

**TEXT OF LETTER TO the EDITOR SENT TO THE BOSCOBEL DIAL, RICHLAND OBSERVER, and THE WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL on April 25, 2009**

Sir:

As a kid growing up in the 1950s, I learned from my parents that the major difference between the United States and the totalitarian states of the world, communist and fascist, is that totalitarians believe that "the end justifies the means," and democracies like the U.S. do not. My parents had a more fixed view of right and wrong than some folks in the neighborhood, but it didn't take long for me to discover that their view on this issue was pretty much universal. The United States had some claim to the moral high ground because we believed that there were some things that shouldn't be done, and we didn't do them.

I am opposed to torture for three reasons: first, torture is immoral; second, torture is against the law, both our national law and international laws, and treaties to which the U.S. is a signatory; third, torture does not provide reliable information.

I have been hugely disappointed in the news of the past couple of weeks revealing what we already suspected about the last national administration's policies and practices regarding the use of torture. While it's not surprising that members and supporters of the Bush-Cheney regime support something that is immoral and illegal, what is amazing is that they continue to advocate and support something that doesn't work. The Bush-Cheney Republican approach to governance has not only brought us to the brink of economic bankruptcy, but also brought us to the brink of moral and legal bankruptcy.

It's time for us to clean up the mess and be sure that there is justice. It is patently unfair for soldiers to have their careers ruined, spend time in jail, and be publicly referred to as "bad apples", while the rot at the top of the Bush-Cheney regime goes unpunished. There needs to be thorough investigation of who did what, and that investigation may well lead to prosecutions. No one should be above the law.

Bill Davis