

## The Day the Law Died

by bluey - CommonDreams *Monday, Mar 5 2012, 9:38am*

international / injustice/law / commentary

During my university days I studied all forms of fiction, fabulation, metafiction, realism, horror, gothic and personal favourite, fiction of the absurd; but I never imagined I would one day live in a real world of the fantastic and absurd.



***Obama, errand boy***

After delivering the death blow to all civil liberties and rights with the indefinite detention law, Obama, the Red Queen of our time, is about to announce, via his Attorney General Eric Holder, the “legal framework” under which the American executive would be able to ‘legally’ assassinate whoever it likes anywhere it chooses by whatever means it deems appropriate. The absurd element in this fictive reality is attempting to legalise the clearly illegal -- murder is murder by any other name and attempting to whitewash crime by using legalistic jargon offends reason beyond measure.

I would add that I was not surprised by this latest absurd announcement, after all, we have the world’s leading civilian killing -- therefore terrorist -- nation actually accusing its victims of terrorism in order to veil, ever so thinly, its own criminal, terrorist activities.

Now consider the horrendous wars waged over the past decade on ‘humanitarian’ pretexts and the flagrant WMD lies and it’s a wonder ‘legal’ extra-judicial killing hasn’t been introduced sooner!

It should now be evident to even the most dim-witted banjo-playing hillbilly that the farce that is the ‘LAW’ is nothing more than a State convenience to justify its crime but oppress the less influential in society -- Obama is merely the latest criminal errand boy to utilise the law in this way, as Martin Luther King once reminded us, “do not forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was legal” -- there is nothing new under the criminal sun, is there, Barack?

Perhaps I should emphasise that the executive is in no position to impose anything on anyone unless we the masses allow it, or is that too much reality to bear? God forbid that someone would remind us of our social responsibilities in these days of flagrant State crime and social paralysis. But I am not writing this for the current ‘dead loss’ generation but for history.

However, I am heartened by the fact that I am not alone in my outrage and offended civil sensibilities, others with similar values have also sounded warnings and made plain their discontent with these laws. I leave you with one such group to elaborate further on the absurdity we live in

today:

## **U.S. Set to Outline Justification for 'Targeted Assassination' Program**

- Common Dreams staff

The Obama administration will later today explain its legal justification for its 'targeted assassination' program, which allows the government to kill U.S. citizens anywhere in the world, the Associated Press is reporting.

The Associated Press reports that Attorney General Eric Holder will explain the legal backing for the program this afternoon at Northwestern University.

CNN adds:

One official familiar with the speech said it was doubtful Holder would mention by name Anwar al-Awlaki, who was targeted in a September drone attack. Another American who was active in Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), Samir Khan, was not the target of the strike but was with al-Awlaki and killed at the same time. [...]

Another official familiar with the speech confirmed the attorney general will discuss the legal framework on the use of lethal force. The official, who asked not to be identified because the speech is still under wraps, said the targeted-killing issue is just one aspect of a broad-ranging look at national security issues from a legal perspective.

Defense department lawyer Jeh Johnson said last month:

"Under well-settled legal principles, lethal force against a valid military objective, in an armed conflict, is consistent with the law of war and does not, by definition, constitute an assassination."

On February 1 the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Justice to demand that the US government release information about the government's targeted killing program.

Explaining its lawsuit, the ACLU wrote:

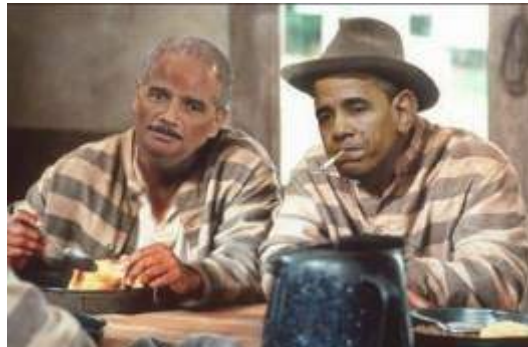
Our government's deliberate and premeditated killing of American terrorism suspects raises profound questions that ought to be the subject of public debate. Unfortunately the Obama administration has released very little information about the practice — its official position is that the targeted killing program is a state secret — and some of the information it has released has been misleading. [...]

Some officials, including President Obama, have spoken on the record about the program. They have publicly claimed responsibility for killing al-Awlaki, and they have more generally defended the government's right to kill citizens after a secret non-judicial process. Just last week, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta acknowledged on 60 Minutes that the U.S. can and does carry out targeted killings of U.S. citizens subject to the recommendations of the CIA Director and the Secretary of Defense and pursuant to the President's authorization. And this week, President Obama publicly defended the CIA targeted killing program in a live internet interview [starts at minute 26:30].

Glenn Greenwald wrote after the ACLU lawsuit was filed:

From a certain perspective, there's really only one point worth making about all of this: if you think about it, it is warped beyond belief that the ACLU has to sue the U.S. Government in order to force it to disclose its claimed legal and factual bases for assassinating U.S. citizens without charges, trial or due process of any kind. It's extraordinary enough that the Obama administration is secretly targeting citizens for execution-by-CIA; that they refuse even to account for what they are doing — even to the point of refusing to disclose their legal reasoning as to why they think the President possesses this power — is just mind-boggling. Truly: what more tyrannical power is there than for a government to target its own citizens for death — in total secrecy and with no checks — and then insist on the right to do so without even having to explain its legal and factual rationale for what it is doing? Could you even imagine what the U.S. Government and its media supporters would be saying about any other non-client-state country that asserted and exercised this power?

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***Attorney General Holder and Obama***

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