

From now on ... Our Biggest Mistake is Believing We Are Free

Written by Bob Alexander

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On December 17, 2007 Senator Christopher Dodd spoke on the Senate floor against George W. Bush's warrantless eavesdropping and telecom company amnesty compromise, *"Clear, first-hand whistleblower documentary evidence [states] that for year on end every e-mail, every text message, and every phone call ... hundreds of millions of private, domestic communications ... have been copied in their entirety by AT&T and knowingly diverted wholesale ... into a secret room controlled exclusively by the NSA."*

Then Senator Barack Obama announced he supported the amnesty "compromise" saying, *"So I support the compromise, but do so with a firm pledge that as President, I will carefully monitor the program, review the report by the Inspectors General, and work with the Congress to take any additional steps I deem necessary to protect the lives -- and the liberty -- of the American people."*

I didn't want George W. Bush, Barack Obama, or any future president of the United States to "carefully monitor the program." I wanted a president who would stop the wiretapping program, restore the Fourth Amendment, and protect the Constitution of the United States. That's his goddamned job. But that's not the president I got for Christmas in 2008. The eavesdropping on every call, text, fax or email hasn't stopped. It's just being "carefully monitored."

Fast forward to December 31, 2011 when Reader Supported News editor Marc Ash wrote, *"President Obama today signed the highly controversial Defense Spending Bill. The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), with its so-called Homeland Battlefield provisions, allows, according to many legal scholars, the indefinite detention of US citizens by the US military. What is most striking is a lengthy signing statement by Obama, in which he maintains his reservations about the Homeland Battlefield provisions, saying, 'I have signed this bill despite having serious reservations with certain provisions that regulate the detention, interrogation, and prosecution of suspected terrorists.' His defense of civil liberties in the signing statement was passionate. Nonetheless, at the same moment, he signed the bill into law."*

So as of now ... anyone ... anywhere ... can be detained indefinitely by order of the President of the United States. Obama said. *"I want to clarify that my Administration will not authorize the indefinite military detention without trial of American citizens."*

"But what he just signed says he can. We just have to trust him ... and all future presidents from now on. Florida Democratic representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz says she'll be working with other Democrats to repeal the Homeland Battlefield provisions as soon as Congress reconvenes. Good luck with that one. What are the chances a Republican controlled house will repeal provisions it had already passed in a 283 to 136 vote?

If the provisions are not repealed, or if the president changes his mind and decides to use the law he signed ... then any of us could end up like Al-Jazeera journalist Sami Al-Hajj. He was arrested in Pakistan on December 15, 2001 and detained at Guantánamo for over 6 years. According to documents published by Wikileaks, the government wanted Al-Hajj *"to provide information on the al-Jazeera News Network's training program, telecommunications*

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equipment, and newsgathering operations.

" He was beaten, sexually assaulted... and released without charge on May 1, 2008.

We are all now officially ... small prey animals. We have the same rights a field mouse has against a hawk. Prey animals can't get a lawyer or a trial. Prey animals get eaten.

So let's kick off The New Year with what we know about Late Great The United States.

War criminals are immune from prosecution.

The president can declare martial law by declaring a public emergency and this public emergency can be anything he says it is.

The president can scoop up U.S. citizens and detain them forever if he wants to because Habeas Corpus is now a memory.

This government doesn't mind backsliding into slavery. One of Project Censored's top stories from 2008 was about how our government used slave labor to build the U.S. Embassy in Iraq. "*Thousands of citizens from countries that banned travel or work in Iraq were tricked and smuggled into brutal and inhumane labor camps and subjected to months of forced servitude ... all in the middle of the US-controlled Green Zone*"

The borders of closing ... or in some cases ... closed.

From the CODEPINK website, "*In October 2007 Ann Wright, retired U.S. army colonel and former diplomat who quit in opposition to the Iraq war, and Medea Benjamin, co-founder of CODEPINK were on their way to Toronto at the invitation of the Toronto Stop the War Coalition but were denied entry into Canada.*" The border was closed to them.

Our email and phone conversations are monitored by the government.

Is my phone tapped? Is yours? We don't know. Was this email read by some government stooge? We don't know. How many U.S. citizens will disappear? We don't know. Somebody goes out for a loaf of bread and a pack of cigarettes some night and then ... poof ... vanishes. Did he run away from his life; or is she in a secret prison somewhere? We'll never know.

How bad is it? How bad could it get? When is it too late?

What exactly are we waiting for? What incident, what sign, what great shocking event has to happen to make us realize The American Dream is over, dead, and done with?

Naomi Wolf, author of *The End of America*, has said that she will stop speaking out when someone she knows has disappeared. I suppose it is a natural delusion to think that someone else will be disappeared first. I guess Ms. Wolf believes that people are renditioned in

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alphabetical order.

I did not expect Barack Obama to be this nation's savior. But I did not think he could turn out to be as bad, or worse, than George W. Bush and Dick Cheney. In 2008 Obama gave us the Audacity of Hope. Less than four years later the only hope we have is the desperate hope that it's not as bad as it seems.

The President wants us to believe what he says ... not what he signed into law.

On December 31st 2011 the "Lesser of Two Evils" argument finally, completely, and utterly collapsed. Any liberal who tries to put a positive spin on this steaming pile is as delusional or corrupt as the rightwing lunatic gasbags on Fox. By signing this perversion, Constitutional professor Barack Obama has put himself above the Constitution. From now on the President of the United States is a king. We have to depend upon his noblesse oblige to keep us out of the gulag. Jesus Christ I'm starting to agree with Sarah "I've Lost My Goddamned Mind" Palin. This hopey, changey thing turned into a Dick Cheney wet dream.

The next time some liberal zombie tells me to vote Democratic because these freakin' Republicans are out to destroy the country I'll subtly disagree by throwing up on his shoes.