

Truth or Dare

Jon Spitz – November 15, 2007

Judge Michael Mukasey, President Bush's nominee to be the next Attorney General of the United States, found himself in an awkward position at his recent confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee. If he disagreed that an interrogation technique called "waterboarding" (the mock drowning of a suspect) was considered torture and banned under US and international law, he would be putting his professional reputation and possibly his confirmation at risk; and if he agreed that waterboarding is torture, he would be implicating the entire chain of command of the Bush regime in war crimes since it was they who authorized the use of waterboarding by US intelligence agents.

Mukasey tried to dodge the question by saying that "if" waterboarding was torture, then it would be illegal. And in yet another disgraceful display of Democratic complicity with Bush's neo-fascist agenda, six Democratic senators – including Dianne Feinstein of CA – voted with the Republican minority in a 53 to 40 vote to confirm Mukasey as our next Attorney General despite his non-repudiation of torture.

Internationally, prosecution of high government officials for war crimes is no longer an idle threat as discovered to great surprise by former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld upon a recent visit to Paris, France. Rumsfeld was secretly and quietly hustled out of the country to avoid being indicted by French authorities under international law for his part in the war crime of authorizing torture as Defense Secretary under Bush. In the US, however, with Mukasey an ideological clone of Bush's former AGs Ashcroft and Gonzales, torturers like Bush and Rumsfeld will continue to have safe haven.

When it comes to the issue of a US military pullout from Iraq, Congressional Democrats are similarly conflicted in holding Bush accountable for his war crimes.

All of Bush's stated reasons for going to war – free Iraqis from Saddam Hussein, eliminate WMD, avenge 9/11, fight terrorism, and spread democracy – turned out to be poorly concocted lies; so what was the real reason for the US invasion? As everyone knows but is rarely mentioned in the media, the real reason for the US invasion and long term occupation of Iraq is to seize and maintain control of their vast oil reserves.

Interestingly enough, some unexpected characters are now coming forward to tell the truth about the US invasion of Iraq. Allan Greenspan, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, and retired General John Abizaid, former Commander of the US Central Command, have both publicly avowed that the reason for the invasion was oil. These two highly respected establishment sources are both conservative Republicans.

The reason why the Democrats do not simply come out and admit this truth is that under international law it is a war crime for one country to invade and occupy another country for the purpose of controlling its resources. That is why we witness the continuing

spectacle of Bush's ridiculous rationales for war being seriously discussed in the halls of Congress and credulously reported by the mainstream media despite their obvious absurdity. In effect, by telling the truth about Iraq, the Democrats would be implicating Bush and his henchmen in additional war crimes.

The Democrats are under increasing pressure from their constituency to force a total withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. But for the Democrats to end the war they would have to disavow the phony reasons that Bush gave for going to war in the first place and admit that the US has no legitimate reason for being in Iraq. This will never happen since in the real world of politics, when it comes to defending US strategic interests in the Middle East (read oil), the Democrats differ from the Republicans only in the details of troop deployment, not over whether troops should be deployed. That is why the Democrats will not end the war and at most will only call for a scaled back US military presence instead of total withdrawal.

And with a team player like Judge Michael Mukasey as our new AG, Bush's neo-fascist takeover of America marches on...