

Not In Our Name



STATEMENT OF CONSCIENCE AGAINST WAR AND REPRESSION

As **George W. Bush** bullies his way through his second term, let it not be said that people in the United States silently acquiesced in the face of this shameful coronation of war, greed, and intolerance. He does not speak for us. He does not represent us. He does not act in our name.

No election, whether fair or fraudulent, can legitimize criminal wars on foreign countries, torture, the wholesale violation of human rights, and the end of science and reason.

In our name, the Bush government justifies the invasion and occupation of Iraq on false pretenses, raining down destruction, horror, and misery, bringing death to more than 100,000 Iraqis. It sends our youth to destroy entire cities for the sake of so-called democratic elections, while intimidating and disenfranchising thousands of African American and other voters at home.

In our name, the Bush government holds in contempt international law and world opinion. It carries out torture and detentions without trial around the world and proposes new assaults on our rights of privacy, speech and assembly at home. It strips the rights of Arabs, Muslims and South Asians in the U.S., denies them legal counsel, stigmatizes and holds them without cause. Thousands have been deported.

As **new trial balloons** are floated about invasions of Syria, or Iran, or North Korea, about leaving the United Nations, about new "lifetime detention" policies, we say not in our name will we allow further crimes to be committed against nations or individuals deemed to stand in the way of the goal of unquestioned world supremacy.

Could we have imagined a few years ago that core principles such as the separation of church and state, due process, presumption of innocence, freedom of speech, and *habeas corpus* would be discarded so easily? Now, anyone can be declared an "enemy combatant" without meaningful redress or independent review by a President who is concentrating power in the executive branch. His choice for Attorney General is the legal architect of the torture that has been carried out in Guantánamo, Afghanistan, and Abu Ghraib.

The Bush government seeks to impose a narrow, intolerant, and political form of Christian fundamentalism as government policy. No longer on the margins of power, this extremist movement aims to strip women of their reproductive rights, to stoke hatred of gays and lesbians, and to drive a wedge between spiritual experience and scientific truth. We will not surrender to extremists our right to think. AIDS is not a punishment from God. Global warming is a real danger. Evolution happened. All people must be free to find meaning and sustenance in whatever form of religious or spiritual belief they choose. But religion can never be compulsory. These extremists may claim to make their own reality, but we will not allow them to make ours.

Millions of us worked, talked, marched, poll watched, contributed, voted, and did everything we could to defeat the Bush regime in the last election. This unprecedented effort brought forth new energy, organization, and commitment to struggle for justice. It would be a terrible mistake to let our failure to stop Bush in these ways lead to despair and inaction. On the contrary, this broad mobilization of people committed to a fairer, freer, more peaceful world must move forward. We cannot, we will not, wait until 2008. The fight against the second Bush regime has to start now.

The movement against the war in Vietnam never won a presidential election. But it blocked troop trains, closed induction centers, marched, spoke to people door to door – and it helped to stop a war. The Civil Rights Movement never tied its star to a presidential candidate; it sat in, freedom rode, fought legal battles, filled jailhouses – and changed the face of a nation.

We must change the political reality of this country by mobilizing the tens of millions who know in their heads and hearts that the Bush regime's "reality" is nothing but a nightmare for humanity. This will require creativity, mass actions and individual moments of courage. We must come together whenever we can, and we must act alone whenever we have to.

We draw inspiration from the soldiers who have refused to fight in this immoral war. We applaud the librarians who have refused to turn over lists of our reading, the high school students who have demanded to be taught evolution, those who brought to light torture by the U.S. military, and the massive protests that voiced international opposition to the war on Iraq. We affirm ordinary people undertaking extraordinary acts. We pledge to create community to back courageous acts of resistance. We stand with the people throughout the world who fight every day for the right to create their own future.

It is our responsibility to stop the Bush regime from carrying out this disastrous course. We believe history will judge us sharply should we fail to act decisively.

This statement of Conscience has been placed in many newspapers across the country including the Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle and the New York Times. To find out more and to sign on please go to Not In Our Name.org

SOA WATCH FOIA REQUEST DENIED BY THE PENTAGON

WASHINGTON - October 5 - The culture of secrecy surrounding the current presidential administration persisted this month when the Pentagon denied School of the Americas Watch's Freedom of Information Act request to obtain the name, rank, country of origin, and dates of students in attendance at the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation (formerly known as the U.S. Army School of the Americas). Despite 20-day reporting requirements, it took the Pentagon nine months to deny the request.

The Freedom of Information Act was enacted by Congress and signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1966. The FOIA was the first U.S. law to give Americans the right to access the records of federal agencies that are funded with their tax dollars. At the beginning of each fiscal year for the past several years, SOA Watch has filed a FOIA request with the U.S. government to obtain WHINSEC attendance information as part of our commitment to human rights monitoring. Continuing the policies of the U.S. Army School of the Americas (SOA), WHINSEC refuses to participate in any follow-up after students attend the military training facility, choosing to ignore the connections between student's actions and their training at the school.

As a result of previous FOIA requests, researchers at human rights organizations are able to access our extensive graduate database to inform Congress, media outlets, and the public about the numerous instances of SOA/WHINSEC graduates and instructors who have been implicated and convicted of human rights atrocities in Latin America. For example, researchers from SOA Watch matched the name of Colonel Francisco del Cid Diaz - commander of a unit that forcibly removed, beat and shot 16 residents from the "Las Hojas" community in El Salvador - with his attendance at the SOA in 1988 and 1991, and at WHINSEC in 2003.

This high profile massacre was cited in the annual U.S. State Department Human Rights Country Reports, and the OAS Inter-American Commission on Human Rights recommended that the Salvadoran government bring him to justice based on substantial evidence that del Cid Diaz gave the orders to execute the civilians. Despite this condemnation, del Cid Diaz was invited back to the school in 2003, subverting laws in place to prevent rewarding known human rights abusers with U.S taxpayer-funded military training.

Because of this instance and hundreds of others that make the numerous connections between the SOA/WHINSEC and human rights atrocities throughout Latin America, the SOA/WHINSEC and the Department of Defense continue to disrupt the efforts of human rights organizations to advocate for transparency and accountability for international crimes.

By refusing to grant FOIA requests regarding the basic statistics of the WHINSEC student population, WHINSEC and the Department of Defense will continue to admit known human rights abusers such as Colonel del Cid Diaz without any oversight or criticism of the screening process by human rights organizations. The culture of secrecy will continue to deepen.

More relevant than ever!! Let's **CLOSE DOWN THE SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS** **November 17-19, 2006**

Fort Benning, Georgia

When you stand at the gates of Fort Benning this November, you'll be standing together with thousands of people in Central and South America calling for an end to U.S. militarism and intervention and for the closure of the School of the Americas (SOA/WHINSEC).

On the weekend of November 18-19, 2006, simultaneous demonstrations will take place in Manta, Ecuador; in San Salvador, El Salvador; in Asunción, Paraguay; in Colombia; and at Fort Benning, Georgia!

Thousands of people will be raising their voices, calling for a world free of militarism and the SOA/WHINSEC.

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SOA Watch is a nonviolent grassroots movement that works through creative protest and resistance, legislative and media work to stand in solidarity with the people of Latin America, to close the SOA/WHINSEC and to change oppressive U.S. foreign policy that institutions like the SOA represent. We are grateful to our sisters and brothers throughout Latin America for their inspiration and the invitation to join them in their struggle for economic and social justice.



WHAT IS THE SOA?

The School of the Americas (SOA), in 2001 renamed the "Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation," is a combat training school for Latin American soldiers, located at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Initially established in Panama in 1946, it was kicked out of that country in 1984 under the terms of the Panama Canal Treaty. Former Panamanian President, Jorge Illueca, stated that the School of the Americas was the "biggest base for destabilization in Latin America."

The SOA, frequently dubbed the "School of Assassins," has left a trail of blood and suffering in every country where its graduates have returned.

Over its 59 years, the SOA has trained over 60,000 Latin American soldiers in counterinsurgency techniques, sniper training, commando and psychological warfare, military intelligence and interrogation tactics.

These graduates have consistently used their skills to wage a war against their own people.

Among those targeted by SOA graduates are educators, union organizers, religious workers, student leaders, and others who work for the rights of the poor.

Hundreds of thousands of Latin Americans have been tortured, raped, assassinated, "disappeared," massacred, and forced into refugee by those trained at the School of Assassins.



...THAT WAR IS NOT A SUITABLE RESPONSE TO CONFLICT.

For nearly 50 years Peace Action has worked for an environment where all are free from violence and war. We understand that long standing global conflicts require long-term solutions, and that US foreign policy has a lasting effect on the world. We are working to promote a new US foreign policy that is based on peaceful support for human rights and democracy, reducing the threat from weapons of mass destruction, and cooperation with the world community. We are against pre-emptive war, and call for a full withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. ...that every person has the right to live without the threat from nuclear weapons.

There are still over 30,000 nuclear weapons in the world. The US and Russia still have thousands of nuclear weapons, on hair trigger alert—ready to launch in minutes. While the Cold War may have ended, the nuclear threat has not. The only way to ensure that nuclear weapons will never be used - whether purposefully, or accidentally - is global abolition.

The U.S. must lead the way to a safer world by taking our weapons off hair trigger alert, halting our research and development of new nuclear weapons and disarming and demilitarizing our warhead stockpile of over 10,000 nuclear warheads. We can reduce the threat to the world posed by nuclear weapons, but we must start by getting serious about getting rid of our own weapons of mass destruction. ...that America has the resources to both protect and provide for its citizens.

As the Pentagon's budget soars to \$400 billion, 17% of American children live in poverty. Basic infrastructure is crumbling, school are using outdated textbooks, and millions of Americans are without basic health insurance.

For what the US will spend on the War in Iraq, 26,701,621 children could have attended a year of Head Start, we could have built 1,815,194 additional housing units for the poor, we could have hired 3,493,706 additional public school teachers for one year, and we could have provided 9,772,998 students four-year scholarships at public universities (source - National Priorities Project). We believe that these are priorities that should come before war.

WHAT WE DO AT PEACE ACTION...

We are the nation's largest grassroots Peace network, with over 28 state affiliates, and over 100 local chapters. We organize our grassroots network to place pressure on Congress and the Administration through write-in campaigns, internet actions, citizens lobbying and direct action. Through a close relationship with progressive members of Congress, we play a key role in devising strategies to move forward peace legislation, and, as a leading organizing member of United for Peace and Justice and the Win Without War coalition, we lend our expertise and large network to achieving common goals.

Through our Peace Voter awareness campaigns, we inform citizens about their choices for both local and national campaigns, by highlighting different candidates' stances on issues relating to peace. Our annual Congressional Voter Guide gives credit to those in Congress who voted for a peaceful future, while holding accountable those who voted for larger Pentagon budgets, spending tax dollars on nuclear weapons, and voted for wars of aggression and occupation.

PEACE ACTION YOUNGSTOWN OCTOBER, 2006 PROGRESSIVE PAPER

FROM THE EDITOR: I draw from many sources including regional writers, peace-action.org, comondreams.org, truthout.org, peace takes courage.com, counter punch.org, michael moore.com, Veterans Against the War, Mother Jones.com, Costs of war.com, Democracy Now, Jim Hightower.com, World Can't Wait.org and more.

Corporate owned media outlets are more likely to give you the Pentagon approved version of the war than the truth. Turn off the 24/7 coverage and tune into factual, balanced and complete sources from the above groups and other publications. Wanting an honest news source that isn't bought and paid for by corporate interests is not enough. To end the cycle of dependence on corporate news, you must support independent journalism. Think about it. We need your help.

We print 2000 copies; mail over 350 and distribute the remaining papers throughout the area. Actual costs average \$500 each issue for supplies, printing and postage/mailing.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT.

This affiliate of Peace Action for a Sane World is a 501 c3 tax exempt organization and exists through membership, donations, underwriters for this paper, volunteer work and hopefully, YOUR RESPONSE. Letters to the editor always appreciated.

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REFUSE & RESIST!

STOPPING A POLICE STATE: A POCKET GUIDE

We have seen the round-up and secret detention of those from Muslim and South Asian countries. We have seen the President order the military to seize citizens and hold them incommunicado and without charges. We have seen free speech marginalized and protest banned from public spaces. We have seen the FBI questioning people planning protests at the political conventions. We have seen the Patriot Act give police agents vast new powers of secret search and surveillance.

We have seen a campaign to impose fundamentalist religious social norms. And we have even heard government agencies talking about plans to postpone national elections. For many in this country, police state conditions are not new. And since 9/11 millions more are threatened. It won't do to count on others to do something and hope that it will all go away. No! We see where things are heading. The time to resist is now.

1. Build Communities of Resistance.

All across the country, local governments are refusing to cooperate with the Patriot Act and people are beginning to organize. Hang-outs, house parties, book clubs, film series, discussion groups, open mics and other cultural scenes build communities of trust as well as the networks to read the alternative press, discuss current events, raise money, organize defense committees, and promote active resistance.

2. Stand with Those Under Attack.

The government seeks to scapegoat whole sections of people and go after the leadership of any real resistance to their plans for empire. Yet all across the country people went to the aid of their Muslim neighbors and stood watch at local mosques after 9/11. The government's plan is to pick us off one at a time. Our response must be to recognize that "It's all one attack" and give aid and shelter all those under attack.

3. Don't Talk.

Never answer the questions of police or government agents beyond identifying yourself where required by law. You should then state that you do not consent to any search and that you wish to be represented by an attorney. Do not say anything else, even if agents threaten you with a grand jury subpoena or promise to leave you alone if you "cooperate." Recently activists at Drake University were called before a Grand Jury to give testimony about an antiwar conference on campus. They refused and public outcry forced the government to withdraw the subpoenas.

4. Defend Every Legal Right.

At the same time that the government invades other countries in the name of democracy, there is a constant chipping away at every legal right in this country. Follow the example of those who have videotaped and exposed beatings by police. Every denial of a permit, every arrest, every police raid on dissenters, every wire-tap, and every grand jury subpoena must be fought both in court and in the court of public opinion. This is part of the battle. Don't let the police and media decide what is "legitimate protest" and who are "legitimate protesters."

5. Handle Information Responsibly.

Choosing to keep your personal information and that of your organization confidential does not mean you have something to hide. It means you know what kind of country we live in! Librarians in California now destroy the records of what books people read to protect their patrons from government snoops. Unnecessary records should be destroyed, the audience at meetings should not be videotaped, e-mail should be encrypted with PGP, and vital information should be duplicated and stored in a secure location.

6. Oppose the Climate of Fear and Compulsory Patriotism.

It is the policies of the U.S. government that have put the American people in harm's way. The leaders of the "new Rome" constantly seek to ensnare us in a "devil's bargain": a false promise to keep us safe if only we will give up all our rights to privacy and dissent, and hand over to them our allegiance for their war plans. In Madison, WI, the local school board refused a call from the federal government after 9/11 to compel school children to recite the Pledge of Allegiance in unison.

7. Be Part of the National Resistance Network.

In Refuse & Resist! some of us strongly believe in the principles and values to which this country has historically aspired, while others of us find oppression and injustice to be rooted in those same principles. But we are united as one in our determination to build a culture, climate and community of resistance against the current Ashcroft police-state measures with its imposition of Christian fundamentalist social norms.

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ORWELL ROLLS IN HIS GRAVE

By Ron Kaufman

"All over Oceania this morning there were irrepressible spontaneous demonstrations when workers marched out of factories and offices and paraded through the streets with banners voicing their gratitude to Big Brother for the new, happy life which his wise leadership has bestowed upon us.

"For the moment [Winston] had shut his ears to the remoter noises and was listening to the stuff that streamed out of the telescreen. It appeared that there had even been demonstrations to thank Big Brother for raising the chocolate ration to twenty grams a week. And only yesterday, he reflected, it had been announced that the ration was to be reduced to twenty grams a week. Was it possible that they could swallow that, after only twenty-four hours? Yes, they swallowed it . . . with the stupidity of an animal."

— from *Nineteen Eighty-Four* by George Orwell

Orwell Rolls In His Grave is an excellent film that, unfortunately, nobody will ever get to see. This independent documentary, directed by Robert Kane Pappas, takes a deeply disturbing look at how mass media in the United States is controlled by only a handful of large corporations. The movie's premise is that these large corporations have one goal: to get larger and control the system that reports the news. To this end, big media has aligned itself with the conservative Republican political minority and has pushed their selfish agenda in order to gain political favor and build fortunes.

Punctuated with quotes and phrases from George Orwell's novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, this film takes issues that many people may already suspect to be true and presents it with sound and video. The movie is a good presentation of how American society has turned into an oligarchy of frightening proportions. In some sense, *Orwell Rolls In His Grave* is a pretty depressing film. To think that the wealthiest one-tenths of one percent of the country is in control of the largest corporations, the executive and judicial branches of government and the mass media is something that challenges our notions of freedom and democracy.

Why are some news stories dropped? Why are some news stories not reported on at all? The documentary presents evidence that the 1980 and 2000 U.S. presidential elections were won by Republicans through dirty tricks and media spin and control. The movie investigates the 1980 "October Surprise" when hostages held for more than 400 days in Iran were detained longer until after the presidential election. Director Pappas presents evidence that representatives from the Ronald Reagan campaign met with representatives from Iran to ensure that the hostages would not be released until after the election. The hostages were released the day of Reagan's inauguration. After a congressional commission turned back any accusation of wrongdoing, the story and scandal was never reported further.

The movie also shows the scandalous situation during the 2000 election which led to many votes not being counted or tallied incorrectly in Florida. With the rest of the country divided, Florida became the pivotal state in which the presidential election would be decided. The election between George W. Bush and Al Gore was so close in Florida, that the Florida State Supreme Court ordered a manual recount of all ballots to determine the winner. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, stopped the recount when it looked like Gore may win. The movie suggests that Bush "stole" the election and the media essentially overlooks this political maneuvering.

Orwell Rolls In His Grave is an acerbic political movie. It ties in big media with politics and specifically targets the Republican party and the Neo-Conservative (neocon) movement.

The creators of the film present a lot of evidence linking politics and big media corporations, however it glosses over some other issues which may have made a more balanced report. For example, the 1980 "October Surprise" got a lot of press 6 years later when the public learned that the Reagan administration actually did make an arms deal with the Iranian government for the release of the hostages — it then took the money it made during this illegal sale and sent it to rebels in Nicaragua. This scandal became known as the Iran-Contra Affair and the resulting reports and congressional hearings were news for nearly two years.

The movie also gives only glancing reference to the Clinton administration's approval of media deregulation. The Telecommunications Act of 1996 was the first huge step toward allowing media consolidation. Democrats are not innocent in allowing media consolidation.

However, looking past the political twisting of the film, it does present many compelling ideas about how media has been altered and sculpted to fit in with the agenda of large corporations. Many times during the film, it shows the Big Ten media companies as represented by The Nation online. Interviews with the Center for Public Integrity founder Charles Lewis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign professor Robert McChesney, New York University professor Mark Crispin Miller, and Vermont Congressman Bernie Sanders and many others add interesting perspectives about the creation of the media empire.

Essentially, those who own the media decide what gets presented and reported. The two main examples are Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation and the Mays' Clear Channel Communications. News Corp, owner of Fox Television, Fox News, DirecTV and others unabashedly pushes its pro-Republican, pro-war, right-wing agenda. Clear Channel, owned by the Mays family from San Antonio, Texas, has close ties to President George Bush since his days as governor of Texas.

Clear Channel owns 1200 radio stations, 36 television stations, and The Clear Channel Music Group which manages 70 percent of concert ticket revenue in the U.S. The documentary film presents evidence that both organizations do whatever they can to push their political agendas. Since they own the media outlets controlling what news hits the airwaves is easy. For example, the film mentions that News Corp was the first organization to announce George Bush as the winner of the 2000 election and is the most pro-Iraq War news organization. It also notes that Clear Channel stopped playing songs by the Dixie Chicks who made statements critical of the Bush administration.

The film included video of actor Tim Robbins' speech at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. in April 2003. Robbins talked about the policies of Clear Channel. "A famous middle-aged rock-and-roller called me last week to thank me for speaking out against the war, only to go on to tell me that he could not speak himself because he fears repercussions from Clear Channel. 'They promote our concert appearances,' he said. 'They own most of the stations that play our music. I can't come out against this war.'

"A chill wind is blowing in this nation," said Robbins. "A message is being sent through the White House and its allies in talk radio and Clear Channel . . . If you oppose this administration, there can and will be ramifications."

(Though not discussed, the movie also gives rationality to the recent move by Clear Channel in April 2004 to permanently take anti-Bush radio personality, Howard Stern, off its stations.

"A chill wind is blowing in this nation," said Tim Robbins.

"A message is being sent through the White House and its allies in talk radio and Clear Channel. If you oppose this administration, there can and will be ramifications."



The company said its reason was a fine from the Federal Communications Commission for indecency. Stern contends that the Republican-controlled FCC wants him off the air because of his political views.)

Orwell Rolls In His Grave is a well done film that presents the Orwellian notions of "doublespeak," "big brother" and "the endless war" in a contemporary context.

Ironically, its message of corporate media control and the loss of free speech in America will never get any exposure. The film is critical of the very companies it needs for effective distribution.

Politics and conspiracy theories aside, the film makes a strong case against the consolidation of media companies. In the end, the film polarizes the United States into "us" versus "them" — this being "the general public" versus "the corporate elite." The public may eventually learn of this viewpoint, but one thing is certain. It will never be reported in the media.

As Mark Crispin Miller explains in the film, individuals may get headlines and specific companies may be investigated in newspapers and TV, but the system will never be scrutinized.

Big media will never admit that it has influence over our world and corporations may allow airtime for parts of the truth, but the whole truth will never get broadcast.

"It's clear to me, two things:

that almost every square inch of the Earth's surface is soaked with the tears and blood of the innocent, and it's not God's doing. It's our doing. That's human malpractice.

Don't chalk it up to God. Every time people say, when they see the innocent suffering, every time they lift their eyes to heaven and say, "God, how could you let this happen?" it's well to remember that exactly at that moment God is asking exactly the same question of us: "How could you let this happen?" So you have to take responsibility."

— Rev. William Sloane Coffin Jr.

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'Jimi Hendrix of the Violin'

Historical Roots and Patterns of Conflict

THE US, ISRAEL AND LEBANON

By DAVID GREEN

October 7 / 8, 2006 CounterPunch.org The destructive and lethal forces unleashed this past summer by the United States and Israel upon Lebanon are not surprising in light of their historical roots in at least four patterns of conflict:

First, the unwillingness of Israel and its American patrons to resolve the question of the Palestinian refugees and provide for a viable Palestinian state, but rather the exploitation of this conflict to intimidate other Arab states in the region, especially Lebanon.

Second, Israel's territorial ambitions in southern Lebanon, especially regarding water, as well as the economic challenge posed to Israel by a peaceful and thriving Lebanon as a center of finance and tourism.

Third, Israel's doctrine of massive and illegal retaliation against civilian populations in response to Arab terrorism and resistance, as a means of asserting unquestioned military superiority in the region and preventing the establishment of a deterrent force that would necessitate good faith negotiation.

Fourth, Israel's military alliance with the U.S., and its willingness to serve American interests in the latter's efforts to dominate the region's energy resources, as defined more recently by both neoconservative and neoliberal doctrines that have engendered the destruction of not only Lebanon but Afghanistan, Iraq, and Gaza; and have also justified the increased concentration of wealth and economic inequality in both Israel and the U.S.

The Palestinian Question:

Palestinian refugees have resided in Lebanon since the 1948 war. After the 1967 war, Israel continued bombing refugee camps in southern Lebanon. Ron David (*Arabs and Israel for Beginners*) quotes *London Guardian* correspondent Irene Beeson (writing in 1978) that "150 or more towns and villages in South Lebanon . . . have been repeatedly savaged by the Israeli armed forces since 1968." In 1970, PLO leadership was driven from Jordan to Lebanon. After the 1973 war, Yasser Arafat began to signal that he would accept a two-state solution to the Palestinian problem, building on an interpretation of UN resolution 242 that called for the formation of a Palestinian state comprising the West Bank and Gaza.

According to Noam Chomsky (*Middle East Illusions*):

"The issue reached the UN Security Council in January 1976, with a resolution incorporating the language of UN 242 but abandoning its rejectionism, now calling for a Palestinian state alongside Israel. The resolution was supported by virtually the entire world, including the major Arab states, the PLO, Europe, the nonaligned countries, and the Soviet Union, which was in the mainstream of international diplomacy throughout.

"Israel refused to attend the UN session. Instead, it bombed Lebanon once again, killing more than 50 villagers in what it called a 'preventive' strike, presumably retaliation against U.N. diplomacy . . . The United States vetoed the resolution, as it did again in 1980."

Chomsky (*The Fateful Triangle*) documents that Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, long-planned and killing 20,000 Lebanese, mostly civilians, grew out of fears of a peaceful resolution: "The PLO was gaining respectability thanks to its preference for negotiations over terror. The Israeli government's hope, therefore, was to compel 'the stricken PLO' to 'return to its earlier terrorism,' thus 'undercutting the danger' of negotiations." As such, this was a "war for the (illegal) settlements."

The background for the recent American-Israeli destruction of Lebanon was, of course, Israel's relentless starving and bombing of Gaza (with American weapons), beginning in its current intensified form after the election of Hamas early this year, with an escalation well before Israel's kidnapping of two Palestinian civilians on June 24th, followed the next day by the capture of an Israeli soldier which "precipitated" full-scale Israeli bombardment. While Hezbollah's capture and killing of Israeli soldiers two weeks later must also be seen in the context of six years of border violations since Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon in 2000 (with a ratio of 10 to one in favor of Israeli violations), it was arguably also a response in solidarity with Israel's assault on Gaza. Both Hamas and Hezbollah have legitimacy as religious, populist, and nationalist resistance movements in a Middle East dominated by American-approved authoritarian regimes.

As such, they threaten American/Israeli hegemony if they become viable democratic actors and legitimate negotiating partners.

Israeli Ambitions in and Competition with Lebanon

Israel's long-term territorial ambitions are discussed in the diaries of the second Israeli Prime Minister, Moshe Sharett (1954-56), in accounts of conflicts with his predecessor David Ben-Gurion. These diaries form the basis for Livia Rokach's *Israel's Sacred Terrorism*.

Rokach writes:

"The 1982 'operation,' as well as its predecessor, the 'Litani Operation' of 1978, were part of the long-standing Zionist strategy for Lebanon and Palestine. That strategy, formulated and applied during the 1950s, had been envisaged at least four decades earlier, and attempts to implement it are still being carried out three decades later. On November 6, 1918, a committee of British mandate officials and Zionist leaders put forth a suggested northern boundary for a Jewish Palestine 'from the North Litani River up to Banias.' (A 1919 proposal emphasized the 'vital importance of controlling all water resources up to their sources.'")

In the 1960s, as Ron David reminds us, Beirut was the "Paris of the East," a financial center with a tourist boom. In December 1968, Israel bombed the Beirut airport, destroying 13 civilian airliners in a "retaliatory raid" in response to an attack by two terrorists belonging to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine at the Athens airport that killed one Israeli. The UN Security Council condemned the attack, but as David suggests, "Lebanese tourism nosedived; Israel's tourism went up, and up." The Lebanese economy was devastated by civil war (1975-90) and Israeli invasions (1978, 1982).

In this context, it's worth noting the comments of two Lebanese businessmen interviewed on *Democracy Now*.

Georges Hanna, manager of a factory for prefab housing: "They hit everything: 25,000 square meter coverage area, factories, all of them damaged. We think it's about — they have also some factories that made the same products like us, and they made this attack to eliminate us from the market."

And Michel Waked, manager of a larger dairy factory: "You know, this is the third time our factory get destroyed. In '82, the same thing happened. It's not the first time. So how can you consider Israeli as a friend, or whatever? You always consider Israel the enemy. And the only dairy who can compete with them is us."

Among other things, the destruction of Lebanon can be seen as a kind of state-sponsored neoliberal gangsterism.

Massive and Disproportionate Retaliation Against Civilians

The first notorious example of Israel's doctrine of massive retaliation against civilians was at the Jordanian village of Qibya in 1953, reviewed by Walid Khalidi in an article also based upon Sharett's diary.

Ariel Sharon's Unit 101, under orders from Moshe Dayan, responded to the murder of an Israeli mother and her two children by infiltrators into Israel by blowing up 45 houses and killing 69 civilians, two-thirds of them women and children.

Israel's implementation of this policy based on a racist "language of force" (directed at Arabs who stand accused of understanding no other) does not necessarily require a clear provocation, as in 1982, when the assassination of the Israeli ambassador in London by the Abu Nidal group (sworn enemies of the PLO) provided the pretext for a long-planned invasion into Lebanon, literally a "war against peace" to drive out the PLO, which had scrupulously observed a truce for nearly one year. Nor does the initial action have to victimize Israeli civilians for Israel to "retaliate" primarily against Arab civilians, as recent events in both Gaza and Lebanon demonstrate.

In *The Fateful Triangle*, Chomsky quotes remarks by General Mordechai Gur regarding the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, as summarized by military analyst Ze'ev Schiff: "In South Lebanon we struck the civilian population consciously, because they deserved it . . . the Army has never distinguished civilian (from military) targets . . . but purposely attacked civilian targets even when Israeli settlements had not been struck."

U.S.-Israel Military Alliance

The U.S.-Israel military alliance can be traced to the early 1960s, and has been global in nature, especially regarding the support for terrorism in Latin America in the 1970s and 80s. With the fall of the Shah of Iran in 1979, Israel became even more important as a protector of American interests in the Middle East. This alliance has intensified during recent years with the neoconservative Project for a New American Century, 9/11, and the re-declaration of the 1980s "war on terror" by the Bush administration. The promotion of military solutions and of fear in the general population in both countries directly relates to transfers of wealth to military-industrial sectors. Both countries are thus beset by a vicious cycle of fear, war, and widespread economic desperation, for which invaded and occupied peoples have paid the highest price.

Regarding the specifics of U.S. support for Israel's invasion of Lebanon, Stephen Zunes writes:

"There is increasing evidence that Israel instigated a disastrous war on Lebanon largely at the behest of the United States. The Bush administration was set on crippling Hezbollah, the radical Shiite political movement that maintains a sizable block of seats in the Lebanese parliament. Taking advantage of the country's democratic opening after the forced departure of Syrian troops last year, Hezbollah defied U.S. efforts to democratize the region on American terms. The populist party's unwillingness to disarm its militia as required by UN resolution-and the inability of the pro-Western Lebanese government to force them to do so-led the Bush administration to push Israel to take military action."

CALL FOR MASSIVE SIT-IN IN D.C.



WE WANT OUR COUNTRY BACK AND THE TROOPS HOME FROM IRAQ MASSIVE SIT-IN, WHITE HOUSE NOVEMBER 7TH AND 8TH

Oct 8th, 2006 *A message from Cindy Sheehan:*

Good comes from the bottom up—crap rolls down hill. I am tired of getting crapped on by our government—when will it be enough for you? We are covered with crap and our leaders aren't going to clean it up—we have to.

[Gold Star Families for Peace](#) is planning on convening on the White House on Election Day and the day after (Nov. 7 & 8).

We hope that there are enough Americans who are willing to stand up and be counted with us to demonstrate to BushCo and Congress, Inc. that we are tired of having our rights taken away from us faster than our bombs destroyed Babylon. We are tired of having our young people die and kill innocent people to enhance corporate America's bottom line. We are tired of the constant drip, drip, drip of the wearing away of everything that we hold dear.

I withdrew my consent to be governed by maniacs long ago. I withdraw my consent to be hauled off to Guantanamo and be stashed away for matriotically dissenting from this crime-ridden regime. Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired of the corruption and heartache? Show your discontent with us.

Vote **absentee** so your vote will have a better chance of being counted and join Gold Star Families for Peace and other prominent peace groups and organizations in our continuing quest to end the illegal and immoral occupation of Iraq and hold our government accountable.

If the Republicans steal another election, it is time for we the people to stand up (or sit down) to demonstrate that we are finally not taking corrupt and illegitimate elections anymore. We need to surround the White House by the tens of thousands those days.

But equally important, if a miracle occurs and the Democrats take back one or both Houses of Congress, we also need to be out in great numbers to remind them that we will hold them to the same standards of peace with justice that we are about to hold the Republicans to.

This will be a non-permitted event. It is time that we also take back our First Amendment rights to peaceably gather, exercise our freedoms of speech and to petition our government for redress of wrong.

War is over if we want it and WE are the ones we have been waiting for. Come and make history with us by being the checks and balances on our government that are so sorely needed! Or organize sit-ins in your community if you can't make it to DC.

Go to [Gold Star Families for Peace](#) for more information. Or email: CampCaseyMom@yahoo.com

THE US, ISRAEL AND LEBANON Rhetoric and Reality in the "War on Terror"

As American and Israeli efforts to control events in the Middle East become increasingly problematic, there are increased efforts to re-cast the conflict in terms of a "clash of civilizations" between "Judeo-Christians" and "Islamofascists." Such propaganda is obviously intended to invoke both Nazi Germany and the Cold War, reframing power-driven conflicts over land and resources as an essentialized global conflict of culture and religion.

But the ironies inherent in this propaganda may portend changes in violent historical patterns. The Bush and Olmert administrations have proved to be corrupt and deceitful; the relation between their rhetoric and reality evokes none other than fascist propagandists and Pravda. Hezbollah and Hamas have proved to be incorruptible popular movements, unrelated to al-Qaeda, that rightly stand in opposition to the Palestinian Authority, the government of Lebanon, and Israel.

Meanwhile, the religious subplot in the secular Jewish State evokes Jacob Talmon's 1965 assertion (quoted by Chomsky in *Middle East Illusions*) that "the Rabbinate (in Israel) is rapidly developing into a firmly institutionalized church imposing an exacting discipline on its members. The State . . . has given birth to an established Church."

But the religious Jew stays at home or in the illegal settlements while the secular Jew is conscripted to fight in an American/Israeli war for oil and hegemony that targets civilians and infrastructure, and now invites serious retaliation against his community.

One possibility to be hoped for is that the secular Jewish-Israeli conscript and impoverished American "volunteer" will come to see no future in all of this, and realize that their respective states are also (and just as fundamentally) at war against their own citizens.

David Green lives in Champaign, IL. He can be reached at: davegreen84@yahoo.com

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Tomgram: David Swanson, *The Impeachment Moment*
If you've been around long enough, you've lived through moments — there were a couple of striking ones in the Vietnam era — when all the collective, practical wisdom of pundits and policy makers about what is possible in this world seems to fall away and suddenly the previously inconceivable enters the mainstream. The next thing you know, it's a commonplace and everybody is proudly ready to take credit for making it so. That was the case when it came to the issue of the impeachment of Richard Nixon back in 1973. Will it, in the near future, be true again when it comes to George W. Bush (and Dick Cheney)?

In the last years, impeachment has been the all-American solution that could not speak its name in the vicinity of Washington DC or anywhere in the mainstream media, even as support for it grew among Americans generally. But we may be at the edge of a new moment, judging by the ever-unfolding Mark Foley affair, the ensuing turmoil in the Republican Party, the muffling of the presidential voice, the latest polls, and even a threatened reversal in oil prices. So it seems the perfect moment at TomDispatch for David Swanson, who last wrote about "trophy photos" in Iraq, but has put his prodigious energies into the issue of impeachment, to take up the subject. Tom Dispatch

IMPEACHMENT ANYONE?

THE CASE FOR TAKING THE TAPE OFF OUR MOUTHS

By David Swanson

[This piece is based on seven new books on impeachment, all briefly discussed in a final note.]

Never before has the system of government established by the U.S. Constitution been as seriously threatened; never before has the built-in remedy for the sort of threat we face been as badly needed; never before have we had as good an opportunity to use that remedy exactly as it was intended.

Congress has never impeached a President and removed him from office. Once, with Richard M. Nixon, impeachment proceedings forced a resignation. Twice, with Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton, impeachment proceedings led to acquittals. On a few other occasions, Congressional efforts to advance articles of impeachment have had legal and political results. These have always benefited the political party that advanced impeachment. This was even true in the case of the Republicans' unpopular impeachment of Clinton, during which the Republicans lost far fewer seats than the norm for a majority party at that point in its tenure. Two years later, they lost seats in the Senate, which had acquitted, but maintained their strength in the House, with representatives who had led the impeachment charge winning big. (This point — little noted but important indeed — was made to me recently by John Nichols, author of the forthcoming book, *The Genius of Impeachment*.)

In every past case, impeachment efforts were driven by members of Congress or other Washington political players, sometimes with support from the media. The public got behind Nixon's impeachment, but only after the proceedings had revealed massive presidential crimes. The public never got behind Clinton's impeachment, despite saturation news coverage and widespread support among political power players. In the case of George W. Bush's impeachment, with the media and both parties in Congress opposed to it, public support is just about all there is — so far. In past cases, impeachment has either focused on trivial offenses or on crimes that were serious but not tied to the administration's major foreign policy decisions or to policies in which Congress was complicit. Clinton was impeached for lying under oath about his sex life — clearly a crime but not bribery, treason, or a "high crime or misdemeanor" (an old British phrase meaning an abuse of the political system by a high office holder), and so not actually an impeachable offense. Nixon was nearly impeached for obstruction of justice, warrantless spying, refusing to produce information subpoenaed by Congress, lying to the public, and other abuses of power, but not for his secret and illegal bombing of Cambodia.

For all the reasons Nixon was nearly impeached, George W. Bush could be impeached too. He has openly engaged in illegal, unconstitutional, warrantless spying, and — while Congress has not yet used subpoenas — Bush has obstructed its investigations, refused to comply with Freedom of Information Act requests, and broken a variety of laws in the course of exacting retribution against whistleblowers, producing false reports, and establishing a regime of secrecy of a sort that Nixon could only dream about.

Bush has lied to the public about the warrantless spying program at the National Security Agency (NSA), the war in Iraq, the kinds of warnings he was given before hurricane Katrina arrived, and numerous other issues. While Nixon made secret audio tapes in the White House which, when discovered, doubled as evidence, this time there is video — of Bush being warned prior to Katrina and claiming he was not warned, of Bush assuring us he was not engaged in warrantless spying and brazenly asserting that he will continue to spy without warrants, of Bush warning us about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction as well as Saddam's supposed ties to the 9/11 attacks and of Bush claiming he did no such thing, of Bush claiming the U.S. does not condone torture and of the torture victims.

Bush's administration has even bribed journalists and manufactured phony news stories at home as well as in Iraq in order to deceive the public. Congressman John Conyers has introduced bills to censure both the President and Vice President Cheney for their refusal to turn over information, while Senator Russ Feingold has introduced a bill to censure Bush for his illegal spying programs.

THOUSANDS NATIONWIDE PROTEST BUSH

by Lubna Takruri

Oct 6, 2006 *Associated Press* WASHINGTON - Hundreds of people called the Bush administration's policies a crime and held up yellow police tape in front of the White House on Thursday amid a nationwide day of protest against the president.

The 500 demonstrators were among many who gathered for similar events in more than 200 cities to protest Bush on issues ranging from global warming to the war in Iraq. "We are turning the corner in bringing forward a mass movement of resistance to drive out the Bush regime," said organizer Travis Morales with the activist group World Can't Wait.

Some dressed in costume, including a hooded prisoner in an orange jumpsuit, a devilish rendition of President Bush and two grim reapers. One man wore a red cheerleader outfit with "Radical" emblazoned on the jersey.

The demonstrators held up yellow police tape along a three-block stretch in front of the White House.

Thousands of protesters clogged New York City's streets as they marched from the United Nations headquarters. Some people lay down in the middle of the street, while others carried signs saying "Expose 9/11" and "This war should be over." They also handed out fliers reading, "Drive out the Bush regime." Lydia Sugarman, 82, of Manhattan, said she believed in the power of demonstrating. "That's how we got our civil rights," she said. "If we didn't protest we wouldn't be Americans."

White House spokeswoman Nicole Guillemard defended the administration's Iraq policy.

"Our constitution guarantees the right to peacefully express one's views. The men and women in our military are fighting to bring the people of Iraq these same rights and freedoms," she said. "The president believes it is important to stay on the offense in Iraq."

World Can't Wait was founded in 2005 and has organized several marches since then, including a nationwide protest coinciding with Bush's State of the Union address in January, according to the group's Web site. Supporters listed on the site include Edward Asner, Ed Begley Jr. and Jane Fonda and activists such as the Rev. Jesse Jackson, the Rev. Al Sharpton and Cindy Sheehan.

But charging Bush with such Nixonian offenses would only scrape the surface of the criminal record that is motivating the popular movement for impeachment — and impeachment was always meant to be a popular movement. The drafters of the Constitution placed impeachment in the hands of the House of Representatives because they considered that body — with its members facing reelection every two years — closest to the people.

In theory, a democratic system with impeachment at its heart creates an obvious conflict in the wake of any (honest and credible) presidential election. How could the people's representatives impeach, and ask the Senate to consider removing from office, a president whom the people have just elected? In practice at present, quite a different conflict takes center stage: How can a Congress complicit in many of this President's criminal acts be asked to impeach him? Perhaps by focusing on crimes Congress was not complicit in, by allowing Congressional representatives to plead ignorance or remorse, and by electing new representatives better tuned to the present will of the people.

And how do we get the media to cover investigations of crimes the media too have been complicit in? Same answer (minus, of course, the elections).

Let's begin by considering the case for impeaching and removing from office George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. Quite a few organizations and individuals have, in fact, already drafted articles of impeachment. Though no two lists are the same, there is a great deal of overlap. There are some crimes that appear on almost every list and that seem to be driving the public demand for accountability. Many of the best lists are in recently published and forthcoming books. (See note at end of article.)

Impeachment for What?

Every list of impeachable offenses includes tangential references to other impeachable offenses. The list seems inexhaustible, but here's a quick run-down of the main possible charges:

The illegal war in Iraq is at or near the top of everyone's list. Sometimes, the emphasis is on the illegality of an aggressive war; sometimes, on the fraud used to sell the war to Congress and the public; sometimes, on the absence of a proper Congressional declaration of war.

Lying to Congress is a felony. Lying to the public is an impeachable offense — and one brought against Nixon. Initiating an aggressive war is the highest crime under treaties that are part of international and U.S. law.



Protesters dressed as from left, Dick Cheney, President Bush, Condoleezza Rice, and Donald Rumsfeld stand in front of the federal building in downtown Seattle as they protest against the war in Iraq and Bush administration Thursday, Oct. 5, 2006. The protest was part of a national protest effort that saw demonstrations in other cities across the United States. (AP Photo/Ted S. Warren)

In Seattle, a person carrying a rifle wrapped in a blanket was among five people arrested. The charges against the other people ranged from resisting arrest to assault. "They're still investigating to determine what that person was doing with the rifle," said Seattle Police spokeswoman Debra Brown.

The march through Seattle's streets was peaceful as protesters chanted, waved signs and wore costumes mocking administration officials. One woman dressed as a pageant queen with a sash that read, "I Miss America."

In Portland, Ore., at least 10 people were detained because they did not follow police instruction to get out of the street during a protest march through downtown. Cathie Kent, a police spokeswoman, said one person, 26-year-old Christopher Knudtsen, also faced a charge of attempted assault for trying to attack a police officer.

An estimated 800 people, mostly college age, chanted "Impeach Bush" and carried signs, including one that read: "We Can't Wait for 2008."

Hundreds marched in Los Angeles, carrying caskets draped in U.S. flags to a federal courthouse, where protesters held a mock marriage of church and state.

In Asheville, N.C., dozens of University of North Carolina students walked out of classes. In Chicago, thousands of people flooded Michigan Avenue waving anti-Bush signs. "We are at a defining moment for this country and our people," said World Can't Wait's Rick Strandlof in Reno, Nev.

Launching a war without proper Congressional approval is a violation of the War Powers Act of 1973.

Misusing government funds to launch a war is a separate crime, committed by Bush when he ordered troops moved to Iraq and began bombing raids prior to Congress's dubious authorization to use force.

On some lists are the various war crimes that have accompanied the war, including the targeting of civilians, journalists, hospitals, and ambulances, the use of antipersonnel weapons in densely settled urban areas, and the use of illegal weapons, including white phosphorous, depleted uranium, and a new version of napalm used in Mark 77 firebombs.

High on most lists are also unlawful detentions and torture. The arbitrary detention of Americans, of legal residents, and of non-Americans without due process, without charge, and without access to counsel is illegal under U.S. and international law, and unconstitutional as well. In case anyone doubted this fact, the Supreme Court recently ruled on it. The highest body in our judicial branch of government has essentially declared Bush a criminal, and yet Congress recently acted, through the Military Commissions Act of 2006, to provide the President with retroactive immunity for some of his acts in these areas.

Bush has authorized the torture of thousands of captives, resulting in some cases in death, and sought to evade responsibility by redefining acts commonly considered torture out of the category of torture. He has agreed to let suspects be kidnapped off the streets of cities in other countries, allowed prisoners to be hidden from the International Committee of the Red Cross, shipped people under U.S. control to third nations or a network of secret U.S. prisons to be tortured. The Constitution, international treaties that are part of U.S. law, and other U.S. laws ban torture. When, in the McCain Amendment to a Department of Defense bill last January, Congress redundantly re-banned torture, the President signed the bill but added a signing statement explaining that he would not obey it.

On every impeachment list as well is the illegal National Security Agency spying to which Bush has publicly (and proudly) confessed, and which a federal court has ruled criminal. Yet, to this day, it goes on unchecked. Bush lied to the public and Congress about his illegal spying programs for years. Congress has passed bills cutting off funding for the programs, but Bush countermanded these with signing statements. (continued on page 15)

“HOW THE 2004 ELECTION WAS STOLEN”

Republicans prevented more than 350,000 voters in Ohio from casting ballots or having their votes counted — enough to have put John Kerry in the White House. —**ROBERT F. KENNEDY JR.**

ROLLING STONE, APRIL, 2006,
Key points from the article.

After carefully examining the evidence, I've become convinced that the president's party mounted a massive, coordinated campaign to subvert the will of the people in 2004. Across the country, Republican election officials and party stalwarts employed a wide range of illegal and unethical tactics to fix the election. A review of the available data reveals that in Ohio alone, at least 357,000 voters, the overwhelming majority of them Democratic, were prevented from casting ballots or did not have their votes counted in 2004 — more than enough to shift the results of an election decided by 118,601 votes. In what may be the single most astounding fact from the election, one in every four Ohio citizens who registered to vote in 2004 showed up at the polls only to discover that they were not listed on the rolls, thanks to GOP efforts to stem the unprecedented flood of Democrats eager to cast ballots) And that doesn't even take into account the troubling evidence of outright fraud, which indicates that upwards of 80,000 votes for Kerry were counted instead for Bush. That alone is a swing of more than 160,000 votes — enough to have put John Kerry in the White House

Then there is the issue of the exit polls.

On the evening of the vote, reporters at each of the major networks were briefed by pollsters at 7:54 p.m. Kerry, they were informed, had an insurmountable lead and would win by a rout: at least 309 electoral votes to Bush's 174, with fifty-five too close to call. In London, Prime Minister Tony Blair went to bed contemplating his relationship with President-elect Kerry.

As the last polling stations closed on the West Coast, exit polls showed Kerry ahead in ten of eleven battleground states — including commanding leads in Ohio and Florida — and winning by a million and a half votes nationally. The exit polls even showed Kerry breathing down Bush's neck in supposed GOP strongholds Virginia and North Carolina. Against these numbers, the statistical likelihood of Bush winning was less than one in 450,000. **“Either the exit polls, by and large, are completely wrong,” a Fox News analyst declared, “or George Bush loses.”**

But as the evening progressed, official tallies began to show implausible disparities — as much as 9.5 percent — with the exit polls. In ten of the eleven battleground states, the tallied margins departed from what the polls had predicted. **In every case, the shift favored Bush.** Based on exit polls, CNN had predicted Kerry defeating Bush in Ohio by a margin of 4.2 percentage points. Instead, election results showed Bush winning the state by 2.5 percent.

Bush also tallied 6.5 percent more than the polls had predicted in Pennsylvania, and 4.9 percent more in Florida.

According to Steven F. Freeman, a visiting scholar at the University of Pennsylvania who specializes in research methodology, **the odds against all three of those shifts occurring in concert are one in 660,000.**

As much as we can say in sound science that something is impossible,” he says. **“It is impossible that the discrepancies between predicted and actual vote count in the three critical battleground states of the 2004 election could have been due to chance or random error.”**

The key question of course are - “How did this happen?” and even more importantly “How can we prevent it from happening again?”

To determine that we have to look at what actually did occur.

THE CORE ISSUES.

Kenneth Blackwell John Conyers states...

“Blackwell made Katherine Harris look like a cupcake,” Conyers told me. “He saw his role as limiting the participation of Democratic voters. We had hearings in Columbus for two days. We could have stayed two weeks, the level of fury was so high. Thousands of people wanted to testify. Nothing like this had ever happened to them before.”

When ROLLING STONE confronted Blackwell about his overtly partisan attempts to subvert the election, he dismissed any such claim as “silly on its face.” Ohio, he insisted in a telephone interview, set a “gold standard” for electoral fairness. In fact, his campaign to subvert the will of the voters had begun long before Election Day. **Instead of welcoming the avalanche of citizen involvement sparked by the campaign, Blackwell permitted election officials in Cleveland, Cincinnati and Toledo to conduct a massive purge of their voter rolls, summarily expunging the names of more than 300,000 voters who had failed to cast ballots in the previous two national elections.) In Cleveland, which went five-to-one for Kerry, nearly one in four voters were wiped from the rolls between 2000 and 2004.**

The Strike Force (“Knock ‘em off the Rolls”)

To stem the tide of new registrations, the Republican National Committee and the Ohio Republican Party attempted to knock tens of thousands of predominantly minority and urban voters off the rolls through illegal mailings known in electioneering jargon as “caging.”

During the Eighties, after the GOP used such mailings to disenfranchise nearly 76,000 black voters in New Jersey and Louisiana, it was forced to sign two separate court orders agreeing to abstain from caging. **But during the summer of 2004, the GOP targeted minority voters in Ohio by zip code, sending registered letters to more than 200,000 newly registered voters (64) in sixty-five counties. On October 22nd, a mere eleven days before the election, Ohio Republican Party Chairman Bob Bennett — who also chairs the board of elections in Cuyahoga County — sought to invalidate the registrations of 35,427 voters who had refused to sign for the letters or whose mail came back as undeliverable.** Almost half of the challenged voters were from Democratic strongholds in and around Cleveland.

Barriers to Registration (“Keep ‘em off the rolls”)

To further monkey-wrench the process he was bound by law to safeguard, Blackwell cited an arcane elections regulation to make it harder to register new voters.

In a now-infamous decree, Blackwell announced on September 7th — less than a month before the filing deadline — that **election officials would process registration forms only if they were printed on eighty-pound unwaxed white paper stock**, similar to a typical postcard. Justifying his decision to ROLLING STONE, Blackwell portrayed it as an attempt to protect voters: “The postal service had recommended to us that we establish a heavy enough paper-weight standard that we not disenfranchise voters by having their registration form damaged by postal equipment.” **Yet Blackwell's order also applied to registrations delivered in person to election offices. He further specified that any valid registration cards printed on lesser paper stock that miraculously survived the shredding gauntlet at the post office were not to be processed; instead, they were to be treated as applications for a registration form, requiring election boards to send out a brand-new card.**

In one of his most effective maneuvers, Blackwell prevented thousands of voters from receiving provisional ballots on Election Day. The fail-safe ballots were mandated in 2002, when Congress passed a package of reforms called the Help America Vote Act. This would prevent a repeat of the most egregious injustice in the 2000 election, when officials in Florida barred thousands of lawfully registered minority voters from the polls because their names didn't appear on flawed precinct rolls. Under the law, would-be voters whose registration is questioned at the polls must be allowed to cast provisional ballots that can be counted after the election if the voter's registration proves valid. (114)

The Wrong Pew (“Even if they still show up to vote, don't let it count”)

“Provisional ballots were supposed to be this great movement forward,” says Tova Andrea Wang, an elections expert who served with ex-presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford on the commission that laid the groundwork for the Help America Vote Act. “But then different states erected barriers, and this new right became totally eviscerated.”

The Long Lines (“Wait ‘em out”)

When Election Day dawned on November 2nd, tens of thousands of Ohio voters who had managed to overcome all the obstacles to registration erected by Blackwell discovered that it didn't matter whether they were properly listed on the voting rolls — because long lines at their precincts prevented them from ever making it to the ballot box. **Would-be voters in Dayton and Cincinnati routinely faced waits as long as three hours. Those in inner-city precincts in Columbus, Cleveland and Toledo — which were voting for Kerry by margins of ninety percent or more — often waited up to seven hours.** At Kenyon College, students were forced to stand in line for eleven hours before being allowed to vote, with the last voters casting their ballots after three in the morning. (



RFK Jr.

The long lines were not only foreseeable — they were actually created by GOP efforts. Republicans in the state legislature, citing new electronic voting machines that were supposed to speed voting, authorized local election boards to reduce the number of precincts across Ohio. In most cases, the new machines never materialized — but that didn't stop officials in twenty of the state's eighty-eight counties, all of them favorable to Democrats, from slashing the number of precincts by at least twenty percent.

Faulty Machines (“Change the Vote”)

Voters who managed to make it past the array of hurdles erected by Republican officials found themselves confronted by voting machines that didn't work. Only 800,000 out of the 5.6 million votes in Ohio were cast on electronic voting machines, but they were plagued with errors. **In heavily Democratic areas around Youngstown, where nearly 100 voters reported entering “Kerry” on the touch screen and watching “Bush” light up, at least twenty machines had to be recalibrated in the middle of the voting process for chronically flipping Kerry votes to Bush.** (Similar “vote hopping” from Kerry to Bush was reported by voters and election officials in other states.

Elsewhere, voters complained in sworn affidavits that they touched Kerry's name on the screen and it lit up, but that the light had gone out by the time they finished their ballot; the Kerry vote faded away. In the state's most notorious incident, an electronic machine at a fundamentalist church in the town of Gahanna recorded a total of 4,258 votes for Bush and 260 votes for Kerry. In that precinct, however, there were only 800 registered voters, of whom 638 showed up. (The error, which was later blamed on a glitchy memory card, was corrected before the certified vote count.)

Rural Counties (Stuffing the Box)

Despite the well-documented effort that prevented hundreds of thousands of voters in urban and minority precincts from casting ballots, the worst theft in Ohio may have quietly taken place in rural counties. An examination of election data suggests widespread fraud — and even good old-fashioned stuffing of ballot boxes — in twelve sparsely populated counties scattered across southern and western Ohio: Auglaize, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Darke, Highland, Mercer, Miami, Putnam, Shelby, Van Wert and Warren. (See The Twelve Suspect Counties) One key indicator of fraud is to look at counties where the presidential vote departs radically from other races on the ballot. **By this measure, John Kerry's numbers were suspiciously low in each of the twelve counties — and George Bush's were unusually high.** (continued on page 10)

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"NO! THIS REGIME DOES NOT REPRESENT US! AND WE WILL DRIVE IT OUT!"



YOUR GOVERNMENT

on the basis of outrageous lies, is waging a murderous and utterly illegitimate war in Iraq, with other countries in their sights. Your government is openly torturing people, and justifying it.

YOUR GOVERNMENT

puts people in jail on the merest suspicion, refusing them lawyers, and either holding them indefinitely or deporting them in the dead of night. Your government is moving each day closer to a theocracy, where a narrow and hateful brand of Christian fundamentalism will rule.

YOUR GOVERNMENT

suppresses the science that doesn't fit its religious, political and economic agenda, forcing present and future generations to pay a terrible price. Your government is moving to deny women here, and all over the world, the right to birth control and abortion.

YOUR GOVERNMENT

enforces a culture of greed, bigotry, tolerance and ignorance. People look at all this and think of Hitler - and they are right to do so. The Bush regime is setting out to radically remake society very quickly, in a fascist way, and for generations to come. We must act now; the future is in the balance. Millions and millions are deeply disturbed and outraged by this. They recognize the need for a vehicle to express this outrage, yet they cannot find it; politics as usual cannot meet the enormity of the challenge, and people sense this.

There is not going to be some magical "pendulum swing." People who steal elections and believe they're on a "mission from God" will not go without a fight. There is not going to be some savior from the Democratic Party. This whole idea of putting our hopes and energies into "leaders" who tell us to seek common ground with fascists and religious fanatics is proving every day to be a disaster, and actually serves to demobilize people.

BUT SILENCE AND PARALYSIS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

THAT WHICH YOU WILL NOT RESIST AND MOBILIZE TO STOP, YOU WILL LEARN - OR BE FORCED - TO ACCEPT.

ENDORERS OF THE CALL TO DRIVE OUT THE BUSH REGIME INCLUDE: James Abourezk, Aris Anagnos, Anti-Flag, Edward Asner, Russell Banks, Ed Begley Jr., Harry Belafonte, St. Clair Bourne, Gabriel Byrne, Margaret Cho, Ward Churchill, US Rep John Conyers Jr., John Densmore, Jesse Diaz Jr., Michael Eric Dyson, Steve Earle, Niles Eldridge, Daniel Ellsberg, Eve Ensler, Jane Fonda, Martin Garbus, Andre Gregory, Sam Hamill, Suheir Hammad, Rev. Jesse L. Jackson Jr., Mumia Abu-Jamal, Rickie Lee Jones, Sarah Jones, Brig. Gen. (Ret) Janis Karpinski, Jonathan Kozol, Rabbi Michael Lerner, US Rep. Cynthia McKinney, Robin Meyers, Mark Crispin Miller, Tom Morello, Viggo Mortensen, US Rep. Major Owens, Grace Paley, Harvey Pekar, Sean Penn, Michelle Phillips, Harold Pinter, Michael Ratner, Mark Ruffalo, US Rep. Bobby Rush, Susan Sarandon, Richard Serra, Rev. Al Sharpton, Cindy Sheehan, Martin Sheen, Nancy Spero, Gloria Steinem, Lynne Stewart, Serj Tankian, Sunsara Taylor, Studs Terkel, Gore Vidal, Kurt Vonnegut, Alice Walker, Naomi Wallace, Lt. Ehren Wahtada, US Rep. Maxine Waters, Cornel West, Ann Wright, Howard Zinn, and thousands more who have already joined us.

The point is this: history is full of examples where people who had right on their side fought against tremendous odds and were victorious. And it is also full of examples of people passively hoping to wait it out, only to get swallowed up by a horror beyond what they ever imagined. THE FUTURE IS UNWRITTEN. WHICH ONE WE GET IS UP TO US.

THE PROBLEM IS NOT THAT OUR ACTIONS HAVE HAD NO IMPACT; IT'S THAT WE HAVE NOT ACTED UP ENOUGH.

A new season of upsurge must start now, one that sets out to reverse the whole direction in which this society is now hurtling, and to dramatically change the course of history. The stakes now are too high to keep going through the motions of protest as usual - politics that say: the people in government exercise power and make the corresponding decisions and our only role is to protest certain things they do. Instead, we need to act on the truth that when people take massive and independent political action, they can change things very profoundly. People in the 60's did not ask the liberal Democrats then in office for permission to fight for civil rights and Black liberation or to protest the war. They just did it, mobilizing millions and effectively saying in the immortal words of Bob Dylan that "your sons and daughters are beyond your command." The whole ethos of a generation and a country changed.

Q: But isn't getting the Democrats elected and getting a majority in Congress the only real way to stop Bush? A: Stop him from doing what?

From invading Iran? The Democrats support Bush on Iran. From outlawing abortion? The Democrats are running *anti-choice* candidates for the Senate. From carrying out repression? The Democrats voted overwhelmingly to support the Patriot Act and have done nothing to stop the illegal spying on millions of people. From conducting the war in Iraq? Even Ned Lamont only promises withdrawal "a year from now" and he's already hedged on that - and the rest of the Democrats are doing far worse.

Our Call tells it like it is: "There is not going to be some savior from the Democratic Party. This whole idea of putting our hopes and energies into 'leaders' who tell us to seek common ground with fascists and religious fanatics is proving every day to be a disaster, and actually serves to demobilize people."

The situation is way too urgent to allow yourself to be lulled. The reality is this: without the whole political situation being radically altered by people in this country taking responsibility to act, the current fascist direction will *accelerate*.

Without decisively breaking out of the confines of official politics... without refusing to take orders from the likes of Charles Schumer and the other top Democrats... without refusing to set an entirely different and radically new dynamic from below, we are headed from this dark time to an even darker one. But if we do set that dynamic from below, then everyone in society - including those on the top who today make horrific decisions unchallenged - will be forced to respond to *that*.

The question is where are you going to put your resources and energies? Into something that has disappointed you time and again? Something that doesn't even represent *your* demands and interests? Or into something that you not only agree with, but that carries the only chance now before us to carve out a different road and a different future?

Think of what it will mean for the people of Lebanon, for the survivors of Katrina, for the immigrants under attack, and for the rest of the planet to know that there is a massive and determined movement of people in the United States taking to the streets in cities and towns across the country to demand this be brought to a halt. Imagine the start of a new dynamic - actions producing headlines reading: "Anti-Bush Protests Continue to Bring Cities to a Standstill across the Country." What if THIS were injected into the regular string of shocking atrocities and monstrous crimes being carried out by the Bush regime?



U.S. government is out of control

WORLD CAN'T WAIT

(continued from page 7) Face it. The political will of the people is not going to find expression through the elections.

Look at the state of official politics and how unacceptable the whole process and logic is. There is no other way this fall for people to make manifestly clear that they want the war ended, that they want the right of abortion protected, that they think torture is completely immoral and unacceptable, that they regard a government that abandons and then uproots the Black population of New Orleans as unconscionable.

There is no other way to affirm that evolution and global warming are truths that must be acted upon, no way to voice that living under a government that engages in detaining people without trial, spies on its citizens, summarily terminates basic constitutional protections such as due process, and silences dissent is well on its way to becoming a police state - and that all this must be stopped.

And there is no other way to make powerfully clear that we refuse to be dragged into yet another hellish war and nightmarish political situation, this time with Iran!

Q: Well, you have some good points, but I think you go too far. This reference to Hitler in your Call - things aren't that bad yet, and you're going to lose people. It's too strident.

A: After enumerating the many crimes and criminal policies of the Bush Regime, our Call notes that "people look at all this and think of Hitler - and they are right to do so."

The Bush regime is setting out to radically remake society very quickly, in a fascist way, for generations to come."

The question is, is that true or not? Are people thinking of Hitler? Yes, they are. Who hasn't heard that analogy come up in conversation? Are they wrong to do so? Is it wrong to sound the alarm - to point to the ways in which Bush has actually begun to remake society in, yes, a fascist direction, to point to the speed of this, and to point to the logical conclusion of the whole thing - unless stopped?

Would it be more truthful to say that "people think of Hitler, but they are wrong to do so" - that the "normalization" of torture and indefinite detention, the empowerment of religious fanatics, the pervasive "above the law" surveillance and suppression of dissent and critical thinking, the military invasion of three countries (going on four) and the blithe reassurance that the deaths and suffering resulting from this are merely "the birth pangs of a new Middle East"?

Would it be more truthful to say that all these are mere passing phenomena, of no larger significance or threat, expressing no directional change in society whatsoever? That has to be the point of departure. Not "is it strident", but is it TRUE? And let's face it - this is a very "inconvenient" truth. It is hard for people to face up to the fact that not only CAN it happen here; it's going on right before our eyes.

And it is hard for people to face up to the level of responsibility, to be honest, that this presents us with.

Q: But it's not fascism until I'm affected and besides we still have free speech, no one is putting people in concentration camps. People in this country won't move unless they are directly affected by something like the draft.

A: Denial, Denial, Denial, then freak-out & capitulate because it's too late. How many people in history have done this - passively hoped to wait it out, only to get swallowed up by a horror they never imagined nor wished on anyone?

A lot of people remember the famous statement of Martin Niemoller, the German clergyman who resisted Hitler, but too late to make a real difference. After the war, Niemoller said, "First they came for the Communists, but I was not a Communist, so I said nothing; then they came for the Jews, but I was not a Jew, so I said nothing..." and so on down the line, ending with: "then they came for me, and by that time there was no one left to stand up." Niemoller didn't make his statement and sum up experience so that people could REPEAT it.

He was trying to tell us that people like me sat around in denial and had the attitude that as long as it wasn't happening to me, it wasn't happening. People like me could have made a difference, and there were thousands of us, but we kept trying to accommodate to what was going on, because "if it wasn't happening to me it wasn't that bad."

Niemoller said that the people who knew should have made huge sacrifices because it would have made a difference. He was saying, "If I could turn back the clock to '33, I would have stood with the ones under attack, I would have sounded the alarm, I would have stood up and resisted."

Today we are sitting in a position analogous to that of Martin Niemoller in 1933. Are we going to do what he did, or what he said he should have done? Put yourself back in time. In 1933 Hitler was not the Hitler of 1943 - he had not put the Jews in concentration camps yet and he disguised his anti-Semitic agenda. What if when Hitler first came to power, people came to you and said, "He's Hitler," and you said "You're too shrill. You're too extreme. You're going to turn people off." Which Niemoller do we want to be? The one who went along, or the one who said this is what I should have done?

Q: But stepping outside the normal political process seems scary.

A: Right now the "normal political process" and where it's heading is itself the scariest thing on the planet. The "normal political process" has for some years now been nothing but a "rolling coup," one with disastrous consequences for the whole world. The "normal political process" has given us electoral charades and suffocating terms of debate ("how best do we fight the 'war on terror?") and a society locked in denial, despair, and political paralysis.

BE A PEACE VOTER IN 2006!

With the war in Iraq still raging into a fourth year, threats looming against Iran, and an Administration and Congress who continue to fund war instead of human needs, this year's elections present a key opportunity to demand that Congress catch up with the peace majority. Ned Lamont's recent victory in CT shows the power of peace voters to demand change.

As the "war on terror" becomes more deadly, costly and counter-productive each day, a growing majority of citizens want to see a change of course in Iraq and U.S. foreign policies that better reflect American values. With mid-term elections approaching, Peace Action's Peace Voter 2006 campaign will bring the occupation of Iraq and other key foreign policy issues to the forefront of the electoral debate.

We will put our elected officials on record on critical peace and security issues and demand their commitment to a more responsible foreign policy for our country.

By making **peace** the top priority in 2006, you can make a big impact at the local level, helping to build a powerful movement of people willing to organize for peace on Election Day, and beyond. This November, let's hold Congress accountable to the rising tide of public opinion that's urging an end to the war in Iraq and a new direction for U.S. relations with the world. **Come to www.peace-action.org and sign our Declaration of Peace. Volunteer. Do something more! Contact local Peace Action at 330.747.5404 or people@paytown.org.**

NOTE ON BUSH AND BOOKS: THE NEW IMPEACHMENT LITERATURE

(continued from page 15) The fact that a sizeable collection of books exists on the subject of impeaching George W. Bush is a phenomenon worthy of comment in itself. Some of the offenses committed by Bush and Cheney have been reported first - and sometimes only - in books as was the case with James Risen's *State of War: The Secret History of the C.I.A. and the Bush Administration* and Philippe Sands' *Lawless World: America and the Making and Breaking of Global Rules*.

The books that follow, all exploring where U.S. citizens must take that evidence, constitute a field of reporting that has yet to make an appearance in a major American newspaper or on a major American television network. Books (and the internet) are now the first draft of history as well as the last, since the other news media have abandoned the field.

Yet the analysis in these books is not only largely in agreement but readily comprehensible by anyone with an elementary school education, no less a reporter, and there is no reason to imagine that the views expressed could not be effectively expressed on television or in a newspaper.

If you know nothing about the impeachment movement, pick up at least one of the following. They tend to be brief, easy to read, and enormously important:

**The Impeachment of George W. Bush: A Practical Guide for Concerned Citizens*, by Elizabeth Holtzman, former Congresswoman and member of the Nixon impeachment panel, and Cynthia L. Cooper (Nation Books, 268 pages, \$14.95), an excellent and readable book, lays out five major grounds for the President's impeachment, and offers a bonus section on Dick Cheney.

**Impeach the President: The Case Against Bush and Cheney*, edited by Dennis Loo and Peter Phillips, with an introduction by Howard Zinn (Seven Stories Press, 208 pages, \$17.95), is a wonderfully well written collection of essays organized around a list of 12 grounds for the impeachment of Bush and Cheney. **The Case for Impeachment, the Legal Argument for Removing President George W. Bush from Office* by Dave Lindorff and Barbara Olshansky (Thomas Dunne Books, 275 pages, \$23.95), an amazingly popular and extremely readable book, explains the context for impeachment proceedings, while also setting forth six articles of impeachment against Bush, plus an extra section on Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice, and Alberto Gonzales.

**Articles of Impeachment Against George W. Bush* by the Center for Constitutional Rights (Melville House, 144 pages, \$9.95) is a short book that simply lists and explains four (multi-part) articles of impeachment

**George W. Bush versus the U.S. Constitution: The Downing Street Memos and Deception, Manipulation, Torture, Retribution, and Cover-ups in the Iraq War and Illegal Domestic Spying* by the U.S. House Judiciary Committee Democratic Staff (Academy Chicago Publishers, 260 pages, \$16.95) not only collects the evidence but also tells us what Congressman John Conyers, the ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, is thinking.

**Verdict and Findings of Fact* by the International Commission of Inquiry on Crimes Against Humanity Committed by the Bush Administration of the United States (\$10), a report that looks at five major international crimes and overlaps significantly with most lists of impeachable offenses.

**Impeach Bush: A Funny Li'l Graphical Novel About the Worstest Pres'dent in the History of Forever* (Blatant Comics, \$12.95) is a comic-book account of Bush's impeachable offenses - the crimes really are self-evident, but pictures don't hurt

David Swanson, co-founder of the *AfterDowning Street.org* coalition, works for ImpeachPAC.org, which is funding pro-impeachment candidates. Each one has committed to making the introduction of articles of impeachment his or her first act in office. Swanson also works for MyDem.org, which is giving people tools to help make sure their votes are counted. A former newspaper reporter, he was the press secretary for Dennis Kucinich's 2004 presidential campaign.

"There is no way to peace; peace is the way." A. J. Muste

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"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

— Dr. Martin Luther King

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WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. IN NOVEMBER, COME PREPARED TO GET EVIDENCE, WITH CAMERA, VIDEO, OR AT LEAST AN AUDIO RECORDER.

People don't do this. They think nothing will happen. But in Ohio, where this citizen lives, it is legal to do "single party consent" audio recording—in other words, secretly tape record.

Imagine this easy technique, for example: You buy an inexpensive digital audio recorder at Radio Shack, stick it in your pocket when you get out of the car to go vote, switch it on.

Then, if the machine flips the vote, you call the poll worker over, as this citizen did, and the CONVERSATION IS DOCUMENTED in an audio recording. Better yet, you take a video or photo (but that means losing your voting privacy).

A videotape of the vote flipping cannot be explained away as "humidity" or spun as "a glitch." In fact, that videotape would probably make the evening news.

When you go vote, be prepared to get evidence. And know what evidence is: Video, Audio, photos, public records.

2. GET THE SERIAL NUMBER OF THE MACHINE. I will post this, and then I will put a photograph of a Diebold TSx that shows you where to find the serial number in a subsequent post.

3. SEED EVIDENCE INTO THE PUBLIC RECORD. If you show a poll worker that the machine is vote-flipping, insist that she write it up.

They call these trouble reports different things in different areas—"trouble slips", "manager reports", "punch reports", etc. Even if there is no procedure, no form for the poll worker to fill out, make sure it is put in writing.

Be friendly and polite—after all, it isn't the poll worker's fault!—but do let the poll worker know that these written notes are part of the public record and you will be doing a public records request for it.

WHY IS THE MAN WHO STOLE OHIO CAMPAIGNING WITH A WHITE SUPREMACIST?

by Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman

October 9, 2006 CommonDreams.org

J. Kenneth Blackwell, the man who stole Ohio's 2004 presidential election, was out campaigning October 4, 2006 with a man widely viewed as one of America's leading white supremacists. Blackwell is an African-American.

He is also the Republican nominee for governor of Ohio. As Secretary of State, he was the GOP point man for stealing the 2004 presidential vote that gave George W. Bush a second term.

As co-chair of the state's Bush-Cheney re-election campaign, Blackwell engineered a complex strategy of confusion, disenfranchisement and theft that mirrored what was done by Katherine Harris in Florida 2000. Harris was rewarded with a safe Congressional seat, and is now the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate.

Polls show Blackwell trailing between 12-20 points in his gubernatorial race, but few Ohio insiders doubt his ability to steal the necessary votes, if he can get away with it. Currently, Blackwell operatives are stressing that he's "only 12 points down" and that they believe the race will tighten significantly by Election Day.

Blackwell toured the state with Larry Pratt, author of ARMED PEOPLE VICTORIOUS, which advocates the creation of militant right-wing militias. Pratt has spoken and shared platforms in the past with Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi Aryan Nation members. He was forced to take a leave of absence from Pat Buchanan's 1996 presidential campaign over charges of white supremacist and anti-semitic views.

Pratt's 150,000-member Gun Owners of America is proudly to the right of the National Rifle Association.

According to the Columbus Dispatch, Pratt says he couldn't be a racist because he is campaigning with Blackwell, an African-American. Blackwell is "our kind of guy," says Pratt, in reference to Blackwell's support of gun owners' rights.

Blackwell campaign spokesperson attorney Eric Seabrook, conceded on Sunday, October 8 to the Khari Enaharo show listeners on 98.9FM radio that Pratt was a white supremacist but, he stressed "it was all about the gun rights issue."

But this is not the first time Blackwell has lined up with extreme right-wing backers boasting racist and anti-semitic roots.



All citizens should seed information into the public record when they see a problem.

This makes the information available to others, and forces county officials to keep records of the problems.

When seeding information into the public record, it's best to offer your name and phone number.

Film makers, reporters, lawyers and public policy advocates may get hold of those records, and may want to interview witnesses or take affidavits.

4. FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE CITIZEN'S TOOL KIT TO TAKE BACK ELECTIONS: AVAILABLE AT - <http://www.blackboxvoting.org/toolkit.pdf>

The module that applies to incidents while voting is this one: <http://www.blackboxvoting.org/toolkit-voting.pdf>

Skim through the different modules. Each is quite short, just bullet points. Pick one that appeals to you—any module—and choose one action to take—any action. Your actions as a citizen will help trigger a new evolution of citizenship.

5. NEVER PUT IT IN A FUNNEL. PROPAGATE YOUR INFORMATION AT LEAST SEVEN WAYS—AT LEAST THREE DIFFERENT CATEGORIES:

Propagation is just as important as documentation. Everyone's busy. Spread it to at least seven places to increase the chance that someone will do something effective with the information.

Earlier this year Blackwell posted on his website a picture of himself addressing the Council for National Policy.

The CNP has deep "neo-fascist" and Ku Klux Klan ties according to Chip Berlet of the Boston-based Political Research Associates.

In addition to right wing extremists such as Jerry Falwell, Phyllis Schlafly and Pat Robertson, the CNP embraces a broad spectrum of powerful, reactionary bigots.

Among them are members of the Ahmanson family, major funders of extremist publications and electronic voting machines. The Ahmanson's financial and political ties are thoroughly intertwined with both ES&S and Diebold, mainstays of the electronic hardware used to steal the Ohio vote. Among their associates are Bob and Todd Urosevich, whose executive and programming work has helped shape the two voting machine companies.

Blackwell may well be banking on two bottom lines in Bush-era electoral politics: loaded guns and rigged voting machines.

Others associated with the CNP include:

- Richard Shoff, a former Ku Klux Klan leader in Indiana.
- John McGoff, an ardent supporter of the former apartheid South African regime.
- R.J. Rushdoony, the theological leader of America's "Christian Reconstruction" movement, which advocates that Christian fundamentalists take "dominion" over America by abolishing democracy and instituting Old Testament Law. Rushdoony's Reconstructionists believe that "homosexuals . . . adulterers, blasphemers, astrologers and others will be executed," along with disobedient children.
- Reed Larson, head of anti-union National Right to Work Committee.
- Don Wildmon, TV censorship activist and accused anti-Semite.
- Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver North, Major General John K. Singlaub and other principals from the Iran-Contra Scandal. After a public uproar, Blackwell pulled his CNP photo off his website. But he has thus far made no similar backtrack on Larry Pratt. "We're happy to have his support," says a campaign spokesman, reported the Dispatch.

Blackwell supporters continue to predict he will make a "last-minute surge" to win the governor's race. Making no visible moves toward the mainstream, Blackwell may well be banking on two bottom lines in Bush-era electoral politics: loaded guns and rigged voting machines.

Bob Fitrakis and Harvey Wasserman are co-authors, with Steve Rosenfeld, of *What Happened in Ohio: Documentary Record of What Happened in the 2004 Election*, just published by the New Press. Fitrakis is an independent candidate for governor of Ohio, endorsed by the Green Party.

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 - Public official
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 - Call a friend who is an attorney
 - Provide the information to a candidate
 - Letter to editor
 - Publish photos, audio recordings or videos on a Web site
- Get a written copy of what you witnessed to at least seven places, and make sure you include contact persons, dates, places, times. And by the way, Thank you for your stewardship of our republic. It is going to be up to us to make the case and insist on remedies.

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<http://www.blackboxvoting.org/toolkit.pdf>

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- You don't have to find someone to follow.
- Pick any module. Pick a single action in it. See it to its completion.
- You've just opened the door to an unexpected evolution.

VOTE RECOUNT REGULATION CHANGED

By Jim Kuhnenn

Associated Press Writer Oct 5, 2006 WASHINGTON (AP) - Changing nearly 30 years of election regulations, House and Senate candidates as well as state parties will have to abide by federal fundraising limits to pay for vote recounts, federal regulators decided Wednesday.

The 4-2 decision by the Federal Election Commission is especially significant this year when both political parties are bracing for potential post-election challenges to results in tight congressional races.

The FEC's new advisory opinion reinterprets 1977 regulations that said money raised to pay for recounts and legal challenges were not covered by campaign finance restrictions on contributions or expenditures. As before, however, neither the candidates nor the parties will be able to raise money from labor unions, corporations or foreign nationals.

"This is going to make them work a little harder to raise the money," said Commissioner Ellen Weintraub, a Democrat on the commission who offered a compromise to break a 3-3 deadlock. "But its doable."

At issue was whether a 2002 campaign finance law that did away with unrestricted and unlimited giving to the political parties altered those 1977 regulations.

Commission Chairman Michael Toner and Commissioner Hans A. von Spakovsky, both Republicans, voted against the opinion, saying that the campaign finance law applied only to the election, not recounts. Toner also objected to the timing of the change, noting that it came only five weeks before the Nov. 7 elections.

In making its decision, the FEC recognized that recounts are expensive. As a result, the contributions that candidates raise from individual contributors for their recount accounts will not count against their fundraising for the election. Under current law, a candidate can receive donations up to \$2,100 from individual contributors for each election. The FEC's advisory opinion approved Wednesday said a contributor who had already reached that limit with a candidate could contribute further to the recount account.

Similarly, while the state parties would have to abide by the \$10,000 contribution limits that apply to them, they would not have to live within limitations on spending for so-called coordinated expenditures with federal candidates.

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IMPEACHMENT ANYONE?

(continued from page 5) The spying, done without recourse to the secret FISA court set up in 1978 for exactly this purpose, is also in blatant violation of the FISA Act of 1978, of the Fourth Amendment, and – according to Congressman John Conyers' report, *George W. Bush versus the U.S. Constitution* – of the Stored Communications Act of 1986 and the Communications Act of 1934. Congressman Conyers also cites Bush for violating the National Security Act and for failing to keep all members of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees "fully and currently informed" of intelligence activities, such as the warrantless surveillance programs.

On nearly every list of impeachable offenses is the President's failure to protect New Orleans from Hurricane Katrina. Over a period of years, the administration undermined the city's protection. In the days prior to the storm's arrival, Bush was warned about just what might happen. Yet prior to the storm – and for days after it hit – he did nothing; the unqualified cronies he had put in charge of the Federal Emergency Management Agency did nothing; and the National Guard members from Louisiana, Mississippi and other states of the southeast whom he had dispatched to Iraq could not be called upon to help. Thousands of Americans died preventable deaths and a city was ruined, not so much by a storm as by the non-response to it. Even now, people who lost their homes in the Katrina debacle are being told there are no funds available to help them.

The Constitution requires that the President "take care that the laws be faithfully executed." Former Congresswoman and Judiciary Committee Member Elizabeth Holtzman in her new book, *The Impeachment of George W. Bush*, argues that Bush's neglect of New Orleans (and other presidential duties) violated this responsibility and so constitute high crimes and misdemeanors. Holtzman puts into this category as well the administration's failure to provide U.S. troops in Iraq with proper body armor, and the failure of the President and his top officials to plan for the occupation of Iraq.

In their book, *The Case for Impeachment*, Dave Lindorff and Barbara Olshansky make a similar argument about Bush's failure to attempt to prevent the attacks of September 11, 2001 and his obstruction of investigations into those crimes (as do Dennis Loo and Peter Phillips in their book *Impeach the President*).

The same two books, along with the Bush Crimes Commission in its "verdict," also suggest that, by denying the existence of, enacting policies that increase, and failing to work to decrease global warming, Bush has committed perhaps the most serious offense possible – in the words of Loo and Phillips, "placing oil-industry profits over the long-term survival of the human race and the viability of the planet."

The Bush Crimes Commission finds the President's imposition of abstinence-only policies on countries being ravaged by AIDS to be a serious crime against humanity. Loo and Phillips charge Bush with "violating the constitutional principle of separation of church and state through the interlinking of theocratic ideologies in the decision-making process of the U.S. government."

Three of the recent books on impeachment include as an impeachable offense Bush's use of signing statements to announce his refusal to obey [hundreds of laws](#) passed by Congress. The American Bar Association has found the practice unconstitutional. It is, in fact, an open threat to the rule of law.

An official censure by Congress would do nothing to compel the President to obey laws he chooses not to obey. Impeachment would do nothing. Only impeachment followed by removal from office will cure this cancer on the American political system.

The current situation is exactly what the authors of the Constitution had in mind when they made impeachment and removal from office the means of protection against tyranny.

Holtzman includes in her roster of impeachable offenses the selective and misleading leaking of classified information, especially on supposed Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (which Bush himself was directly involved in) to advance a dishonest case for war. Lindorff and Olshansky also include the leaking of CIA agent Valerie Plame's identity.

Conyers cites violations of the following related laws: 1) Federal requirements concerning the leaking and misuse of intelligence, including failing to enforce an executive order that requires the disciplining of those who leak classified information, whether intentionally or not; 2) Federal laws forbidding retaliation against whistle-blowers of various sorts, an example being the demotion of [Bunnatine Greenhouse](#), the chief contracting officer at the Army Corps of Engineers, who exposed secret, no-bid contracts awarded to Kellogg, Brown & Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton; 3) Federal regulations and ethical requirements governing conflicts of interest, including the briefing of then-Attorney General John Ashcroft on an FBI investigation of possible misconduct by Karl Rove, even though Mr. Rove had previously received nearly \$750,000 in fees for political work on Mr. Ashcroft's campaigns. (continued on page 15)

HOW THE 2004 ELECTION WAS STOLEN

(continued from page 6) How might this fraud have been carried out? One way to steal votes is to tamper with individual ballots — and there is evidence that Republicans did just that.

In Clermont County, where optical scanners were used to tabulate votes, sworn affidavits by election observers given to the House Judiciary Committee describe ballots on which marks for Kerry were covered up with white stickers, while marks for Bush were filled in to replace them.

Rep. Conyers, in a letter to the FBI, described the testimony as "strong evidence of vote tampering if not outright fraud." In Miami County, where Connally outpaced Kerry, one precinct registered a turnout of 98.55 percent — meaning that all but ten eligible voters went to the polls on Election Day. An investigation by the Columbus Free Press, however, collected affidavits from twenty-five people who swear they didn't vote.

In addition to altering individual ballots, evidence suggests that Republicans tampered with the software used to tabulate votes. In Auglaize County, where Kerry lost not only to Connally but to two other defeated Democratic judicial candidates, voters cast their ballots on touch-screen machines.

Two weeks before the election, an employee of ES&S, the company that manufactures the machines, was observed by a local election official making an unauthorized log-in to the central computer used to compile election results.) In Miami County, after 100 percent of precincts had already reported their official results, an additional 18,615 votes were inexplicably added to the final tally. The last-minute alteration awarded 12,000 of the votes to Bush, boosting his margin of victory in the county by nearly 6,000.

The Phony Terrorism Alert

The most transparently crooked incident took place in Warren County. In the leadup to the election, Blackwell had illegally sought to keep reporters and election observers at least 100 feet away from the polls. (190) The Sixth Circuit, ruling that the decree represented an unconstitutional violation of the First Amendment, noted ominously that "democracies die behind closed doors." But the decision didn't stop officials in Warren County from devising a way to count the vote in secret. **Immediately after the polls closed on Election Day, GOP officials — citing the FBI — declared that the county was facing a terrorist threat that ranked ten on a scale of one to ten. The county administration building was hastily locked down, allowing election officials to tabulate the results without any reporters present.**

Last Step: Rigging the Recount

After Kerry conceded the election, his campaign helped the Libertarian and Green parties pay for a recount of all eighty-eight counties in Ohio. Under state law, county boards of election were required to randomly select three percent of their precincts and recount the ballots both by hand and by machine. If the two totals reconciled exactly, a costly hand recount of the remaining votes could be avoided; machines could be used to tally the rest.

But election officials in Ohio worked outside the law to avoid hand recounts. **According to charges brought by a special prosecutor in April, election officials in Cleveland fraudulently and secretly pre-counted precincts by hand to identify ones that would match the machine count.** They then used these pre-screened precincts to select the "random" sample of three percent used for the recount.

From the list of issues a series of talking points can be constructed, to push back against those who would argue that all of this is "tin-foil hattery" and *sour grapes* on the part of democrats.

If not to illegally skew the vote what was the justification for...

- The Exit Polls being so far off, that they far exceeded a statistical improbability?
- The purge of inactive voters centered on Democratic Strongholds?
- The use of illegal registered letters to "Cage" Democratic Voters?
- Blackwell's requiring 80 lbs stock for registration cards, and then supplying *non-80 lbs stock* to voters?
- Some (Democratic) voters having to wait up to 7 hours (in the rain)?
- There being no safeguards to protect the electronic tabulators from tampering?
- The mysterious "Level Ten" Terror alert during the counting?
- why "Pre-counting" was premitted?

The key to all of this is tying the actions and events specifically to the actions of authorized Republicans such as Blackwell and the RNC. We're certain to hear claims that there was no deliberate malice involved, that there were Democratic election offices involved in many of these decisions - but none of that changes the fact that in **each and every case - a problem generated more votes for Bush and less for Kerry** in a critical "Battleground State".

I have to admit, that when things originally went down I was skeptical that a deliberate theft of the election had taken place. The amount of the vote discrepancy seemed to large, too massive. It couldn't be possible that nearly 3 Million votes national wide could have been shifted from Kerry to Bush, could it? But the fact is such as shift isn't really necessary. All they needed was a few hundred here, and a few hundred there in key or close districts and states.

In order to protect what's left of our Democracy, and particularly the integrity of future elections (such as 2006) we need to be ready to challenge these and similar tactics before it's too late. We have to act *Now*, and the first thing to do is prepare LTE's asking why every newspaper in the country isn't running this story.

It doesn't matter if they agree with Kennedy, we just need them to address the issue — keep the noise machine spinning - let them try and argue against the facts and science.

They ignored Conyers. They ignored Miller. We can't afford to let them ignore Kennedy. It's *our* Democracy, and our duty to protect it.

Just remember your Gandhi:

"First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you - then you win." _____Vyan, *Daily Kos*

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BUSH'S NUCLEAR APOCALYPSE

by **Chris Hedges** October 9, 2006 [truthdig](#)

The aircraft carrier Eisenhower, accompanied by the guided-missile cruiser USS Anzio, guided-missile destroyer USS Ramage, guided-missile destroyer USS Mason and the fast-attack submarine USS Newport News, is, as I write, making its way to the Straits of Hormuz off Iran. The ships will be in place to strike Iran by the end of the month. It may be a bluff. It may be a feint. It may be a simple show of American power. I doubt it.

War with Iran—a war that would unleash an apocalyptic scenario in the Middle East—is probable by the end of the Bush administration. It could begin in as little as three weeks.

This administration, claiming to be anointed by a Christian God to reshape the world, and especially the Middle East, defined three states at the start of its reign as “the Axis of Evil.” They were Iraq, now occupied; North Korea, which, because it has nuclear weapons, is untouchable; and Iran.

Those who do not take this apocalyptic rhetoric seriously have ignored the twisted pathology of men like Elliott Abrams, who helped orchestrate the disastrous and illegal contra war in Nicaragua, and who now handles the Middle East for the National Security Council. He knew nothing about Central America. He knows nothing about the Middle East. He sees the world through the childish, binary lens of good and evil, us and them, the forces of darkness and the forces of light. And it is this strange, twilight mentality that now grips most of the civilian planners who are barreling us towards a crisis of epic proportions.

These men advocate a doctrine of permanent war, a doctrine which, as William R. Polk points out, is a slight corruption of Leon Trotsky’s doctrine of permanent revolution. These two revolutionary doctrines serve the same function, to intimidate and destroy all those classified as foreign opponents, to create permanent instability and fear and to silence domestic critics who challenge leaders in a time of national crisis. It works.

The citizens of the United States, slowly being stripped of their civil liberties, are being herded sheep-like, once again, over a cliff.

But this war will be different. It will be catastrophic. It will usher in the apocalyptic nightmares spun out in the dark, fantastic visions of the Christian right. And there are those around the president who see this vision as preordained by God; indeed, the president himself may hold such a vision.

The hypocrisy of this vaunted moral crusade is not lost on those in the Middle East. Iran actually signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It has violated a codicil of that treaty written by European foreign ministers, but this codicil was never ratified by the Iranian parliament.

I do not dispute Iran’s intentions to acquire nuclear weapons nor do I minimize the danger should it acquire them in the estimated five to 10 years. But contrast Iran with Pakistan, India and Israel. These three countries refused to sign the treaty and developed nuclear weapons programs in secret. Israel now has an estimated 400 to 600 nuclear weapons. The word “Dimona,” the name of the city where the nuclear facilities are located in Israel, is shorthand in the Muslim world for the deadly Israeli threat to Muslims’ existence. What lessons did the Iranians learn from our Israeli, Pakistani and Indian allies?

Given that we are actively engaged in an effort to destabilize the Iranian regime by recruiting tribal groups and ethnic minorities inside Iran to rebel, given that we use apocalyptic rhetoric to describe what must be done to the Iranian regime, given that other countries in the Middle East such as Egypt and Saudi Arabia are making noises about developing a nuclear capacity, and given that, with the touch of a button Israel could obliterate Iran, what do we expect from the Iranians?

On top of this, the Iranian regime grasps that the doctrine of permanent war entails making “preemptive” and unprovoked strikes.

Those in Washington who advocate this war, knowing as little about the limitations and chaos of war as they do about the Middle East, believe they can hit about 1,000 sites inside Iran to wipe out nuclear production and cripple the 850,000-man Iranian army.

The disaster in southern Lebanon, where the Israeli air campaign not only failed to break Hezbollah but united most Lebanese behind the militant group, is dismissed. These ideologues, after all, do not live in a reality-based universe. The massive Israeli bombing of Lebanon failed to pacify 4 million Lebanese. What will happen when we begin to pound a country of 70 million people? As retired General Wesley K. Clark and others have pointed out, once you begin an air campaign it is only a matter of time before you have to put troops on the ground or accept defeat, as the Israelis had to do in Lebanon. And if we begin dropping bunker busters, cruise missiles and iron fragmentation bombs on Iran this is the choice that must be faced—either sending American forces into Iran to fight a protracted and futile guerrilla war or walking away in humiliation.

“As a people we are enormously forgetful,” Dr. Polk, one of the country’s leading scholars on the Middle East, told an Oct. 13 gathering of the Foreign Policy Association in New York. “We should have learned from history that foreign powers can’t win guerrilla wars. The British learned this from our ancestors in the American Revolution and re-learned it in Ireland. Napoleon learned it in Spain. The Germans learned it in Yugoslavia. We should have learned it in Vietnam and the Russians learned it in Afghanistan and are learning it all over again in Chechnya and we are learning it, of course, in Iraq. Guerrilla wars are almost unwinnable. As a people we are also very vain. Our way of life is the only way. We should have learned that the rich and powerful can’t always succeed against the poor and less powerful.”

An attack on Iran will ignite the Middle East. The loss of Iranian oil, coupled with Silkworm missile attacks by Iran on oil tankers in the Persian Gulf, could send oil soaring to well over \$110 a barrel. The effect on the domestic and world economy will be devastating, very possibly triggering a huge, global depression.



The 2 million Shiites in Saudi Arabia, the Shiite majority in Iraq and the Shiite communities in Bahrain, Pakistan and Turkey will turn in rage on us and our dwindling allies. We will see a combination of increased terrorist attacks, including on American soil, and the widespread sabotage of oil production in the Gulf.

Iraq, as bad as it looks now, will become a death pit for American troops as Shiites and Sunnis, for the first time, unite against their foreign occupiers.

The country, however, that will pay the biggest price will be Israel. And the sad irony is that those planning this war think of themselves as allies of the Jewish state. A conflagration of this magnitude could see Israel drawn back in Lebanon and sucked into a regional war, one that would over time spell the final chapter in the Zionist experiment in the Middle East. The Israelis aptly call their nuclear program “the Samson option.” The Biblical Samson ripped down the pillars of the temple and killed everyone around him, along with himself.

If you are sure you will be raptured into heaven, your clothes left behind with the nonbelievers, then this news should cheer you up. If you are rational, however, these may be some of the last few weeks or months in which to enjoy what is left of our beleaguered, dying republic and way of life.

Chris Hedges is the author of the bestselling and National Book Critics Circle Award finalist, [War is a Force That Gives Us Meaning](#) and [What Every Person Should Know about War](#). His newest book, [Losing Moses on the Freeway](#) will be published in June 2005 by Free Press.

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A SPECIAL COMMENT ABOUT LYING

KEITH OLBERMANN ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TERRORISTS AND CRITICS

Anchor, 'Countdown' MSNBC Oct 5, '06

While the leadership in Congress has self-destructed over the revelations of an unmatched, and unrelieved, march through a cesspool ...

While the leadership inside the White House has self-destructed over the revelations of a book with a glowing red cover ...

The president of the United States — unbowed, undeterred and unconnected to reality — has continued his extraordinary trek through our country rooting out the enemies of freedom: the Democrats. Yesterday at a fundraiser for an Arizona congressman, Mr. Bush claimed, quote, "177 of the opposition party said, 'You know, we don't think we ought to be listening to the conversations of terrorists.'"

The hell they did.

One hundred seventy-seven Democrats opposed the president's seizure of another part of the Constitution. Not even the White House press office could actually name a single Democrat who had ever said the government shouldn't be listening to the conversations of terrorists.

President Bush hears what he wants.

Tuesday, at another fundraiser in California, he had said, "Democrats take a law enforcement approach to terrorism. That means America will wait until we're attacked again before we respond."

Mr. Bush fabricated that, too. And evidently he has begun to fancy himself as a mind reader.

"If you listen closely to some of the leaders of the Democratic Party," the president said at another fundraiser Monday in Nevada, "it sounds like they think the best way to protect the American people is — wait until we're attacked again."

The president doesn't just hear what he wants. He hears things that only he can hear.

It defies belief that this president and his administration could continue to find new unexplored political gutters into which they could wallow.

Yet they do.

It is startling enough that such things could be said out loud by any president of this nation.

Rhetorically, it is about an inch short of Mr. Bush accusing Democratic leaders, Democrats, the majority of Americans who disagree with his policies of treason.

But it is the context that truly makes the head spin.

Just 25 days ago, on the fifth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, this same man spoke to this nation and insisted, "We must put aside our differences and work together to meet the test that history has given us."

Mr. Bush, this is a test you have already failed.

If your commitment to "put aside differences and work together" is replaced in the span of just three weeks by claiming your political opponents prefer to wait to see this country attacked again, and by spewing fabrications about what they've said, then the questions your critics need to be asking are no longer about your policies. They are, instead, solemn and even terrible questions, about your fitness to fulfill the responsibilities of your office.

No Democrat, sir, has ever said anything approaching the suggestion that the best means of self-defense is to "wait until we're attacked again."

No critic, no commentator, no reluctant Republican in the Senate has ever said anything that any responsible person could even have exaggerated into the slander you spoke in Nevada on Monday night, nor the slander you spoke in California on Tuesday, nor the slander you spoke in Arizona on Wednesday ... nor whatever is next.

You have dishonored your party, sir; you have dishonored your supporters; you have dishonored yourself. But tonight the stark question we must face is — why?

Why has the ferocity of your venom against the Democrats now exceeded the ferocity of your venom against the terrorists?

Why have you chosen to go down in history as the president who made things up?

In less than one month you have gone from a flawed call to unity to this clarion call to hatred of Americans, by Americans. If this is not simply the most shameless example of the rhetoric of political hackery, then it would have to be the cry of a leader crumbling under the weight of his own lies. We have, of course, survived all manner of political hackery, of every shape, size and party. We will have to suffer it, for as long as the Republic stands.

But the premise of a president who comes across as a compulsive liar is nothing less than terrifying.

A president who since 9/11 will not listen, is not listening — and thanks to Bob Woodward's most recent account — evidently has never listened. A president who since 9/11 so hates or fears other Americans that he accuses them of advocating deliberate inaction in the face of the enemy. A president who since 9/11 has savaged the very freedoms he claims to be protecting from attack — attack by terrorists, or by Democrats, or by both — it is now impossible to find a consistent thread of logic as to who Mr. Bush believes the enemy is.

But if we know one thing for certain about Mr. Bush, it is this: This president — in his bullying of the Senate last month and in his slandering of the Democrats this month — has shown us that he believes whoever the enemies are, they are hiding themselves inside a dangerous cloak called the Constitution of the United States of America.

How often do we find priceless truth in the unlikeliest of places?

I tonight quote not Jefferson nor Voltaire, but Cigar Aficionado Magazine. On Sept. 11th, 2003, the editor of that publication interviewed General Tommy Franks, at that point, just retired from his post as commander-in-chief of U.S. Central Command — of Cent-Com. And amid his quaint defenses of the then-nagging absence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, or the continuing freedom of Osama bin Laden, General Franks said some of the most profound words of this generation.

He spoke of "the worst thing that can happen" to this country:

First, quoting, a "massive casualty-producing event somewhere in the Western World — it may be in the United States of America." Then, the general continued, "the Western World, the free world, loses what it cherishes most, and that is freedom and liberty we've seen for a couple of hundred years, in this grand experiment that we call democracy." It was this super-patriotic warrior's fear that we would lose that most cherished liberty, because of another attack, one — again quoting General Franks — "that causes our population to question our own Constitution and to begin to militarize our country in order to avoid a repeat of another mass-casualty-producing event. Which, in fact, then begins to potentially unravel the fabric of our Constitution."

And here we are, the fabric of our Constitution being unraveled, anyway.

Habeus corpus neutered; the rights of self-defense now as malleable and impermanent as clay; a president stifling all critics by every means available and, when he runs out of those, by simply lying about what they said or felt.

And all this, even without the dreaded attack.

General Franks, like all of us, loves this country, and believes not just in its values, but in its continuity. He has been trained to look for threats to that continuity from without. He has, perhaps been as naïve as the rest of us, in failing to keep close enough vigil on the threats to that continuity from within.

Secretary of State Rice first cannot remember urgent cautionary meetings with counterterrorism officials before 9/11. Then within hours of this lie, her spokesman confirms the meetings in question. Then she dismisses those meetings as nothing new — yet insists she wanted the same cautions expressed to Secretaries Ashcroft and Rumsfeld.

Mr. Rumsfeld, meantime, has been unable to accept the most logical and simple influence of the most noble and neutral of advisers. He and his employer insist they rely on the "generals in the field." But dozens of those generals have now come forward to say how their words, their experiences, have been ignored.

And, of course, inherent in the Pentagon's war-making functions is the regulation of presidential war lust.

Enacting that regulation should include everything up to symbolically wrestling the Chief Executive to the floor.

Yet—and it is Pentagon transcripts that now tell us this—evidently Mr. Rumsfeld's strongest check on Mr. Bush's ambitions, was to get somebody to excise the phrase "Mission Accomplished" out of the infamous Air Force Carrier speech of May 1st, 2003, even while the same empty words hung on a banner over the President's shoulder.

And the vice president is a chilling figure, still unable, it seems, to accept the conclusions of his own party's leaders in the Senate, that the foundations of his public position, are made out of sand.

There were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. But he still says so.

There was no link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaida. But he still says so.

And thus, gripping firmly these figments of his own imagination, Mr. Cheney lives on, in defiance, and spreads—around him and before him—darkness, like some contagion of fear.

They are never wrong, and they never regret — admirable in a French torch singer, cataclysmic in an American leader.

Thus, the sickening attempt to blame the Foley scandal on the negligence of others or "the Clinton era"—even though the Foley scandal began before the Lewinsky scandal.

Thus, last month's enraged attacks on this administration's predecessors, about Osama bin Laden—a projection of their own negligence in the immediate months before 9/11.

Thus, the terrifying attempt to hamstring the fundament of our freedom—the Constitution—a triumph for al Qaida, for which the terrorists could not hope to achieve with a hundred 9/11's.

And thus, worst of all perhaps, these newest lies by President Bush about Democrats choosing to await another attack and not listen to the conversations of terrorists.

It is the terror and the guilt within your own heart, Mr. Bush, that you redirect at others who simply wish for you to temper your certainty with counsel.

It is your own—before 9/11 - and (and you alone know this), perhaps afterwards.

Mr. President, these new lies go to the heart of what it is that you truly wish to preserve.

It is not our freedom, nor our country—your actions against the Constitution give irrefutable proof of that. You want to preserve a political party's power. And obviously you'll sell this country out, to do it.

These are lies about the Democrats — piled atop lies about Iraq — which were piled atop lies about your preparations for al Qaida.

To you, perhaps, they feel like the weight of a million centuries — as crushing, as immovable.

They are not.

If you add more lies to them, you cannot free yourself, and us, from them.

But if you stop — if you stop fabricating quotes, and building straw-men, and inspiring those around you to do the same — you may yet liberate yourself and this nation.

Please, sir, do not throw this country's principles away because your lies have made it such that you can no longer differentiate between the terrorists and the critics.



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THE ENEMY WITHIN AND THE GIFT OF FEAR

by John Atcheson

Mon, Oct 2, 2006 CommonDreams.org Last week we lost a part of the Constitution. It wasn't taken from us on the battlefield. It wasn't snatched away from us by a determined enemy.

It was freely given, sacrificed out of fear and cowardice. A fear made all the worse because it was manufactured out of artifice and wielded by politicians who love their power so much that they played cheap political tricks with long cherished freedoms for no other reason than they want to win an election.

Some of them were Democrats. Most were Republicans. And they were led by the coward-in-chief and chief fear monger, George Bush.

But it was We the People, who allowed it. Our Founding Fathers, if they are looking on, are now hanging their heads in mourning. The soldiers who fought and died in the Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, World Wars I and II and host of lesser wars to protect those freedoms look down upon us now with rage at the mockery we've made of their sacrifice.

And what was it that scared us so? Had the mighty armies of Hitler risen from the dead? Were his Panzer divisions poised to roll over Europe? Did the Soviet Union suddenly coalesce? Was it standing once again before us, an implacable foe wielding tens of thousands of nuclear war heads? No. It was merely a few thousand jihadists armed with homemade bombs, cheap rifles, and plastic box cutters.

That's it. No navy, no airforce, no military equipment other than what they could scrounge, steal, beg and borrow. This is the faux World War III bogeyman the Republicans gin up every two years in order to win elections.

In the years between, they pass legislation giving their rich patrons more, giving you less, and sticking your children with the bill.

Tax cuts for Paris Hilton, wage freezes for you, massive debt for your children. Oil profits for Exxon, price gouging for you and global warming for your children.

But they wager that if you're frightened enough, you won't notice. Just as Orwell's Oceania needed its war with Eastasia or Eurasia to justify its excesses, so does Bush's America need its perpetual "war." And this is the lie the Democrats refuse to confront, because they don't want to be perceived as weak in this "war." But of course, it's not a war. It's meaningless to declare a war on terrorism, which as everyone except Bush, Rumsfeld, Rice and Cheney seems to have figured out is a tactic, not a foe.

Practitioners of terror such as Hamas, Hezbollah, al Qaeda, or right wing whackos like McVee - terrorists all - have different interests and different motivations. Attempting to deal with them in a one-size fits all "war on terror" makes about as much sense as trying to prevent measles, mumps, and Rubella with a flu shot. Less, actually. Hamas seeks to settle the Palestinian question; Hezbollah seeks to destroy Israel; al Qaeda seeks some grand caliphate, the expulsion of the west, and the return of Saudi Arabia to the hands of the pure. And the fastest growing terrorist group - homegrown Iraqi insurgents created by Bush's policies - seek to oust US troops from occupying their country.

Each requires a unique approach; none can be solved by bullets and bayonets; none poses anything like an existential threat to the US; each can only be made worse by conflating them into some monolithic enemy; and finally, none can come anywhere near defeating the US. At their worst, they pose a very limited threat capable of creating a true tragedy every five years or so.

But the dirty little secret of Bush's ill-conceived "War on Terror" is this: it gives the terrorist exactly what they crave most - the gift of fear and the illusion of power. Here's why.

As terrorism expert Jeffery Record points out, terrorism cannot be an enemy, it is a tactic used by the weak against the strong. When a party or group is too weak to achieve its goals militarily, terrorism as a tactic seeks to influence and intimidate the foe into acquiescing or accepting a political outcome. It is not designed to defeat the opponent, rather it seeks to force the foe to change from within. When a victim of terrorism responds by feeling terror, it feeds the terrorist. Thus, each time the Bush administration cranks up their fear and fog machine to win an election, they strengthen the terrorist's hand. Each time they claim we are in a clash which will determine the fate of civilizations, they fuel terrorism and those who would use terrorist tactics.

What is needed is courage, and a little perspective.

Fact: Over the last five years, automobiles have killed more than sixty times as many Americans as terrorism has. Do we declare a war on cars or roads or drivers? Should we suspend Constitutional rights and invade Detroit?

Fact: averaged over five years, more Americans have drowned each year than have been killed by terrorists here at home. Should we declare a global war on water?

Fact: Nearly as many have died over the last five years from electrocution as have died from terrorism. Should we abandon electricity? Declare a war on it? Abandon our Constitutional freedoms, spy on our citizens and torture utility executives?

Of course not. And yes, there is a difference between accidents and intentional attacks. The point of these statistics is to give the threat of terrorism a sense of proportion. The above risks are threats that are arguably preventable given enough money and draconian laws, but which we've chosen to live with.

Just for perspective, cardio-vascular disease kills about 1 million a year, yet many of us smoke, live sedentary lifestyles, and swill down cholesterol laden foods. We willingly and calmly accept a risk that is thousands of times more likely than death from terrorists.

Bottom line: terrorism doesn't threaten our existence. It threatens us with tragedy, but on a scale that is equal to or much less than many other tragedies we have no trouble accepting.

Indeed, the worst case scenario - detonation of a stolen nuclear device - would likely kill fewer than a hundred thousand (about a tenth of the number of people who die from cardio-vascular disease each year) and it would be about as destructive as Katrina. Horrible, to be sure, but nothing like the threats of the Cold War or Nazism, or any of several threats we choose to live with each and every day.

What is needed now, in facing terrorism, is a leader who will call us to courage, not paralyze us with fear. Courage, and a plan that is grounded in an understanding of what terrorism is and of the true magnitude of the limited threat it poses, and a strategy for reducing that threat, rather than increasing it.

Sadly, what we have is a leader who is politically motivated to instill fear. One who has concocted a ready-fire-aim fantasy as a solution. A later day cowboy who doesn't read; who prefers to act on his "gut"; who doesn't learn from his many mistakes; who has the audacity and un-earned arrogance to place himself above the law; who refuses to listen to men and women who wear the uniform - folks who have put their lives on the line. As Lt. General Newbold said, the decision to invade Iraq, "...was done with a casualness and swagger that are the special province of those who have never had to execute these missions or bury the results."

Willingly trading away our freedoms at the behest of this ignorant and incompetent President is an abject act of cowardice on our part. Ginning up the Republican fear machine in order to win elections - a strategy straight out of Goering's play book - is immoral on their part.

But the greatest act of cowardice may be that the Democrats and the press let them get away with it. It is time for the Democrats to show some spine. Time to take on the Republican's politically motivated fear mongering.

And when they ask, "but what is the alternative?" it is time to tell the American people that this is not a war to be won with bullets, boots bayonets and tough talk - it requires better Intelligence gathering, good old fashioned police work, diplomacy and engagement (not unilateralism), an even-handed foreign policy, and a commitment to putting human rights above oil rights. It requires the judicious and limited use of military force as a last resort, and then only with a clear and rapid exit strategy.

It also requires us to invest more in protecting our homeland - our ports; our schools; our power plants and chemical plants; our trains, planes, tunnels, buses, ferries, and bridges. Finally, it requires us to secure the world's loose nuclear material and to once again join the rest of the world in seeking treaties and laws that civilize society, not in arrogant claims of exemption from them.

Bush has either undercut or under-invested in these kinds of actions and strategies in favor of his ill-conceived Iraq War, and his global "war" on terrorism. The National Intelligence Estimate tells us that this strategy of focusing "over there" has made us less safe, and the 911 Commission recently gave the administration an average grade of "D" on actions needed to secure the homeland.

For example, the Bush administration has consistently slow-walked and short-funded the Nunn-Lugar program, which is designed to secure the world's loose nuclear material. For less than five days worth of what we spend in Iraq we could double the annual budget for Nunn-Lugar and make America safer. Or, we could double the funding for this critical program by suspending Bush's cuts in inheritance taxes for just five folks in Paris Hilton's circumstances.

Either way, we would dramatically speed up the effort to get the world's loose nuclear material under lock and key and reduce the single biggest threat posed by terrorists of any stripe.

Apparently, though, Mr. Bush thinks it's more important to throw money down the Iraqi rat hole and to give Paris Hilton and friends their full inheritance and a hefty tax cut to boot, than it is to keep loose nuclear material out of the hands of al Qaeda.

But Bush's most serious transgression in this struggle, lies in placing himself above the law.

A nation in fear, willing to jettison its values and principles, to torture its enemies, to eavesdrop on its citizens, to lie to them and keep secrets from them will defeat itself.

For if we are at war, it is a war of ideas and ideals - it can't be won by abandoning our principles and our laws, it can only be won by embracing them. The Constitution and the values it embodies are the most powerful weapons we wield in this "war." It has stood as a beacon of hope and an inspiration to action to men and women throughout the world for more than two centuries. If we let fear make us desert these principles, we not only feed the terrorist that which he seeks, but we deprive ourselves of our most effective weapon - and we do to ourselves that which our enemy has no hope of achieving.

John Atcheson has written extensively on politics and policy and his writing has appeared in the Washington Post, The Baltimore Sun, The San Jose Mercury News, The Memphis Commercial Appeal and several other papers, as well as various work journals. He has over 30 years experience in government and with the nation's premier think tanks.



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REPUBLICANS GIVE IN TO BUSH, BETRAY AMERICA

by Thom Hartmann

September 25, '06 CommonDreams.org Senators John McCain, John Warner, and Lindsey Graham were presented with an opportunity to uphold the fundamental human right known as habeas corpus, or flinch and write a law that would retroactively make sure that George W. Bush could not be prosecuted for violations of habeas corpus in our overseas concentration camps and prisons.

it was a contest between protecting the President and protecting the Constitution.

The Republican senators flinched, and in last week's so-called "compromise" chose Bush over the Constitution. In doing so, they turned their backs on a rule of law that stretches back over nearly eight centuries to an epic moment in 1215 on a meadow by the River Thames in the United Kingdom.

The modern institution of civil and human rights, and particularly the writ of habeas corpus, began in June of 1215 when King John was forced by a group of feudal lords to sign the Magna Carta at Runnymede.

Two of the most critical parts of the Magna Carta were articles 38 and 39, which established the foundation for what is now known as "habeas corpus" laws (literally, "produce the body" from the Latin - meaning, broadly, "let this person go free or else give him a trial - you may not hold him forever with charging him with a crime"). The concept of habeas corpus in the Magna Carta led directly to the Fourth through Eighth Amendments of our Constitution, and hundreds of other federal and state due process provisions.

Articles 38 and 39 of the Magna Carta said:

"38 In future no official shall place a man on trial upon his own unsupported statement, without producing credible witnesses to the truth of it.

"39 No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgment of his equals or by the law of the land."

This was radical stuff, and over the next four hundred years average people increasingly wanted for themselves these same protections from the abuse of governmental power that the feudal lords had gotten at Runnymede.

But from 1215 to 1628, outside of the privileges enjoyed by the feudal lords, the average person could be arrested and imprisoned at the whim of the king with no recourse to the courts.

Then, in 1627, King Charles I overstepped, and the people snapped. Charles I threw into jail five knights in a tax disagreement, and the knights sued the King, asserting their habeas corpus right to be free or on bail unless convicted of a crime.

King Charles I, in response, invoked his right to simply imprison anybody he wanted (other than the rich feudal lords), anytime he wanted, as he said, "*per speciale Mandatum Domini Regis.*"

This is essentially the same argument that George W. Bush makes today for why he has the right to detain people without charges for as much as their entire lives solely on his own say-so: because he's in charge. And it's an argument now supported on the record by these Republicans who have chosen to betray America's founding principles in exchange for peace with the White House.

**"We must pursue peace as vigorously as the Bush Administration has pursued war." — Rocky Anderson
mayor of Salt Lake City, Utah**

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DEMAND

TRUTH

Legal scholars had expected that George W. Bush's decree to the "renegade" Republicans would meet true resistance.

After all, King Charles' decree wasn't well received. The result of his overt assault on the rights of citizens led to a sort of revolt in the British Parliament, producing the 1628 "Petition of Right" law, an early version of our Fourth through Eighth Amendments, which restated Articles 38 and 39 of the Magna Carta and added that "writs of habeas corpus, [are] there to undergo and receive [only] as the court should order." It was later strengthened with the "Habeas Corpus Act of 1640" and a second "Habeas Corpus Act of 1679."

Thus, the right to suspend habeas corpus no longer was held by the King. It was exercised solely by the people's (elected and hereditary) representatives in the Parliament.

The third George to govern the United Kingdom confronted this in 1815 when he came into possession of Napoleon Bonaparte. But the British laws were so explicit that everybody was entitled to habeas corpus - even people who were not British citizens - that when Napoleon surrendered on the deck of the British flagship Bellerophon after the battle of Waterloo in 1815, the British Parliament had to pass a law ("An Act For The More Effectually Detaining In Custody Napoleon Bonaparte") to suspend habeas corpus so King George III could legally continue to hold him prisoner (and then legally exile him to a British fortification on a distant island).

Now, the third George to govern the United States, 191 years later, isn't even bothering with the civilized step that King George III of England took, of asking Congress for a temporary suspension of habeas corpus for a particular situation. Instead, he's demanding that his Republican colleagues give him the sole power to do away with habeas corpus altogether - and Bill Frist is insisting that they will push it through even over a filibuster.

It's a virtual repeat of Charles I's doctrine that a nation's ruler may do whatever he wants because he's the one in charge - "*per speciale Mandatum Domini Regis.*"

Article I of the Constitution outlines the powers and limits of the Legislative Branch of government (Article 2 lays out the Executive Branch, and Article 3 defines the Judicial Branch). In Section 9, Clause 2 of Article I, the Constitution says of the Legislative branch's authority: "The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it."

Abraham Lincoln was well aware of this during the Civil War, and was the first president to successfully ask Congress (on March 3, 1863) to suspend habeas corpus so he could imprison those he considered a threat until the war was over. Congress invoked this power again during Reconstruction when President Grant requested The Ku Klux Klan Act in 1871 to put down a rebellion in South Carolina.

But there is no "Rebellion or Invasion" going on in America right now.

Nonetheless, our President has locked people up, "*per speciale Mandatum Domini Regis.*" Some of their names are familiar to us - US citizens Jose Padilla and Yaser Hamdi, for example - but there are over ten thousand whose names we are not even allowed to know. It's a state secret, after all. *Per speciale Mandatum Domini Regis.*

The Founders must be turning in their graves. Clearly they never imagined such a thing in their wildest dreams. As Alexander Hamilton - arguably the most conservative of the Founders - wrote in Federalist 84:

"The establishment of the writ of habeas corpus ... are perhaps greater securities to liberty and republicanism than any it [the Constitution] contains. ... [T]he practice of arbitrary imprisonments have been, in all ages, the favorite and most formidable instruments of tyranny. ...

"To bereave a man of life, says he, 'or by violence to confiscate his estate, without accusation or trial, would be so gross and notorious an act of despotism, as must at once convey the alarm of tyranny throughout the whole nation; but confinement of the person, by secretly hurrying him to jail, where his sufferings are unknown or forgotten, is a less public, a less striking, and therefore A MORE DANGEROUS ENGINE of arbitrary government.'" [Capitals all Hamilton's from the original.]

The question these tragic Republican senators, ultimately, propose to decide is whether our nation will continue to stand for the values upon which it was founded. And they have chosen timidity and convenience - to trash habeas corpus and the Geneva Conventions and the US War Crimes Act - instead of fulfilling their oaths of office to "defend the Constitution of the United States of America."

President Thomas Jefferson rebuked those who wanted America ruled by an iron-handed presidency that could throw people in jail without constitutional due process.

"I know, indeed," Jefferson said in his first inaugural address on March 4, 1801, "that some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong; that this government is not strong enough. ...

"I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it is the only one where every man, at the call of the laws, would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern."

The sum of this, Jefferson said, was found in "*freedom of person under the protection of the habeas corpus; and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us, and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation.*"

When I was working in Russia some years ago, a friend in Kaliningrad told me a perhaps apocryphal story about Nikita Khrushchev, who, following Stalin's death, gave a speech to the Politburo denouncing Stalin's policies of imprisoning people without trial. A few minutes into Khrushchev's diatribe, somebody shouted out, "Why didn't you challenge him then, the way you are now?"

The room fell silent, as Khrushchev swept the audience with his eyes. "Who said that?" he asked in a reasoned voice. Silence.

"Who said that?" Khrushchev demanded angrily, leaning forward. Silence. Pounding his fist on the podium to accent each word, he thundered, "Who - said - that?" Still no answer.

Finally, after a long and strained silence, the elected politicians in the room fearful to even cough, a corner of Khrushchev's mouth lifted into a smile.

"Now you know," he said with a chuckle, "why I did not speak up against Stalin when I sat where you now sit."

Apparently Senators Graham, Warner, and McCain have about as much spine as did the members of Khrushchev's Politburo. One wonders what sort of Stalin-like threats Bush made to get them to so completely compromise their principles and betray the trust of their country.

Thom Hartmann is a Project Censored Award-winning best-selling author, and host of a nationally syndicated daily progressive talk show carried on the Air America Radio network and Sirius. www.thomhartmann.com His 17 published books include "[The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight](#)," "[Unequal Protection](#)," "[We The People: A Call To Take Back America](#)," "[What Would Jefferson Do?](#)" and "[Ultimate Sacrifice](#)." His most recent book is "[Screwed: The Undeclared War on the Middle Class and What We Can Do About It](#)."

IMPEACHMENT ANYONE?

(continued from page 10) Loo and Phillips — rightly I think — bring up a number of offenses not found on most lists, including:

***"Usurping the American people's right to know the truth about governmental actions through the systematic use of propaganda and disinformation";

***"Overthrowing Haiti's democratically elected president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and installing a highly repressive regime" in his place;

*Hiding government decisions from public and congressional view "by a willful subversion of the Freedom of Information Act."

I would add one item not yet found on anybody's list: the passage by Congress of the Military Commissions Act of 2006 that retroactively and unconstitutionally legalizes various Bush administration acts involving torture and illegal detention, and the passage of other bills doing the same on a number of the crimes listed above. Impeachment is not a criminal process. Legalizing impeachable offenses does not make them less impeachable. But proposing and lobbying to legalize illegal impeachable offenses are themselves additional impeachable offenses.

What Would It Take for Impeachment to Happen?

Believe it or not, the impeachment of George W. Bush and Dick Cheney is perfectly possible, although a number of factors will have to come together for it to happen. The public will is already there, and this is quite remarkable given the lack of action in Congress or mention in the mainstream media. The polling that has been done on impeachment is dramatic. The Washington Post finds that a third of the country wants Bush not just impeached but also removed from office. Zogby finds that, by a margin of 53% to 42%, Americans want Congress to impeach President Bush if he lied about the war in Iraq. When Americans were asked, "What 2 or 3 specific changes would have to take place in order to improve your trust in government today?" the winner by far was "personnel changes/impeachment proceedings." When Pennsylvanians were asked whether they would be likely to vote for a congressional candidate who "supports having impeachment proceedings against President Bush," 84.9% of Democrats said yes, while 7.0% said no. Among Independents, 49.3% said yes, while 40.6% said no.

The Republican National Committee got spooked this past summer and felt obliged to announce that impeachment would be good for Republicans in the coming elections. This claim is made without a shred of evidence, either in history or in present polling. Nothing excites non-Republicans today like impeachment, and "Vote for us or we'll go to jail" is a lousy slogan. The Democratic base is aching for Democrats in Congress to get some spine and stand up to the criminals who are throwing away one of the most brilliant creations of the eighteenth century: our Constitution. Instead, Leader Nancy Pelosi has ordered Democrats in Congress to stay away from impeachment — though she did say that they would hold hearings and see where they went... if the Democrats win a majority in the House of Representatives.

To voters who are paying attention, the "let's hold investigations and see where they go" approach looks disingenuous, given how many impeachable offenses are already public knowledge. I've heard reports from dozens of Congressional representatives, in both parties, who refused to sign onto Conyers' bill for an investigation, and not once has anyone argued that there is too little evidence. The argument always focuses on the "extreme" nature of impeachment or the political agenda behind impeachment. As a result, the Democrats are, for the most part, steering clear even of talk of future investigations.

Quietly, however, Democrats do acknowledge that impeachment is coming. Following the triumphal 1972 election of Richard Nixon, had you raised the topic of impeachment, Democrats in Washington would have dismissed it as impossible. Today, on the other hand, they dismiss it as unacceptable — at least pre-election. When former director of the NSA, Lt. Gen. William Odom, suggested impeaching Bush last week at a forum on Iraq organized by progressive Democratic Congress members, the ensuing silence and shuffling in seats suggested a strong desire by our representatives to dive under the table. They resisted that urge and changed the subject. They did not, however, argue against impeachment.

A lot of activists imagine that there is a conflict between working on impeachment and working on the upcoming elections. They fail to see raising impeachment as one way to win those elections. I would argue that holding a large rally for impeachment, as we did in Charlotte, North Carolina last Saturday, does more to help defeat Republicans than does funding the campaigns of any number of milquetoast Democrats who will use the money to run uninspiring ads that excite nobody. If Democrats could stop worrying for a minute about energizing the Republican base and converting Republicans, they might be able to look at the potential impeachment has to excite and turn out their own base.

This is an off-year election. It will be won by turnout — and by fighting suppression, fraud, and theft. To the extent that the elections are about something as significant as impeachment, candidates and citizens will be more likely to fight for stolen votes.

If the Democratic incumbents all stood for impeachment now, the Democrats would win a majority in a landslide. In fact, they might even persuade the necessary fifteen Republicans to join them and impeach Bush and Cheney pre-election.

Rep. Ron Paul has spoken up for impeachment. Only fourteen more are needed, and there is no law that says Republicans can't put their country ahead of George W. Bush. That fact will become increasingly important if the Democrats do not win a majority or do not fight when their elections are stolen. For now, impeachment advocates find themselves in the situation of trying to push the Democrats to talk about impeachment for their own good.

After the election, come what may, citizen activists will find themselves with time on their hands for at least a few months until the next election cycle begins. During this window, leading into the next Congress, the American public will either force impeachment on Washington or allow the slide toward fascism to continue. This moment in our history presents an opportunity for the first time for a popular presidential impeachment, an impeachment imposed on the government by the people.

Impeachment and removal, followed later by indictment and conviction, will be a long struggle. (It will, sadly, slow Congress down for a while in its work of destroying the world.) But it is needed to restore the U.S. Constitution as well as international law, and to establish a standard of accountability for the launching of aggressive wars. So, while the process may need to begin with crimes that Congress has been less complicit in, such as the use of signing statements, it must end with the offenses our world cannot well survive if they are repeated.

The first subpoena sent to the White House will be refused, of course, and the conflict will develop from that point. Democrats and any Republicans of conscience should be prepared for that and have a plan that will see us through to George Bush's removal from office for the highest of high crimes and misdemeanors.

(continued on page 8)

EXPERTS WARN OF AN ACCIDENTAL ATOMIC WAR

by Eric Rosenberg

Nuclear missile modified for conventional attack on Iran could set off alarm in Russia

Oct 6, '06 [San Francisco Chronicle](#) A Pentagon project to modify its deadliest nuclear missile for use as a conventional weapon against targets such as North Korea and Iran could unwittingly spark an atomic war, two weapons experts warned Thursday.

years after the first atomic bomb was tested in the New Mexico desert, the United States still has some 2,000 nuclear weapons on hair trigger alert and is considering new weapons such as earth-penetrating bunker busters. (AFP/File)

Russian military officers might misconstrue a submarine-launched conventional D5 intercontinental ballistic missile and conclude that Russia is under nuclear attack, said Ted Postol, a physicist and professor of science, technology and national security policy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Pavel Podvig, a physicist and weapons specialist at Stanford. "Any launch of a long-range nonnuclear armed sea or land ballistic missile will cause an automated alert of the Russian early warning system," Postol told reporters.

The triggering of an alert wouldn't necessarily precipitate a retaliatory hail of Russian nuclear missiles, Postol said. Nevertheless, he said, "there can be no doubt that such an alert will greatly increase the chances of a nuclear accident involving strategic nuclear forces."

Podvig said launching conventional versions of a missile from a submarine that normally carries nuclear ICBMs "expands the possibility for a misunderstanding so widely that it is hard to contemplate." Mixing conventional and nuclear D5s on a U.S. Trident submarine "would be very dangerous," Podvig said, because the Russians have no way of discriminating between the two types of missiles once they are launched.

Russian President Vladimir Putin warned that the project would increase the danger of accidental nuclear war. "The media and expert circles are already discussing plans to use intercontinental ballistic missiles to carry nonnuclear warheads," he said in May. "The launch of such a missile could ... provoke a full-scale counterattack using strategic nuclear forces."

Accidental nuclear war is not so far-fetched. In 1995, Russia initially interpreted the launch of a Norwegian scientific rocket as the onset of a U.S. nuclear attack. Then-President Boris Yeltsin activated his "nuclear briefcase" in the first stages of preparation to launch a retaliatory strike before the mistake was discovered.

The United States and Russia have acknowledged the possibility that Russia's equipment might mistakenly conclude the United States was attacking with nuclear missiles.

In 1998, the two countries agreed to set up a joint radar center in Moscow operated by U.S. and Russian forces to supplement Russia's aging equipment and reduce the threat of accidental war. But the center has yet to open.

A major technical problem exacerbates the risk of using the D5 as a conventional weapon: the decaying state of Russia's nuclear forces. Russia's nuclear missiles are tethered to early warning radars that have been in decline since the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. And Russia, unlike the United States, lacks sufficient satellites to supplement the radars and confirm whether missile launches are truly under way or are false alarms.

The scenario that worries Postol, Podvig and other weapons experts is what might happen if the United States and North Korea come to blows and a conventional D5 is launched against a target there from a submerged Trident submarine. Depending on the sub's location, the flying time to Russia could be under 15 minutes so the Russians would have little time to confirm the trajectory — using decaying equipment — before deciding to launch a nuclear strike on the United States.

The D5 missile project involves the removal of nuclear warheads from as many as two dozen D5 ICBMs that are carried aboard the U.S. fleet of 12 Ohio-class Trident submarines.

The Pentagon has the project on an accelerated schedule, with the goal of fielding the weapons alongside their nuclear variants in two years. Each Trident submarine carries 24 D5 missiles, and the plan calls for using two of those as conventional weapons in each sub.

The rocket fired by a submerged submarine would barrel up through the ocean powered by its three-stage engine and rapidly ascend through the atmosphere at speeds up to 20,000 feet per second into outer space.

The warhead compartment of the missile would then plummet back to earth, guided to its target within about 50 feet by sophisticated sensors. Defense officials believe it would gain enough speed and force to penetrate underground command bunkers.



A nuclear cloud. Sixty years after the first atomic bomb was tested in the New Mexico desert, the United States still has some 2,000 nuclear weapons on hair trigger alert and is considering new weapons such as earth-penetrating bunker busters. (AFP/File)

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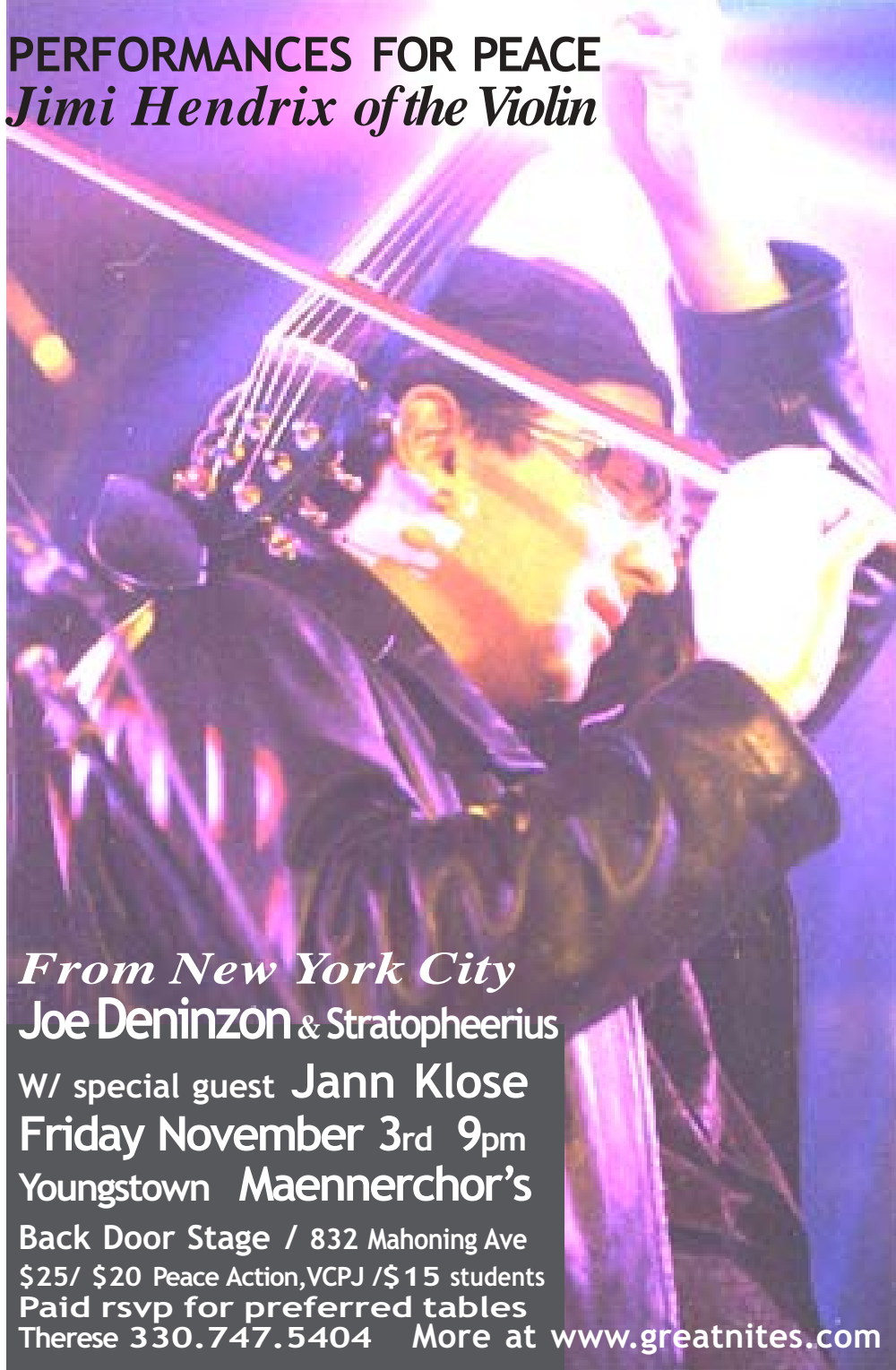
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