

Fall Fund Drive Goal Set at \$25,000

From Editor Robert Parry: Unlike some Web sites, we don't bother our readers with lots of requests for donations, but we do need to pay the bills and we try to pay our writers something for the important original work that they do. So, we are setting our fall fund drive at \$25,000.

To donate to our tax-exempt non-profit, you can use a [credit card online](#) (we accept Visa, Mastercard or Discover) or you can [mail a check](#) to Consortium for Independent Journalism (CIJ); 2200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201.

For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our account, which is named after our e-mail address: "consortnew@aol.com". We are also registered with PayPal's Giving Fund under the name Consortium for Independent Journalism. (Since we are a 501-c-3 non-profit, donations by American taxpayers may be tax-deductible.)

Donations of any size are appreciated. But we also are offering a choice of thank-you gifts for those who can give \$125, \$150 or more.

For donations of \$125 or more, you can receive the new edition of my first book, *Fooling America*, which was originally published in 1992 and has been out of print for many years. Along with it, we'll include a CD of a book talk that I gave in Los Angeles, explaining what was then a little understood phenomenon, the corruption of the mainstream media.

Or for donations of \$150 or more, we can send you the DVD of the movie, "Kill the Messenger," recalling the mainstream media's betrayal of the late investigative reporter Gary Webb who was punished for his work exposing the Contra-cocaine scandal plus a CD of Webb and me discussing the topic before a crowd in Santa Monica, California, in 1996.

If you wish to get one of the thank-you gifts, just follow up your donation with an email to us at consortnew@aol.com with instructions on where to mail it. We'll pay the shipping charges. (To save you time, we'll assume that any donations of \$125 are for *Fooling America* and the related CD, and that if you donate \$150, you want "Kill the Messenger" and that CD and we'll send them to the address attached to your credit card.).

Another way to help Consortiumnews survive is to buy my three-book trilogy on the Bush dynasty *Secrecy & Privilege*, *Neck Deep* and *America's Stolen Narrative* for the discount price of only \$34, less than half the cover price. Given Jeb Bush's presidential run, it contains important history that Americans should

know.

To get the trilogy, just go to Consortiumnews.com's "[Donate](#)" button and make a \$34 "donation" using Visa, Mastercard or Discover. We will read a "donation" of that amount as an order for the trilogy. If your mailing address is the same as your credit card billing address, we will ship the books to that address. If your mailing address is different, just send us an e-mail at consortnew@aol.com and we will make the adjustment.

You can also take advantage of this trilogy offer by mailing a check for \$34 to The Media Consortium; 2200 Wilson Blvd.; Suite 102-231; Arlington VA 22201. Or you can use our PayPal account, "consortnew @ aol.com." Just make sure you include your mailing address in the message. (A portion of each sale will go to support our investigative journalism.)

For U.S. orders of the trilogy, we will pay for the shipping. **(Regrettably, this three-book offer can only be made for the United States because of increased international postal rates.)**

Another contribution option is to donate stock or other equities, which can offer a tax advantage to you if the stock has appreciated in value. If this stock-donation option appeals to you, I suggest you discuss it with your broker and then contact me at consortnew@aol.com for specific instructions on how to transfer the stock.

Again, thanks for your support and for making our nearly two decades of honest journalism possible.

Robert Parry is a longtime investigative reporter who broke many of the Iran-Contra stories for the Associated Press and Newsweek in the 1980s. He founded Consortiumnews.com in 1995 to create an outlet for well-reported journalism that was being squeezed out of an increasingly trivialized U.S. news media.

In Case You Missed...

Some of our special stories from August focused on the failure of the mainstream media to question prevailing "group thinks" on almost any topic, the bitter fight over the Iran nuclear deal, the hidden reality of U.S. allies aiding Al Qaeda in Syria, and the surprising surge of anti-Establishment candidates.

["The 'Two Minutes Hate' of Tom Brady"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 1, 2015

["Nuclear War's Unlearned Lessons"](#) by Robert Dodge, Aug. 1, 2015

["The Soft Power Hoax"](#) by Mike Lofgren, Aug. 2, 2015

["Reporter Wins Fifth Amendment Case"](#) by Marcy Wheeler, Aug. 3, 2015

["Confronting a Very Dark Chapter"](#) by Gary G. Kohls, Aug. 3, 2015

["How US Allies Aid Al Qaeda in Syria"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Aug. 4, 2015

["Why Many Muslims Hate the US"](#) by William R. Polk, Aug. 5, 2015

["Obama's Pragmatic Appeal for Iran Peace"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 5, 2015

["'Paint-balling' the Presidents"](#) by Sam Hussein, Aug. 7, 2015

["Christianity and the Nagasaki Crime"](#) by Gary G. Kohls, Aug. 9, 2015

["Exposing Nixon's Vietnam Lies"](#) by James DiEugenio, Aug. 10, 2015

["Gauging the Violent 'Fox Effect'"](#) by Mike Lofgren, Aug. 11, 2015

["Rectifying Israel's Crimes"](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Aug. 11, 2015

["Pope Francis' Appeal for the Future"](#) by Daniel C. Maguire, Aug. 12, 2015

["Congress' Test of Allegiance: US or Israel?"](#) by John V. Whitbeck, Aug. 12, 2015

["Escalating the Anti-Iran Propaganda"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 13, 2015

["The Saudi Royals, Unchained"](#) by Joe Lauria, Aug. 14, 2015

["Neocons to Americans: Trust Us Again"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 16, 2015

["Reviving the 'Successful Surge' Myth"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 16, 2015

["Propaganda, Intelligence, and MH-17"](#) by Ray McGovern, Aug. 17, 2015

["Explaining the Trump Phenomenon"](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Aug. 17, 2015

["Assange and Democracy's Future"](#) by Norman Solomon, Aug. 18, 2015

["Pentagon Manual Calls Some Reporters Spies"](#) by Don North, Aug. 19, 2015

["The Honduran Coup's Ugly Aftermath"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 19, 2015

["Why US Police Are Out of Control"](#) by Daniel Lazare, Aug. 20, 2015

["The Riddle of Obama's Foreign Policy"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 21, 2015

["The Case for Pragmatism"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 24, 2015

["American Jews Split from Netanyahu"](#) by Lawrence Davidson, Aug. 24, 2015

["The Trump/Sanders Phenomena"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 26, 2015

["Sanders's Screwed Mideast Strategy"](#) by Sam Hussein, Aug. 27, 2015

["Will Peace Find a 2016 Advocate?"](#) by Robert Parry, Aug. 27, 2015

["Pushing the Edge on Nuclear War"](#) by William R. Polk, Aug. 28, 2015

["America's Short-sighted 'Grand Strategy'"](#) by Franklin Spinney, Aug. 31, 2015

["Schumer's Troubling Mideast Record"](#) by Jonathan Marshall, Aug. 31, 2015

["Ron Paul and Lost Lessons of War"](#) by Todd E. Pierce, Aug. 31, 2015

To produce and publish these stories and many more costs money. And except for some book sales, we depend on the generous support of our readers.

So, please consider a tax-deductible donation either by [credit card online](#) or by [mailing a check](#). (For readers wanting to use PayPal, you can address contributions to our PayPal Giving Fund account, which is named "The Consortium for Independent Journalism").

US Intel Vets Decry CIA's Use of Torture

Torture defenders are back on the offensive publishing a book by ex-CIA leaders rebutting a Senate report that denounced the brutal tactics as illegal, inhumane and ineffective. Now, in a memo to President Obama, other U.S. intelligence veterans are siding with the Senate findings and repudiating the torture apologists.

MEMORANDUM FOR: The President

FROM: Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS)

SUBJECT: Veteran Intelligence Professionals Challenge CIA's "Rebuttal" on Torture

Former CIA leaders responsible for allowing torture to become part of the 21st Century legacy of the CIA are trying to rehabilitate their tarnished reputations with the release of a new book, *Rebuttal: The CIA Responds to the Senate Intelligence Committee's Study of Its Detention and Interrogation Program*. They are pushing the lie that the only allegations against them are from a partisan report issued by Democrats from the Senate Intelligence Committee.

We recall the answer of General John Kimmons, the former Deputy Director of Operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who was asked if good intelligence could be obtained from abusive practices. He replied: "I am absolutely convinced the answer to your first question is no. No good intelligence is going to come from abusive practices. I think history tells us that. I think the empirical evidence of the last five years, hard years, tell us that."

But the allegation that the CIA leaders were negligent and guilty was not the work of an isolated group of partisan Democrat Senators. The Senate Intelligence report on torture enjoyed bipartisan support. Senator John McCain, for example, whose own encounter with torture in North Vietnamese prisons scarred him physically and emotionally, embraced and endorsed the work of Senator Feinstein. It was only a small group of intransigent Republicans, led by Saxby Chambliss, who obstructed the work of the Senate Intel Committee.

Indeed, some of us witnessed firsthand during the administration of President George W. Bush that the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence were virtually paralyzed from conducting any meaningful oversight of the CIA and the U.S. Intelligence Community by the Republican members of these committees. Instead, they pursued the clear objective of protecting the Bush administration from any criticism for engaging in torture during the "War on Terror."

It is curious that our former colleagues stridently denounce the work of the Senate Intelligence Committee but are mute with respect to an equally damning report from the CIA's own inspector general, John Helgerson, in 2004.

Helgerson's report, "[Counterterrorism Detention and Interrogation Activities \(September 2001-October 2003\)](#)," was published on May 7, 2004, and classified Top Secret. That report alone is damning of the CIA leadership and it is important to remind all about the specifics of those conclusions. According to the CIA's own Inspector General:

–The Agency's detention and interrogation of terrorists has provided intelligence that has enabled the identification and apprehension of other terrorists and warned of terrorist plots planned in the United States and around

the world. . . . The effectiveness of particular interrogation techniques in eliciting information that might not otherwise have been obtained cannot be so easily measured however.

–In addition, some Agency officials are aware of interrogation activities that were outside or beyond the scope of the written DOJ opinion. Officers are concerned that future public revelation of the CTC Program is inevitable and will seriously damage Agency officers' personal reputations, as well as the reputation and effectiveness of the Agency itself.

–By distinction the Agency-especially in the early months of the Program-failed to provide adequate staffing, guidance, and support to those involved with the detention and interrogation of detainees . . .

–The Agency failed to issue in a timely manner comprehensive written guidelines for detention and interrogation activities. . . .Such written guidance as does exist . . . is inadequate.

–During the interrogation of two detainees, the waterboard was used in a manner inconsistent with the written DOJ legal opinion of 1 August 2002.

–Agency officers report that reliance on analytical assessments that were unsupported by credible intelligence may have resulted in the application of EITs without justification.

The CIA's Inspector General makes it very clear that there was a failure by the CIA leaders, who include Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet, Deputy Director of Central Intelligence John McLaughlin, Counter Terrorism Center Chief Cofer Black, Counter Terrorism Center Chief Jose Rodriguez and the Director Directorate of Operations James L. Pavitt. Lack of proper guidance and oversight created fertile soil for subsequent abuses and these men were guilty of failing to properly do their jobs.

We do not have to rely solely on the report of the CIA's Inspector General. In addition, the Report by the Senate Armed Services Committee on Detainee Treatment reached the same conclusions about the origins, evils, harm to U.S. policy and intelligence collection of "enhanced interrogation," a euphemism for "torture" first used by Nazi Germany during World War II.

Indeed, *all* independent analyses of the enhanced interrogation program have concluded it constituted torture, was ineffective, and contrary to all American laws, ideals, and intelligence practices. We also have the testimony and record of Ali Soufan, an Arabic-speaking FBI Agent, who was involved with several interrogations before torture was used and who achieved substantive results without violating international law.

The sworn testimony of FBI Agent Ali Soufan, who is the only U.S. Government employee to testify under oath on these matters, completely contradicts the authors of *Rebuttal*:

“In the middle of my interrogation of the high-ranking terrorist Abu Zubaydah at a black-site prison 12 years ago, my intelligence work wasn’t just cut short for so-called enhanced interrogation techniques to begin. After I left the black site, those who took over left, too for 47 days. For personal time and to ‘confer with headquarters’.

“For nearly the entire summer of 2002, Abu Zubaydah was kept in isolation. That was valuable lost time, and that doesn’t square with claims about the ‘ticking bomb scenarios’ that were the basis for America’s enhanced interrogation program, or with the commitment to getting life-saving, actionable intelligence from valuable detainees. The techniques were justified by those who said Zubaydah ‘stopped all cooperation’ around the time my fellow FBI agent and I left. If Zubaydah was in isolation the whole time, that’s not really a surprise.

“One of the hardest things we struggled to make sense of, back then, was why U.S. officials were authorizing harsh techniques when our interrogations were working and their harsh techniques weren’t. The answer, as the long-awaited Senate Intelligence Committee Report now makes clear, is that the architects of the program were taking credit for our success, from the unmasking of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed as the mastermind of 9/11 to the uncovering of the ‘dirty bomber’ Jose Padilla. The claims made by government officials for years about the efficacy of ‘enhanced interrogation’, in secret memos and in public, are false. ‘Enhanced interrogation’ doesn’t work.”

The former CIA officers who have collaborated on this latest attempt to whitewash the historical record that they embraced and facilitated torture by Americans, are counting on the laziness of the press and the American public. As long as no one takes time to actually read the extensively footnoted and documented report by the Senate Intelligence Committee, then it is easy to buy into the fantasy that the CIA officers are simply victims of a political vendetta.

These officers are also counting on a segment of the American people repeatedly identified in polling results that continues to believe torture works. Such people have no proof that it works (because there is none that it works consistently and effectively), they simply believe it instinctively or because of people such as this book’s authors’ arguments to that effect.

That is why it is so important that the truth be told and this book and its arguments be debunked. Americans must learn the realities of torture that

it rarely if ever works, that it dehumanizes the torturer as well as the tortured, that it *increases* the numbers and hostility of our opponents while providing no benefit, and that it seriously diminishes America's reputation in the world and thus its power. Torture is wrong and the men who wrote this book are wrong.

The book, *Rebuttal*, is a new incarnation of the lie extolling the efficacy of torture. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, a time of perceived crisis and palpable fear, the leaders of the CIA decided to ignore international and domestic law. They chose to discard the moral foundations of our Republic and, using the same justifications that authoritarian regimes have employed for attacking enemies, and embarked willingly on a course of action that embraced practices that in earlier times the United States had condemned and punished as a violation of U.S. laws and fundamental human rights.

As former intelligence officers, we are compelled by conscience to denounce the actions and words of our former colleagues. In their minds they have found a way to rationalize and justify torture. We say there is no excuse; there is no justification. The heart of good intelligence work, whether collection or analysis, is based in the pursuit of truth, not the fabrication of a lie.

It is to this end that we reiterate that no threat, no matter how grave, should serve to justify inhuman behavior and immoral conduct or torture conducted by Americans.

For the Steering Group, Veteran Intelligence Professionals for Sanity (VIPS)

Fulton Armstrong, National Intelligence Officer for Latin America (ret.)

William Binney, former Technical Director, World Geopolitical & Military Analysis, NSA; co-founder, SIGINT Automation Research Center (ret.)

Tony Camerino, former Air Force and Air Force Reserves, a senior interrogator in Iraq and author of *How to Break a Terrorist* under pseudonym Matthew Alexander

Glenn L. Carle, Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Transnational Threats, CIA (ret.)

Thomas Drake, former Senior Executive, NSA

Daniel Ellsberg, former State Department and Defense Department Official (VIPS Associate)

Philip Giraldi, CIA, Operations Officer (ret.)

Matthew Hoh, former Capt., USMC, Iraq & Foreign Service Officer, Afghanistan

(associate VIPS)

Larry C Johnson, CIA & State Department (ret.)

Michael S. Kearns, Captain, USAF Intelligence Agency (Retired), ex Master SERE Instructor

John Kiriakou, Former CIA Counterterrorism Officer

Karen Kwiatkowski, Lt. Col., US Air Force (ret.)

Edward Loomis, NSA, Cryptologic Computer Scientist (ret.)

David MacMichael, National Intelligence Council (ret.)

James Marcinkowski, Attorney, former CIA Operations Officer

Ray McGovern, former US Army infantry/intelligence officer & CIA analyst (ret.)

Elizabeth Murray, Deputy National Intelligence Officer for Middle East, CIA (ret.)

Todd Pierce, MAJ, US Army Judge Advocate (ret.)

Scott Ritter, former Maj., USMC, former UN Weapon Inspector, Iraq

Diane Roark, former professional staff, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Coleen Rowley, Division Counsel & Special Agent, FBI (ret.)

Ali Soufan, former FBI Special Agent

Robert David Steele, former CIA Operations Officer

Greg Thielmann, U.S. Foreign Service Officer (ret.) and former Senate Intelligence Committee

Peter Van Buren, U.S. Department of State, Foreign Service Officer (ret.) (associate VIPS)

Lawrence Wilkerson, Colonel (USA, ret.), Distinguished Visiting Professor, College of William and Mary

Valerie Plame Wilson, CIA Operations Officer (ret.)

Ann Wright, U.S. Army Reserve Colonel (ret) and former U.S. Diplomat

A Challenge to Neoliberal Orthodoxy

Conventional thinkers say Jeremy Corbyn's election to head Britain's opposition Labour Party and Bernie Sanders's surge against Hillary Clinton are passing fancies that will fade as the summer ends, but Nicolas J S Davies sees the hope for an inspiring new politics.

By Nicolas J S Davies

Jeremy Corbyn, the chairman of the U.K.'s Stop the War Coalition, is now also the leader of the U.K.'s main opposition Labour Party. Bernie Sanders, the independent socialist Senator from Vermont, is leading in the polls for the Democratic Party primary in New Hampshire and the latest poll for the Iowa caucuses.

As Corbyn told the BBC, "politics can change, and we have changed it."

American socialist Michael Harrington coined the phrase "on the left wing of the possible" to define the most effective position that people of conscience could take amid the corruption of capitalist politics. Harrington had a way with words – he is also credited with coining the term "neoconservative." But the challenge on the left of U.S. politics has always been to define just what is "possible."

The Sanders campaign's failure to stake out strong progressive positions on foreign policy and militarism (in contrast with Corbyn in the U.K.) risks squandering a historic opportunity to build a united front for "a new kind of politics" in the United States, but it is not too late for him to do so.

The rise of neoliberalism in the 1970s and 1980s succeeded in marginalizing progressive politics for a generation in the U.S. and U.K., reducing most political activists' view of "the possible" to focusing on single-issue advocacy or supporting the "lesser evil" in actually existing politics – or some ill-fitting combination of the two.

Rationalizations abound to excuse the outrages of the Clinton and Obama administrations. Many Democrats now subscribe to a myth of the Presidency as a powerless office where a fine speech from the "bully pulpit" counts for more than actual policy decisions that bring death or misery to millions – and yet the same people still hold President George W. Bush responsible for his actions!

Such cognitive dissonance is an essential, paralyzing element in the marginalization of participatory democracy under neoliberalism. People consider themselves sophisticated for accepting the glaring contradictions and

compartmentalizations of a “political reality” that is really based on the endless and uncritical repetition of myths and misinformation, much of it deliberately crafted by corporate-funded think tanks and PR firms.

Political philosopher Sheldon Wolin coined the term “inverted totalitarianism” to describe this political system in which traditional tools of democracy like elections and the press have not been abolished but simply co-opted. Wolin explains how this has led to a more effective and sustainable concentration of wealth and political power than “classical totalitarianism” could ever achieve.

But the ability of the wealthy and powerful to define the limits of what is possible in our society is finally being challenged by political developments in the U.S. and Europe.

I had the privilege of working with Tim Carpenter during the final years of his life. After playing a leading role in Harrington’s Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and serving as Deputy Campaign Manager in Dennis Kucinich’s presidential campaign, Carpenter founded Progressive Democrats of America (PDA) in 2004. His vision of being “on the left wing of the possible” was always expansive and creative, opening up possibilities for constructive action where others saw only irreconcilable differences and insoluble problems.

For example, after PDA endorsed Elizabeth Warren for the Senate, she posted a threatening, misinformed position statement about Iran on her campaign web site. PDA members were divided between peace activists who wanted to withdraw the endorsement, something PDA had never done before, and many members in Massachusetts who loved Warren regardless.

As always, Carpenter listened to everybody’s point of view, and then he united PDA in a campaign to educate Warren on Iran and urge her to change her position, which she eventually did. By the time she came to consider the agreement with Iran as a U.S. Senator, she was a firm vote for diplomacy on every whip list.

Tim Carpenter and PDA may have been the first national group to ask Bernie Sanders to run for President as a Democrat, with a “Run, Bernie, Run” campaign that began in 2013. I remember making the case for this campaign to a skeptical PDA steering committee in Miami. The Democrats were putting all their eggs in one basket with Hillary Clinton.

If and when her campaign would implode from the cynicism of her neoconservative foreign policy record, the corruption of the Clinton Foundation or a dozen other liabilities, Bernie Sanders could be left standing as the *de facto* front-runner for the nomination. Neoliberal power-brokers would scramble to draft somebody

else – as they are now doing – but anyone acceptable to them risks taking more votes from Clinton than from Sanders.

Tim Carpenter tragically died of cancer in April 2014 after a long and characteristically courageous struggle. But today's headlines vindicate his principled and expansive view of what is "possible" in politics: a nuclear agreement to avert war on Iran; the rise of Corbyn, Sanders and like-minded new political leaders in Spain, Greece and elsewhere; a new ceasefire in Ukraine brokered by France, Germany and Russia; huge rallies all over Europe to welcome refugees fleeing U.S.-backed wars; and a world starting to wake up to what is "possible" beyond the injustice, violence and chaos conjured up by the neoliberal wizards of Washington and Wall Street.

Nicolas J S Davies is the author of *Blood On Our Hands: the American Invasion and Destruction of Iraq*. He also wrote the chapters on "Obama at War" in *Grading the 44th President: a Report Card on Barack Obama's First Term as a Progressive Leader*.
