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**What Would You Do?**

**Directions: Read each of the following scenarios and determine whether or not:**

***• Is this type of action necessary in a time of war? If so, explain why?***

• ***If not, should someone be held responsible for these actions in a court of law? Explain why***

**Scenario #1**:

In a time of war, a naval commander for a European country orders his submarines to attack all ships, regardless of whether or not they are transporting civilians. His goal is to hit submarines that may be carrying weapons to his enemy. When one of his submarines DOES attack a ship that

(Answer: Nazi commander Karl Donitz was NOT found guilty of war crimes during WWII, but was found guilty of waging wars of aggression).

→**My Response**:

*I do not think this action was necessary in a time of war. Yes, I do agree that those ships could have been a threat to the naval commander, but when there are innocent civilians involved, I believe that a different course of action should be taken. Direct contact with innocent people that involves violence should never be tolerated, even during a war. I also do believe that the European naval commander should be held responsible for his actions. When one kills innocent civilians, he/she should take all of the blame and be held accountable for his/her actions no matter the situation.*

**Scenario #2**:

An eastern European country contains several ethnic groups. Groups from surrounding countries have lived in “Country A” for years. Due to ethnic tensions in the country, the leader of Country A begins a campaign to “rid” his country of these foreigners. He has burned their villages, arrested them without trial, and murdered many. Over 500,000 have fled Country A for safety. When outside intervened, several mass graves were discovered with thousands of bodies. It is estimated that 100,000 civilians are either missing or have been killed.

(Answer: This scenario represents the genocide in Kosovo in 1999 under Slobodan Milosevic.

He was charged with crimes against humanity, including murder, forcible transfer, and deportation

and "persecution on political, racial or religious grounds”, but died before the end of his trial.)

→**My Response**:

*I believe this action should have never been taken. Milosevic’s actions were based on what could have been racism, and he had no right to kill thousands of people simply because they were of different ethnicity. The different ethnic groups did not pose a threat to Milosevic, and even if someone from that ethnic group had threatened him or was seen as harmful, it should be settled with that specific person, or those specific people. Once large amounts of people are affected (innocent people), it becomes unnecessary. Although in a time of war, this should not be overlooked and should definitely be discussed in a court of law. Milosevic should have punishment for his actions.*

**Scenario #3**:

In an effort to fight the “War on Terror”, a prison has been established for “persons of suspicion” to be detained for further questioning. Many of these prisoners are arrested and detained without arrest warrants and are not given the right to counsel (a lawyer). Yet, valuable information may result from questioning these suspects. In order to “extract” this information, the following tactics are used: pouring the phosphoric liquid on detainees; pouring cold water on naked detainees; beating detainees with a broom handle and a chair; frightening and intimidating detainees with threats of attack, and in one instance actually biting a detainee.

(Answer: The above scenario describes the conditions at Abu Ghraib during the Iraq War. While several U.S. soldiers have been brought to trial for their actions, many have been acquitted, dishonorably discharged, or are serving light sentences.)

→**My Response**:

*I think these types of actions contradict the purpose for why they are done in the first place. These prisoners are being questioned for committing crimes, but the way they are questioned is a crime in itself. We can’t expect others to do good if we do harm to them. I think this course of action was also unnecessary, even in war times. There could have been other ways to get the information out of the “person’s of suspicion”, and this was not needed at all. Suspecting something from someone is not always enough to arrest them, let alone use these tactics against them. This should definitely be brought up in a court of law, as it goes against what is wanted from the prisoners.*

**Scenario #4**:

You are a U.S. soldier. You have been assigned to fight in a jungle country. It is difficult to distinguish your enemy from everyday civilians. A recent attack on your company resulted in the death of a close friend. You have been asked to raid the homes of suspected enemies and confiscate weapons. You raid the homes, but find no weapons. You’re emotionally and physically exhausted. You take your frustration out on the villagers you have encountered. Before you know it, you and your fellow soldiers have burned the village to the ground and killed many of its civilians.

(Answer: The above scenario represents the My Lai Massacre during Vietnam. Only one man

was arrested for this incident and has since been pardoned.)

**→My Response:**

*In no way this should be considered necessary during a war. This action was taken on personal account, and didn’t need to be done to resolve anything related to the war. This was done out of instinct, and no justification should make a court of law come to terms with innocent people being affected. There were people in the village that did not have anything to do with the frustration and exhaustion that the soldiers felt.*