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**Ethics Paper Longer Version**

***Dilemma***

The Mad Bomber:- A madman who has threatened to explode several bombs in crowded areas has been apprehended. Unfortunately, he has already planted the bombs and they are scheduled to go off in a short time. It is possible that hundreds of people may die. The authorities cannot make him divulge the location of the bombs by conventional methods. He refuses to say anything and requests a lawyer to protect his fifth amendment right against self-incrimination. In exasperation, some high-level official suggests torture. This would be illegal, of course, but the official thinks that it is nevertheless the right thing to do in this desperate situation. Do you agree? If you do, would it also be morally justifiable to torture the mad bomber’s innocent wife if that is the only way to make him talk? Why?

This dilemma has been taken from [here](https://www.erepublik.com/en/article/the-mad-bomber-dilemma-767202/1/20).

***The Decision***

It is ethically allowed to torture to get the appropriate information, and the torture of his wife is also ethical, provided certain conditions are met (which are discussed later on in detail) , and that the chance (rate of success) of getting a favorable outcome ( saving people’s lives ) is high.

***The Explanation***

The Madman, in his attempt to explode the bombs, might kill and deprive thousands of people of a valuable future. He might also harm the animals and birds nearby that place, and it is also not ethically right to put an end to their lives. It is not ethically right to end the lives of human beings, or any living being in that matter.

Since the authorities have already tried conventional methods, and they did not work, this needs to be resolved by thinking about the situation in a more analytical way.

The madman, by planting the bombs, has endangered millions of lives and he has also endangered the surrounding buildings and property. If there is no try not not stop him from the bombs from going off, he can cause millions of deaths and also a lot of collateral damage to government owned property and space. This is wrong because endangering people’s lives and also trying to damage government owned property is not right.

One other option is, to torture the mad bomber into giving out the location of the bomb. Torture of a human being in normal conditions is not acceptable. However, in this case, since the mad bomber has an intention of harming mass amount of people, this case goes beyond the case of being normal. **It is okay to torture him -** even though someone might argue that it is not completely acceptable - **because it is not as bad as letting millions of people die when there is no torture carried out against him, and just letting the bombs go off.**

When there is the weighing in of the differences and looking at the pros and cons of torture against no torture, it is seen that torturing him is bringing about less bad outcomes. Hence, the decision that the madman’s torture is ethical.

The torture of the wife is also accepted as a resulting outcome, because if it brings about any chance to save the lives of millions of other people, then it is something that should be done.

Note that there are certain conditions that are being assuming here, before it is said that it is okay to torture her. If there is not enough time - like the clock ticking in this case - to administer any other technique, then and only then torture is okay. Also, if there is a good ratio of the torture being successful, only then there is a permit for the torture. If there is like half a chance only, the permission to carry out the torture is not okay. Further explanation why it is said so about these conditions are given later in the defense of the thesis.

Furthermore, consider this scenario. There is one person trying to kill an innocent civilian on the street, his gun pointed at him, ready to shoot and kill. There is a third person who witnesses this scenario, and has the chance to stop the person by shoving him into the wall. The shoving causes a bruise to the person holding the gun. All things considered, it is ethical to shove the person in the wall. When it is said all things considered, it means that if causing 1 unit pain to the person holding the gun saves the life of another civilian, then that the 1 unit pain is justified.

Now, let’s descend to the case on hand. The torture of the wife has the potential to save millions of innocent lives. Now, in the case above 1 unit pain saves the life of one person, and it is ethical. In this case on hand, lives of millions are at stake. Therefore, by basic rules of mathematics, if 1 Million Units of pain is inflicted, it is justified. 1 Million Units of pain can be called torture, which is what is being considering for the mad bomber scenario. *Let it be cleared out by saying that this is specific to the case in hand, and in other cases, there might be different conditions, which need to be considered before applying the same line of thought.*

( Case above was discussed with Prof. Tresan during office hours. The chain of thought above is inspired by him. )

Someone might say that a million units of pain can cause the person to have permanent traumatization, and it is not right to do that to someone. The argument for this is simple, just compare the two outcomes if there is torture or if there is no torture. If there is torture of the wife, there is a chance she will be permanently traumatized. However, on the other hand there is the outcome that millions of people will ***die.*** Generally, a living person is always better than a dead one. Furthermore, in this case it is not just the case of ‘a’ person, it is the case of millions of people being talked here. Torture of one person, in this case at least, is not as bad as letting millions die.

***Some Objections to The Thesis***

* Someone might argue to the paper’s claim that it is wrong to torture someone as it is against the law.
* Additionally, the argument can also develop as if the wife is not involved in the bomb plantings, how is it okay to torture her? They might argue that there is torturing of the madman only because he has harmful intentions, but the wife does not have any harmful intentions. How is okay to torture her then?
* What about the wife’s rights to be secure in her person?
* It is not right to emotionally torment someone.
* An objection can develop as to say that the paper says that torture is okay and should be legalized if it is doing good. It can also say that the paper is endorsing torture, when it develops the grounds on why the torture of the wife is ethical.

***Defense against these Objections***

* The argument that torturing them is against the law, can be easily put to rest by counter arguing a simple fact. How many times in this lifetime have those people gone against the law? The ones who argue against this saying it is not within the law probably have, at some point if their lifetime, broken a law without any good reason. An example that follows is, how many times have they not stopped at a stop sign at midnight, because it was just not relevant at that point of time in life? There are also certain things that may be within the law, but might be unethical. One such scenario is, a rich person buying all the water in a convenience store, when there are 20 more people who need the water cases. It is completely within the limits of the law for him to buy all the water he wants if he pays for it, however, in this case, it unethical of him to do so, because there are others who are being deprived of water because of his actions. These cases mentioned above overrule the fact that everything within the law is ethical very easily. Furthermore, in this paper’s case, the breaking of the law when the madman is tortured is actually doing something ***good***, or atleast trying to do something good. It is preventing, or at least trying to prevent the valuable future of the civilians from getting destroyed, by protecting their lives. So, the argument that it is against the law does not uphold, simply because it relies too much on the prima facie [1] side of things, i.e. it does not look at the entire picture.
* There is morally justification that the torture is ethical, on the grounds that it is helping save the valuable lives of a lot of people. The ethical good of this action is a ***lot*** higher than the ethical bad of the torturing. The torture is saving millions of lives by doing something that is bad in normal circumstances. The point to be noted is also that, since there is an intent to harm, this goes beyond the normal case anyway. Consider an example - If someone is pointing a gun at a woman, whose husband sees this event unfold, is he going to stand and watch, or is he going to try and get the gun out from the hand of the person who is holding it? Let the scenario be clear by saying that the person is going to shoot and the wife is going to die for sure if he does not do anything. Let it also be clear by saying that the only way to take the gun away is to break the person’s hand. Now the husband has two options, turn and go away, or try and save his wife. What would the husband do? Probably break the person’s hand and try and get the gun away. The situation of the mad bomber is a similar sort of scenario. There are similar outcomes, probably worse, if there is no torture against the madman. There is ***breaking*** of the person’s arm in the case of the husband and the wife, without a second thought. Note that this is just for the sake of a single person. Following from that, how is it unethical if something of the similar sort, i.e. torture, when carried out to save not just one life, but millions of lives? It is absolutely ethical, which follows from simple chain of thought as seen above.
* Now onto the argument one might make for torturing the wife. Keeping in mind previous arguments made above in the short explanation of the thesis, going further, assume these different scenarios :-
* Assume a scenario, where there is a sniper on the rooftop of a building. There is a terrorist standing in the lobby of a hotel across from him, who holds the button of a nuclear bomb in some other city. The only way to stop the terrorist from pressing the button is to shoot him dead. However, this scenario has a complication. The terrorist is sitting aligned with a innocent civilian who has no idea about what is going on. If the sniper shoots, the civilian will lose his arm. Is pulling the trigger justified? Absolutely is, following from the simple fact that it is a better to let a single innocent person lose his arm, than to let millions of innocent people ***die***. Even if asked to a single person, he/she would himself lose an arm than rather die. This is the case of millions of people. It is therefore, ethical, and justified to take the shot.
* Let’s make this more interesting. Suppose the terrorist has a wife. He is standing behind a pillar, but his wife is visible to the sniper eyes. The sniper can shoot the wife in the leg, which will make the terrorist drop the attempt to blow up the other city, and cause him to panic and start taking care of his wife.
* Now both the above scenarios, the thing that can be seen is that innocent bystanders are shot somehow to prevent something worse from occurring. In these situations, let it be clear again that the only time the sniper would pull the trigger is if the odds of success are high. Taking the sniper shot is easily justified here. Following from these situations, how come is there a bias when it is just torture of the wife in our case of the mad bomber? It is preventing the death of millions of innocent people in the mad bomber case as well, how is it any different then?
* It can clearly be seen from the above cases that it is ethical to torture the wife, simply because of the same chain of thought as mentioned above. This was mentioned before in the paper, and here it goes again. ***Generally, living life is better than dying. Here, torture is, therefore, ethical because the other outcome is death, and not just death of one, but of millions.***
* Torturing the wife to emotionally torment him is unethical is a bad argument. Consider the second case mentioned above. If shooting the wife is justified to prevent the nuclear bomb in the other city from going off, how comes ***torture*** to make the madman give up information is not? Shooting someone is worse than torture comparatively. The argument that emotionally tormenting someone is bad might uphold in a normal case, but in this case, since the madman has intended harm to millions of people, the wrongness of the action is worn down.
* The paper never says that torture should be legalized or anything along the lines of that, for that matter. Also, the claim made that the paper is endorsing torture is invalid since the paper is talking about this specific case, and considering the relevant factors present in play for this specific scenario. The paper is not, in any sense, discussing anything about the rightness or wrongness of torture. It is just saying whether or not it is right in this case. Furthermore, recall the utilitarian concept as discussed in class, which is that just because doing something is appropriate in one case, does not mean it is always right or appropriate in every case. A person cannot discuss the same thing he discusses with his/her friends on saturday night, the next night in front of his/her parents during dinner.

( Cases above were discussed with Prof. Tresan during office hours. )

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* Overall, if someone still does not agree to the example and illustrations given, the main idea will be repeated, which is also, the most important pillar for the paper. Is it justified that torture of one single individual, though someone might argue that it is a unethical, outweigh the ethical good that might result from it, that is, saving millions of valuable lives? It is definitely, without a doubt, ethical to go forward and torture the madman and the wife.
* The madman has indulged in destructive motives for innocent people and has decided to harm people’s future by trying to end them (kill them by the bomb plants). This is a good enough reason to justify his torture.
* For the wife, the scenarios discussed throughout the paper, clearly make it ethical in this ***specific case*** to go forward with the torture.
* ***I WOULD LIKE TO ENDORSE PROF. J TRESAN, WHO HELPED ME FRAME THE PAPER AND GAVE ME EDITS AND IDEAS ABOUT HOW TO GO ABOUT WRITING THIS PAPER VERY EFFECTIVELY.***

[1] Prima facie wrong means that something when looked at upon with just one of the entire aspect, it seems to be wrong. However, it does not necessarily mean that it is wrong. It just means that looking from this perspective, it might seem to be wrong. One classic example of this is the one we may experience in every once in awhile. We might make a promise to someone, that we might do something for them, like picking them up from work, but then, something really important comes up, and then you decide to do that. Now, this might be wrong, because you broke your promise, but the other important thing might be something like paying your electricity bill so the power in your apartment does not go out or something like submitting your presentation so you do not get fired. It might look wrong at first in these cases, but the whole aspect considered, it is actually okay to break your promise for these cases.