

The American Dictatorship

by David R. Hoffman via judd - Pravda Friday, Oct 7 2011, 9:32am

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*If you are reading this, the President of the United States has declared you to be a terrorist or enemy combatant. As a result, you will be detained without charge or trial, tortured, and/or extrajudicially executed. You are not entitled to any legal due process, you have no civil rights, and there is absolutely no need for the United States government to prove any of the allegations it has made against you, even if you are a citizen of the United States. -- **Barack Obama per Banker and Corporatist ruling elites.***



Throughout much of its history, America had a Bill of Rights that protected the fundamental freedoms of its citizens, as well as a "check-and-balance" system that ensured no government institution, branch or individual would ever obtain unbridled power.

But all that ended with the recent extrajudicial execution of American citizen Anwar al-Awlaki in Yemen. And while most politicians and pundits are opportunistically applauding al-Awlaki's death, a few perceptive Americans are growing increasingly concerned about the unprecedented powers the executive branch of government is assuming.

Under those powers, American citizens can now be illegally detained, even within America's own borders, as was illustrated in the case of Abdullah al-Kidd, who, despite never being charged with a crime, was held for more than two weeks in high security cells and repeatedly strip-searched and shackled. In addition, American citizens like Bradley Manning and Jose Padilla were tortured in American military prisons, and now American citizen Anwar al-Awlaki was deliberately marked for death.

Tragically, but not surprisingly, America's federal judicial system, the branch of government best positioned to halt these abuses, has done everything in its power to ensure that government-sanctioned kidnapers, torturers and murderers evade any semblance of justice.

The United States supreme court, for example, recently proclaimed that al-Kidd could not sue former attorney-general John Ashcroft, the official primarily responsible for al-Kidd's detention and abuse, because Ashcroft was legally "immunized" against such lawsuits; a federal judge in South Carolina dismissed the case filed by torture victim Padilla against former government official Donald Rumsfeld on the grounds that granting Padilla a trial would create "an international spectacle"; and

when al-Awlaki's father attempted to have his son's name removed from the American government's "kill list," a federal judge decreed that Anwar al-Awlaki had to argue for this removal himself—a ruling that creates a ludicrous and perverse Catch-22 for persons on this list, because seeking legal redress in America to prevent their extrajudicial executions would also heighten their chances of being extrajudicially executed before they ever reached the courthouse.

The "Nobel Peace Prize Winning" Obama and his cronies have also done everything in their power to promote illegal detentions, torture and the extrajudicial executions of American citizens. Attorney General Eric Holder, a self-professed paradigm of "integrity" who demonstrates far too little of it, refused to prosecute corrupt CIA officials who, in defiance of a court order, destroyed videotapes that depicted the torture of detainees. And, in a revelation exposed by Wikileaks, it was discovered that Obama strong-armed foreign governments to prevent them from filing torture and/or war crimes charges against Bush and/or his minions.

But, in at least one respect, Obama may be even worse than Bush, because he is—according to a recent article by Matt Apuzzo of the Associated Press—the first United States president in history to intentionally target an American citizen for extrajudicial execution.

George W. Bush once said that terrorists hate America because of its freedoms. But it was Bush and his minions, not the terrorists, who did the most to undermine human rights, democracy and freedom in America. Yet as Obama continues to morph into George W. Bush (as Steven Thomma of McClatchy Newspapers so accurately observed) there has scarcely been a whimper of protest.

What are the reasons behind this deafening silence as America's most basic rights and freedoms are being eroded by the very people sworn to protect them? Why, in a nation that professes to fear the intrusiveness and overreaching of "big" government, aren't the streets overrun with protesters enraged about the unchecked and unconstitutional powers the president of the United States has usurped? Why isn't there commensurate outrage directed against the corrupt legal system, led by amoral men like Scalia, Thomas, Roberts, Alito and Kennedy, who are not only enabling governmental abuses of power, but incessantly dismantling democracy and fundamental freedoms as well? Why are Americans so comfortable with the fact that torturers, war criminals, and murderers can not only evade justice, but also live freely among them?

One possible reason is that freedom to most Americans simply means the ability to conspicuously consume. Almost all the recent protests over health care reform and government spending are really about one thing: The desire to pay less in taxes, because paying less tax means having more disposable income to purchase that bigger house, fancier car, and whatever new trinkets modern technology offers. And as long as one is watching that big screen television, playing with that iPad, or "tweeting" that celebrity, it's easy to remain oblivious to the fact that your countrymen are being tortured and killed by their own government, your freedoms are being decimated, and your politicians are being bought and paid for by billionaires and corporate dollars.

A second reason for this silence was discussed in a Pravda.Ru article entitled Welcome to the Village (October 25, 2010). This article's title was inspired by the prophetic 1960s television drama *The Prisoner*, which starred the late Patrick McGoohan.

McGoohan's character (known only as "Number Six") is a disgruntled government employee who angrily resigns from his position, only to be kidnapped and transported to "The Village"—a bucolic yet sinister place where residents are constantly spied upon by an omnipresent overseer, known only as "Number Two."

My article explained how many of the fictional surveillance techniques used in "The Village" have now become reality as computers, satellites, ubiquitous cameras, facial recognition technologies and tracking chips have the capability to subject almost anyone in the world to continuous surveillance.

I was somewhat surprised to discover that, unlike many of my other articles, Welcome to the Village did not provoke much reader feedback or discussion. And while I realize that the article's title might not have accurately conveyed its content, I could not help but wonder if people, particularly in America, have become so paralyzed by the fear of terrorism that they are willing to surrender their privacy and individuality to "big brother" regimentation and conformity.

Which leads to the third reason: Americans incessantly praise "freedom" and "democracy" with their words (and are repeatedly conned into sending their youth off to die in purported defense of these principles), yet they just as incessantly embrace and promote fascism with their deeds.

Fascism, as I discussed in several Pravda.Ru articles written during the nightmarish years of the Bush dictatorship, has always been more seductive than freedom, because it demands less effort. Freedom requires people to think for themselves, and to gather facts and information necessary to formulate reasoned judgments or opinions. Freedom also means making difficult, sometimes life-altering decisions, with no guarantee those decisions will reap any positive results.

Fascism, on the other hand, favors emotion over reason, appeals to the basest instincts in human nature, and creates omnipotent demagogues who tell the masses what to think and how to think. Freed from the burden of making decisions for themselves, people can then pretend they are blameless for, and powerless to prevent, atrocities and injustices committed by those in power.

Make no mistake about it. I have no sympathy for terrorists or terrorism, and I agree that many of the statements al-Awlaki made were reprehensible, even in a world where Nobel Peace Prize winners sow death and destruction. But regardless of how wicked an individual might be, when a government chooses to extrajudicially execute its own citizens it creates a dark and dangerous precedent that can easily be expanded by those who gain power in the future. Given the kidnappings, illegal detentions, tortures and murders that have already been committed in the name of the so-called "war on terror," it is frighteningly clear that the American government may be traversing a path of no return.

Arrogant, militarily powerful, and lacking a viable foe to curb its contempt for international law, the United States government now feels "superior" to every other country in the world, and, as a result, has become a lawless, rogue nation operating under the clandestine philosophy that "might makes right" while openly (and hypocritically) cloaking itself in the garments of "freedom," "justice" and "human rights."

So America is dead, and within its cadaver lurks a country little different than the third-world dictatorships it claims to abhor—a country controlled by a plethora of sadistic, amoral, venal and ruthless reprobates who relentlessly manipulate the fear of terrorism to promote their own agendas and propagate their own brand of terror throughout the world.

Maybe one day Americans will awaken to this reality.

But by then it will probably be too late.

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