

LINKS, 9/7/11

A chain of Mormon boarding schools has been accused of torturing hundreds of the teenagers who attended the schools. That's horrible on its face. But remember, too, that key architects of the country's torture program—Bruce Jessen and James Mitchell, Jay Bybee, and Tim Flanigan—are also Mormon. That's not to damn the entire faith. But c'mon, folks, that's a lot of embrace of torture.

Most of the 9/11 reviews are just fluff. But Will Bunch has a list of 10 unanswered questions about 9/11 that's worth your time. (h/t Susie)

First the guy who tried to cut USGS and emergency communication funding gets hit with an earthquake, and now Governor Perry, who cut funding to support volunteer firefighters, has had his state get hit by horrible fires.

This guest post at Tom Ricks' place notes that the push to cut military retirement benefits is being led by a bunch of officers who have forgotten the class differences between them and the average retiree.

When I first heard about Obama's capitulation to polluters on ozone standards, I was reminded that when Bush did something similar, lefties got outraged. This piece, titled "Obama pulls a Bush on clean air," details that earlier incident, then explains just how shitty Obama's capitulation here is. Meanwhile, Al Gore weighs in: "Instead of relying on science, President Obama appears to have bowed to pressure from polluters who did not want to bear the cost of implementing new restrictions on their harmful pollution..."

You know those documents conveniently found in Libya showing US and British collaboration with Libya on renditions? One of the guys involved in the rendition of a rebel leader moved from MI6 to BP not long after the rendition.

Peter Daou looks at how GOP ideology has led to

a decline in American exceptionalism.

Two authors who have added up the \$1T+ dumped into homeland security wonder why we don't use a cost-benefit analysis before we waste this money.

Pew looks at the factors that make it more likely for someone to be downwardly mobile. The secret to maintaining the same level of affluence as your parents? Marriage and higher education (not surprisingly).

Chicago Fed President Charles Evans does the math to show a 9% unemployment rate is as bad as 5% inflation—and the Fed ought to respond accordingly.

"Every step taken by the US has benefited Al Shabab," a Somali warlord interviewed by Jeremy Scahill for this important piece told him. "What brought about the [Islamic Courts Union, a group of Islamic organizations that unified to push out the CIA]? It was the US-backed warlords. If Ethiopia did not invade and the US did not carry out airstrikes, Al Shabab would not have survived so long, because they were outnumbered by those who had positive agendas." The piece concludes, "the Shabab's meteoric rise in Somalia, and the legacy of terror it has wrought, is blowback sparked by a decade of disastrous US policy that ultimately strengthened the very threat it was officially intended to crush. In the end, the greatest beneficiaries of US policy are the warlords, including those who once counted the Shabab among their allies and friends."