

“PIKER:” DONALD TRUMP RANTS AS IF ROBERT MENENDEZ’S 22 OUNCES OF GOLD WERE AS BIG AS JARED’S \$2 BILLION

In yet another rant projecting his own corruption on others last night, Trump called Robert Menendez a “piker.” He’s not wrong. After all, Menendez’ alleged payoff for laundering the reputation of Egypt for its role in the Jamal Khashoggi was merely \$40,000. Jared’s pricetag for laundering the reputation of Mohammed bin Salman was \$2 billion.

AN UNKNOWN UNKNOWN MADE KNOWN KNOWN

Former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld who authorized torture under the Bush administration, passed away today at age 88.
spit

THE CHICKS ARE OWED AN APOLOGY

Once upon a time, back when the United States was under the leadership of another fairly incompetent Republican President (yes yes, Bush

and Cheney look a little better now compared to Trump and Pence, but only because they were actually semi-competent in their evil, but they were still very evil), there was was sensationally good crossover country/pop group known as the Dixie Chicks.

They were country, but never of the “stars and bars” Dixie kind. It was simply an appellation. In fact, they were all pretty forward and progressive thinking and talking. And man did they get in trouble for it. I guess the new term of the day is “cancelled”, which is kind of an idiotic term, but the howlers really did try to obliterate Natalie Maines, Emily Strayer and Martie Maguire. From Wiki:

On March 10, 2003, nine days before the invasion of Iraq, the Dixie Chicks performed at the Shepherd's Bush Empire theater in London, England. It was the first concert of their Top of the World tour in support of their sixth album, Home. Introducing their song “Travelin’ Soldier”, Maines told the audience the band they did not support the upcoming Allied invasion of Iraq and were “ashamed” that President George W. Bush was from Texas. Many American country music listeners supported the war, and Maines’s remark triggered a backlash in the United States. The Dixie Chicks were blacklisted by thousands of country radio stations, and the band members received death threats. Maines issued an apology, saying her remark had been disrespectful; in 2006 she rescinded the apology, saying she felt Bush deserved no respect. The backlash damaged sales of their music and sales of their next album and tour.

In a September 2003 interview, Maguire told the German magazine Der Spiegel: “We don’t feel a part of the country scene any longer, it can’t be our home anymore.” She noted a lack of support

from country stars, and being shunned at the 2003 ACM Awards. "Instead, we won three Grammys against much stronger competition. So we now consider ourselves part of the big rock 'n' roll family." Some fans were dismayed, but the group made no clear response.

If you have forgotten, which is awfully easy to do in these pandemic days of Trump, this was a huge deal at the time. The United States government under the Bush/Cheney regime, and the entire country music scene hated on them and ostracized them. It was one of those kind of fulcrum moments. It was not just the Iraq war, it was torture, the unitary executive, free speech, protest....everything was wrapped up, in a cultural way, in the actions of the Dixie Chicks. It was symbolic of the divide.

But Natalie Maines, Emily Strayer and Martie Maguire were bad ass and stuck to their morals and thoughts. They got hammered at the time, but they hung in and are still here bigger and badder ass than ever. They are now just The Chicks, having dumped the Dixie part of their original name. The Chicks are owed a debt of gratitude and an apology for the idiocy and bigotry they faced from the howlers during the Bush/Cheney years, and they are here to let you know they are still on the good side of the cutting edge.

The Chicks have a new song and video out. "March March", and it is truly awesome. A song for this time. I saw it last night at Atrios' joint, and it is really superb. Take a look. Expand it and watch it full screen, it is worth it. This is the music of protest, and in the best way. Music was key in the 60's and it is key now. It spreads far and wide what people feel, whether they are in the streets or at home. The "at home" part seems even more pertinent now in the time of unabated pandemic at the hands of yet another evil Administration. And that is our trash talk for this weekend, get on it!

TWENTY YEARS OF CONTINUITY

For the last twenty years, politicians of both parties have been setting precedents that makes what come next with Iran far, far more dangerous.

BRETT KAVANAUGH CALLED JOHN YOO HIS “MAGIC BULLET”

Brett Kavanaugh found John Yoo’s withdrawal from 9th Circuit consideration a 60 question mark emergency.

GINA HASPEL DESTROYED THE TAPES IN 2005 TO HIDE WHAT SHE DESTROYED IN 2002

The best way to explain apparent dishonesty in Gina Haspel’s testimony the other day is that she was the ultimate target of the Durham investigation, the person who had been involve in destroying the tapes in a first round, in 2002, and in a second round to hide the first round of destruction, in 2005.

GINA HASPEL SEEMS TO ADMIT KNOWING JANE HARMAN OPPOSED TORTURE TAPE DESTRUCTION – JUST NOT CARING

Gina Haspel's different treatment of Jane Harman's opposition to destroying the torture tapes and Carl Levin's moves to conduct an inquiry into torture suggest she really didn't care about Congressional concerns about retaining the tapes.

RON WYDEN MAKES IT CLEAR GINA HASPEL PUSHED FOR TORTURE TO CONTINUE IN 2005

One of Ron Wyden's questions of Gina Haspel makes it clear she was part of a successful effort to force DOJ and the White House to reauthorize torture in 2005 by torturing a detainee before approval had been finalized.

GINA HASPEL'S FLUID MORAL COMPASS

Gina Haspel's testimony was remarkably damaging for her.

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN TORTURING ABU ZUBAYDAH AND AL- NASHIRI AND JUST AL- NASHIRI

The difference between whether Gina Haspel oversaw the torture of both Abu Zubaydah and Abd al Rahim al-Nashiri or just the latter is critical to claims that she only did things authorized by the OLC memo.