

BRITAIN'S POLICE STATE: The cry now is "treason" or the Star Chamber revisited

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Secret, judge-only courts where the accused has no access to the 'evidence'? Changes to the law will include making it illegal to advocate violence to further a person's belief, justifying or validating such violence, or fostering hatred.

Under the Lords Chancellor Cardinal Wolsey and Archbishop Cranmer (1515-1529), the Court of Star Chamber became a political weapon for bringing actions against opponents to the policies of Henry VIII, his Ministers and his Parliament. Then, under James the 1st and Charles the 1st, the Star Chamber Court sessions were held in secret, with no indictments, no right of appeal, no juries, and no witnesses. Evidence was presented in writing. On October 17, 1632, the Court of Star Chamber banned all "news books".[1] Sound familiar?

This is a moment to seize. The Kaleidoscope has been shaken. The pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us re-order this world around us."

Tony Blair @ the Labour Party Conference, October 1st 2001

Tony Blair tells us that "Let no one be in any doubt. The rules of the game are changing", but whose changing them and whose 'game' is it? [2]

The cry of 'Treason', is after all, the logical conclusion to a policy based upon demonisation of the 'other' and the latest sign of a ruling class in desperate need to justify not only its onslaught on the people of Iraq but the attacks on our rights and liberties. Not surprisingly, the bombings of July 7 and the 'topping up' of July 21 came in very handy in the run-up to the cry of 'treason!'

The terrible irony of our current situation is that although the state is undergoing an unprecedented crisis of credibility because of its policy of allying itself with the US imperium, there is no real domestic opposition. So what is it that the state is allegedly so afraid of?

What should not be let out of our sight is the fact that unless the domestic population is presented with a 'clear and present danger', the state faces the real possibility of a genuine opposition developing to its policies. This is the real danger. For the reality is that it is precisely the policies of Blair's government along with that of the US that is the cause of the current situation.

Hence the need to continually up the ante, and thus, the danger is now 'amongst us' and who better to use as a target than not only the 'alien', the Asian, but also an 'alien' religion,

one that still has its more traditional adherents who insist on treating women as property – hence the hijab becomes overnight, a symbol of all that is alien to our alleged British values. Modernity versus tradition become ideological weapons of the state even as it turns the clock back to an earlier age of naked imperialism! These guys know no shame.

The key to understanding the tactics of the Blair government are the phrases, “The British way of life” and “British values”, catch-all phrases that are, by themselves completely hypocritical, especially in the context of the concerted propaganda campaign of the past three decades that centred on the creation of an allegedly multi-cultural Britain.

Thus whilst the ‘experts’ thrash around looking for a clear-cut definition of ‘Britishness’

“To be British seems to us to mean that we respect the laws, the democratic political structures, and give our allegiance to the state in return for its protection,” the group declared.

“To be British is to respect those overarching specific institutions, values and beliefs that bind us all, the different nations and cultures together in peace and in legal order.

“To be British does not mean assimilation into a common culture so that original identities are lost.”

Declares the government-backed study, the Life in the UK Advisory Group, the obvious fact of a country where racism is institutionalized – admitted by the government’s own investigations into the Lawrence murder – at every level – from education to the police, apparently escapes the notice of these ‘experts’. [3]

Moreover, that the self-same government that has waged wars of terror and mayhem against the populations of Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq over the past decade and a half, now talks of making people whose religious and cultural beliefs have become the object of a vicious campaign to marginalize them – ‘British’ – is laughably pathetic not to mention the height of a very British brand of hypocrisy that conveniently airbrushes out centuries of colonial pillage and slavery that is the real backdrop to being ‘British’, at least as the government’s definition goes.

And lest anyone think that this propaganda war is an off-the-cuff affair, a ‘knee-jerk reaction’ to July 7 as some mainline commentators have suggested, look back to the kinds of phrases that Blair has been using in his speeches for the past four years since 9/11 – “We will build a new Jerusalem”, an echo of the post-war Labour Party of Aneurin Bevin and the use of words like “virus” and “inoculation” to describe the “war on terror”. And of course the latest, the “struggle against violent extremism”.

...a new and deadly virus has emerged.

The virus is terrorism, whose intent to inflict destruction is unconstrained by human feeling; and whose capacity to inflict it is enlarged by technology. This is a battle that can’t be fought or won only by armies. Our ultimate weapon is not our guns but our beliefs.

Tony Blair’s speech to the joint session of Congress, 18 July 2003

Blair's PR machine is working overtime, for there can be no doubt that the use of an entire etymology, set into specific contexts, is the work of PR companies, motivational 'experts', indeed the entire panoply of opinion shapers used by modern capitalism.

Here it is that the poison is incubated. Here it is that the extremist is able to confuse in the mind of a frighteningly large number of people, the case for a Palestinian state and the destruction of Israel; and to translate this into a battle between East and West; Muslim, Jew and Christian – Tony Blair

But at the heart of Blair's propaganda blitz are age-old themes, patriotism, tying together the justification for waging war on the civilian populations of defenceless countries to an alleged desire for peace; the continual hyping of the 'human rights' message even as it strips them away; themes that can be found over and over again when preparing a domestic population for war on something or other, normally another country but by no means exclusively so as any reading of the present and the past so clearly demonstrates.

The spread of freedom is the best security for the free. It is our last line of defence and our first line of attack. In some cases, where our security is under direct threat, we will have recourse to arms. In others, it will be by force of reason. But in all cases to the same end: that the liberty we seek is not for some but for all. For that is the only true path to victory. – Tony Blair

The most popular motif is one of race, from the 'dastardly Hun' of WWI through to the 'yellow peril' of WWII and all the stops in-between. The parallels between the propaganda of the Nazis and that of Churchill who thought nothing of gassing Iraqis, are no mere coincidence, for the populace must be persuaded that killing people in the name of 'freedom' or justice requires more than an appeal to a person's sense of what is right but that 'our' killing is somehow better than 'theirs'.

"[Germans] combine in the most deadly manner the qualities of the warrior and the slave. They do not value freedom themselves and the spectacle of it among others is hateful to them."
Winston Churchill, speech to the House of Commons 1943

"We have got to be tough with Germany and I mean the German people, not just the Nazis. You either have to castrate [them] or you have got to treat them...so they can't go reproducing people who want to continue the way they have in the past"
Franklin Delano Roosevelt, August 19, 1944

"From September 11th on, I could see the threat plainly. Here were terrorists prepared to bring about Armageddon."
Tony Blair, March 5 2004

"Why the little yellow bastards!"
Time Magazine 1941, following the attack on Pearl Harbour

We wage war to bring peace, except the peace never comes, it serves as a prelude to yet more wars and now, "perpetual war".

Muslim communities have turned out in force at large anti-war demos, but few

have attended local meetings, for fear that they would be identified to the police, especially in the context of anti-terror laws. This fear has limited the social integration of migrant communities through the anti-war movement, and will continue to do so as the anti-migrant backlash ensues. The UK government will now step up political surveillance of migrant and Muslim communities through police informers, thus intensifying the current fear. Campaign Against Criminalising Communities (CAMPACC) [4]

In order to do this it is necessary to first dehumanise them; thus the use of words that do just this; fiends, animals, beasts and so forth. Thus the slaughter can proceed with no inconvenient moral qualms about our actions as these 'beasts' are less than human, thus unworthy of all those 'rights' our government is busy stripping away, layer by layer in its quest to eradicate allegedly, the "virus" in our midst.

And with death squads now appearing on our streets, there can be no doubt that Blair has brought the 'war' home and with the help of a totally complicit media in tow, only too anxious to prove just how patriotic and 'British' it is, nary a word to the contrary appears in the mainstream press, for fear of being branded 'un-patriotic' or worst of all, giving 'aid and comfort' to a vicious enemy. [5]

Thus was the cold-blooded murder of Mr De Menezes justified, whether innocent or guilty, his death was 'unfortunate', he was, as the front page of the *Independent* informed us, "in the wrong place at the wrong time" just as the tens of thousands of innocent Iraqis were no doubt, also 'in the wrong place at the wrong time'. Tough luck Mr De Menezes, Mr and Mrs Ali, it's all for the greater good, 'our terror is better than the terror of the enemy'.

That it has escaped the notice of the corporate/state press that the actions of the state are in fact worse than those of the bombers should be apparent (to anyone who cares look) whether it be from 30,000 feet up or at point blank range on the Northern Line, for ours has the sanction of the state and in defence of Blair's spurious claims to be defending 'freedom'.

Treason therefore, is the next logical step in the escalation of the state's war on its own population; the logic is inescapable, for in order to justify its attacks on our right to dissent, it is necessary to widen the meaning of what it is to be a dissenter, a process that has no effective end, for ultimately, to protest against such widening of powers itself falls under the heading of dissent. It's Joseph Heller's 'Catch-22' with a vengeance, the vengeance of an all-powerful state.

And for those who defend this 'temporary' restriction on our rights, let them remember that throughout history, unless one defends and even fights to broaden our civil rights, once abrogated, there's very little chance of regaining them, it's a vicious circle of repression, just as it has been since 9/11. Yet there is no evidence that the slew of repressive laws has done the slightest thing to alter the equation of terror, indeed it can be argued that it has had the opposite effect, simply by criminalising an ever wider swathe of those who are now branded as terrorists or 'terrorist sympathisers'. [6]

Notes

1. See Wikipedia entry: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_Chamber

2. Statement by Prime Minister (5.8.05):
www.statewatch.org/news/2005/aug/02pm-terror-statement.htm

3. Forty-five race murders in Britain since the Macpherson Report – Figures released today by the Institute of Race Relations show that there have been forty-five murders with a known or suspected racial element since the publication of the Macpherson report in February 1999:

www.irr.org.uk/2005/august/ak000005.html

4. [See 'We are all 'terror suspects': The 'War on Terror' at home](#)

5. UK: New special forces unit tailed Brazilian (Jean Charles de Menezes shot dead by police on 22 July 2005):

www.guardian.co.uk/print/0%2C3858%2C5254652-103690%2C00.html

6. The price of a chilling and counterproductive recipe – Tony Blair cannot be allowed to sell our rights and freedoms, Shami Chatrabarti (Guardian, 8.8.05):

www.statewatch.org/news/2005/aug/shami-chakrabarti-Guardian.pdf

Further Information

See also the latest [Statewatch](#) for a fuller roundup and

'[The unspeakable in pursuit](#)', Edward Teague, 9 March, 2005 for more on the various and sundry Treason Acts the state has enacted down the ages, including: the Treason Act (Ireland) 1537, Crown of Ireland Act 1542, the Treason Act 1817 and the Treason Felony Act 1848

Stay calm, the government says. Proposed new anti-terrorist laws will be counterproductive, Louise Christian (Guardian, 30.7.05):

www.statewatch.org/news/2005/aug/louise-christian-Guardian.pdf

Reactions to the government's new plans to tackle terrorism: Deportation plans anger rights groups:

www.guardian.co.uk/print/0%2C3858%2C5256497-103685%2C00.html

Who will be deported and who decides?

politics.guardian.co.uk/print/0%2C3858%2C5256517-116499%2C00.html

UK: Anti-Muslim backlash goes on by Institute of Race Relations. 4 August 2005. A month after the London bombings, police forces across the country are reporting rising levels of racial incidents: www.irr.org.uk/2005/august/ha000009.html

Amnesty International: USA/Jordan/Yemen: Torture and secret detention: Testimony of the 'disappeared' in the 'war on terror':

web.amnesty.org/library/print/ENGAMR511082005

The seizure of Indymedia's servers in London: www.eff.org/Censorship/Indymedia/

The documents confirm that the US court order only required Rackspace to produce "log files in relation to the creation and updating of the web spaces corresponding to" particular URLs.

See also: Was the seizure of Indymedia's servers in London unlawful or did the UK government collude?

www.statewatch.org/news/2004/oct/04uk-usa-indymedia.htm

European Commission announces 13 new security research projects to combat terrorism:
www.statewatch.org/news/2005/aug/com-security-res.pdf

Suspect's tale of travel and torture: Alleged bomb plotter claims two and a half years of interrogation under US and UK supervision in 'ghost prisons' abroad (Guardian):
www.guardian.co.uk/print/0%2C3858%2C5252994-111575%2C00.html

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