

MICHAEL HAYDEN'S RISKY AND EDGY SCHADENFREUDE

I've long suspected the reason Republicans have pursued Fast and Furious so relentlessly—and more importantly, have tried to implicate Eric Holder in it personally—is to exact revenge on the Attorney General because he deigned to investigate torture.

This disgusting bit of dick-wagging from Michael Hayden only reinforces that suspicion.

Schadenfreude – joy at the misfortune of others – is a bad thing.

So I've been trying to resist temptation these past months as I watch Attorney General Eric Holder deal with public and congressional reaction to the "Fast and Furious" scheme, the failed attempt by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives to seed and then track U.S. firearms to Mexican drug cartels.

[snip]

But any personal instinct toward some common "executive branch" empathy for Holder is muted not only by the dubious character of Fast and Furious, but by some of the attorney general's other actions, as well. While out of office, for example, he famously called for a "reckoning" for CIA officers and other officials who authorized and conducted operations that were edgy and risky and intended to deal with difficult circumstances.

Once in office, he launched a "reckoning" of CIA renditions, detentions and interrogations of terrorists by directing the Justice Department to reopen investigations

closed years before by career prosecutors. This decision was opposed by then-CIA Director Leon Panetta and seven of his predecessors, and Holder reportedly made the decision without reading detailed memos prepared by those career prosecutors declining to pursue further proceedings.

[snip]

As I said, schadenfreude is a bad thing. But it is sometimes hard to avoid, especially when life seems to come full circle.

Attorney General Eric Holder has made it clear that he thinks he has been subjected to a heavily politicized process over Fast and Furious.

If he has – and that's still an if – I suspect that some folks at CIA know exactly how he feels.

Hayden ought to be grateful that DOJ has helped cover up the Bush Administration's illegal wiretap program, not to mention their unsuccessful efforts to prosecute Thomas Drake for exposing that when implementing that program, Hayden deliberately chose more expensive plans that offered less privacy.

But instead he seems to be suggesting that it would be right to retaliate politically against the Attorney General for doing his job—prosecuting crime.

Ah well, in his spiteful glee, Hayden finally admits that the torture program was unsuccessful.

After the congressional elections of 2006, the CIA was forced to defend edgy (often controversial and sometimes unsuccessful) actions in a tough political environment.

But I guess we citizens have to put up with such unsuccessful and illegal programs otherwise, or risk political retribution?