

 **TODAY'S "SHORT TOPIC"**
INTERROGATION
VS.
TORTURE:
THE DEBATE CONTINUES



By Stephen L. Bakke  January 18, 2015

Here's what provoked me:

*About two weeks ago I had a letter published in the Fort Myers News-Press offering my definition of acceptable interrogation techniques. Today, a retired psychologist offered a scathing professional scolding regarding my motivations and conclusions. A good summary of his letter can be found in his concluding sentence: "Mr. Bakke, I respect your attempt at patriotism. On the other hand, fingernails usually grow back; emotional scars are usually permanent." **You just know that I couldn't let that challenge go by without a retort!***

Here's my response:

Interrogation vs. Torture: The Debate Continues

Psychologist Casagrande attempts to give me a professional scolding in "Issues with interrogation" (1-18). I had offered my thoughts in "Defining interrogation" (1-3). Casagrande gratuitously concludes with "Mr. Bakke, I respect your attempt at patriotism (but) fingernails usually grow back; emotional scars are usually permanent."

Mr. Casagrande, with all due respect to your professional sensitivities, I am certainly NOT concerned with emotional scars left with Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. He was the mastermind of 9-11, the admitted executioner of Daniel Pearl, and recipient of much of the controversial interrogation at Gitmo.

Mr. Casagrande, I'm academically disadvantaged in defending myself, other than to say, patriotism has little to do with it. My focus is national security. My unedited letter referred to the vagueness of laws governing interrogation and related commentary. I respectfully offered my clearer definition of techniques to use in situations of extreme importance to national security or American lives.

Mr. Casagrande, perhaps I'm falling back on the advice of democrat Senators Feinstein, Rockefeller, and Schumer who, "back in the day," were of the opinion (quoting Senator Schumer in 2004): "there are very few people in this room or in America who would say that torture would never be used, particularly if thousands of lives are at stake."