

COVID-19 Detention Camps: Are Government Round-Ups of Resisters in Our Future?

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Global Research, September 29, 2021

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Science and Medicine](#)

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“No doubt concentration camps were a means, a menace used to keep order.”—[Albert Speer, Nuremberg Trials](#)

It's no longer a question of whether the government will lock up Americans for defying its mandates but when.

This is what we know: [the government has the means](#), the muscle and the motivation to detain individuals who resist its orders and do not comply with its mandates in a vast array of prisons, detention centers, and FEMA concentration camps paid for with taxpayer dollars.

It's just a matter of time.

It no longer matters what the hot-button issue might be (vaccine mandates, immigration, gun rights, abortion, same-sex marriage, healthcare, criticizing the government, protesting election results, etc.) or which party is wielding its power like a hammer.

The groundwork has already been laid.

Under the indefinite detention provision of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the President and the military can detain and imprison American citizens with no access to friends, family or the courts if the government believes them to be a terrorist.

So it should come as no surprise that merely criticizing the government or [objecting to a COVID-19 vaccine](#) could get you labeled as a terrorist.

After all, it doesn't take much to be considered a terrorist anymore, especially given that the government likes to use the words “anti-government,” “extremist” and “terrorist” [interchangeably](#).

For instance, the Department of Homeland Security [broadly defines](#) extremists as individuals, military veterans and groups “that are mainly antigovernment, rejecting federal

authority in favor of state or local authority, or rejecting government authority entirely.”

Military veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan may also be characterized as extremists and potential domestic terrorist threats by the government because they may be [“disgruntled, disillusioned or suffering from the psychological effects of war.”](#)

Indeed, if you believe in and exercise your rights under the Constitution (namely, your right to speak freely, worship freely, associate with like-minded individuals who share your political views, criticize the government, own a weapon, demand a warrant before being questioned or searched, or any other activity viewed as potentially anti-government, racist, bigoted, anarchic or sovereign), you could be [at the top of the government’s terrorism watch list](#).

Moreover, as a *New York Times* editorial warns, you may be an anti-government extremist (a.k.a. [domestic terrorist](#)) in the eyes of the police if you are afraid that the [government is plotting to confiscate your firearms](#), if you believe the [economy is about to collapse](#) and the [government will soon declare martial law](#), or if you display an unusual number of [political and/or ideological bumper stickers](#) on your car.

According to the FBI, you might also be classified as a domestic terrorism threat if you [espouse conspiracy theories](#) or dare to subscribe to [any views that are contrary to the government’s](#).

The government also has a growing list—shared with fusion centers and law enforcement agencies—of ideologies, behaviors, affiliations and other characteristics that could flag someone as suspicious and result in their being labeled *potential* enemies of the state.

This is what happens when you not only put the power to determine who is a *potential* danger in the hands of government agencies, the courts and the police but also give those agencies liberal authority to lock individuals up for perceived wrongs.

It’s a system just begging to be abused by power-hungry bureaucrats desperate to retain their power at all costs.

It’s happened before.

As history shows, the U.S. government is not averse to locking up its own citizens for its own purposes.

One need only go back to the 1940s, when the federal government proclaimed that Japanese-Americans, labeled potential dissidents, could be put in concentration (a.k.a. internment) camps based only upon their ethnic origin, to see the lengths the federal government will go to in order to maintain “order” in the homeland.

The U.S. Supreme Court validated the detention program in *Korematsu v. US* (1944), concluding that the government’s need to ensure the safety of the country trumped personal liberties.

Although that *Korematsu* decision was [never formally overturned](#), Chief Justice Roberts opined in *Trump v. Hawaii* (2018) that “the forcible relocation of U. S. citizens to concentration camps, solely and explicitly on the basis of race, is [objectively unlawful and outside the scope of Presidential authority](#).”

Roberts' statements provide little assurance of safety in light of the government's tendency to sidestep the rule of law when it suits its purposes. Pointing out that [such blatantly illegal detentions could happen again](#)—with the blessing of the courts—Justice Scalia once warned, “In times of war, the laws fall silent.”

In fact, the creation of detention camps domestically has long been part of the government's budget and operations, falling under the jurisdiction of FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FEMA's murky history dates back to the 1970s, when President Carter created it by way of an executive order merging many of the government's disaster relief agencies into one large agency.

During the 1980s, however, reports began to surface of secret military-type training exercises carried out by FEMA and the Department of Defense. Code named Rex-84, 34 federal agencies, including the CIA and the Secret Service, were trained on how to deal with domestic civil unrest.

FEMA's role in creating top-secret American internment camps is well-documented.

But be careful who you share this information with: it turns out that voicing concerns about the existence of FEMA detention camps is among the growing list of opinions and activities which may make a federal agent or government official think you're an extremist (a.k.a. terrorist), or sympathetic to terrorist activities, and thus qualify you for indefinite detention under the NDAA. Also included in that list of “dangerous” viewpoints are advocating states' rights, believing the state to be unnecessary or undesirable, “conspiracy theorizing,” concern about alleged FEMA camps, opposition to war, organizing for “economic justice,” frustration with “mainstream ideologies,” opposition to abortion, opposition to globalization, and ammunition stockpiling.

Now if you're going to have internment camps on American soil, someone has to build them.

Thus, in 2006, it was announced that Kellogg Brown and Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton, had been awarded a \$385 million contract to build American detention facilities. Although the government and Halliburton were not forthcoming about where or when these domestic detention centers would be built, they rationalized the need for them in case of “an emergency influx of immigrants, or to support the rapid development of new programs” in the event of other emergencies such as “natural disasters.”

Of course, these detention camps will have to be used for anyone viewed as a threat to the government, and that includes political dissidents.

So it's no coincidence that the U.S. government has, since the 1980s, acquired and maintained, without warrant or court order, a database of names and information on Americans considered to be threats to the nation.

As *Salon* reports, this database, [reportedly dubbed “Main Core,”](#) is to be used by the Army and FEMA in times of national emergency or under martial law to locate and round up Americans seen as threats to national security. There are at least 8 million Americans in the Main Core database.

Fast forward to 2009, when the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) released two

reports, one on "[Rightwing Extremism](#)," which broadly defines rightwing extremists as individuals and groups "that are mainly antigovernment, rejecting federal authority in favor of state or local authority, or rejecting government authority entirely," and one on "[Leftwing Extremism](#)," which labeled environmental and animal rights activist groups as extremists.

Incredibly, both reports use the words terrorist and extremist interchangeably.

That same year, the DHS launched [Operation Vigilant Eagle](#), which calls for surveillance of military veterans returning from Iraq, Afghanistan and other far-flung places, characterizing them as extremists and potential domestic terrorist threats because they may be "disgruntled, disillusioned or suffering from the psychological effects of war."

These reports indicate that for the government, so-called extremism is not a partisan matter. Anyone seen as opposing the government—whether they're Left, Right or somewhere in between—is a target, which brings us back, full circle, to the question of whether the government will exercise the power it claims to possess to detain anyone perceived as a threat, i.e., anyone critical of the government.

The short answer is: yes.

The longer answer is more complicated.

Despite what some may think, the Constitution is no magical incantation against government wrongdoing. Indeed, it's only as effective as those who abide by it.

However, without courts willing to uphold the Constitution's provisions when government officials disregard it and a citizenry knowledgeable enough to be outraged when those provisions are undermined, it provides little to no protection against SWAT team raids, domestic surveillance, police shootings of unarmed citizens, indefinite detentions, and the like.

Frankly, the courts and the police have meshed in their thinking to such an extent that anything goes when it's done in the name of national security, crime fighting and terrorism.

Consequently, America no longer operates under a system of justice characterized by due process, an assumption of innocence, probable cause and clear prohibitions on government overreach and police abuse. Instead, our courts of justice have been transformed into courts of order, advocating for the government's interests, rather than championing the rights of the citizenry, as enshrined in the Constitution.

We seem to be coming full circle on many fronts.

Consider that two decades ago we were debating whether non-citizens—for example, so-called enemy combatants being held at Guantanamo Bay and Muslim-Americans rounded up in the wake of 9/11—were entitled to protections under the Constitution, specifically as they relate to indefinite detention. Americans weren't overly concerned about the rights of non-citizens then, and now we're the ones in the unenviable position of being targeted for indefinite detention by our own government.

Similarly, most Americans weren't unduly concerned when the U.S. Supreme Court gave Arizona police officers the green light to stop, search and question anyone—ostensibly those fitting a particular racial profile—they suspect might be an illegal immigrant. A decade later,

the cops largely have carte blanche authority to stop any individual, citizen and non-citizen alike, they suspect might be doing something illegal (mind you, in this age of overcriminalization, that could be anything from feeding the birds to growing exotic orchids).

Likewise, you still have a sizeable portion of the population today unconcerned about the government's practice of spying on Americans, having been brainwashed into believing that if you're not doing anything wrong, you have nothing to worry about.

It will only be a matter of time before they learn the hard way that in a police state, it doesn't matter who you are or how righteous you claim to be, because eventually, you will be lumped in with everyone else and everything you do will be "wrong" and suspect.

Indeed, it's happening already, with [police relying on surveillance software such as ShadowDragon](#) to watch people's social media and other website activity, whether or not they suspected of a crime, and potentially use it against them when the need arises.

It turns out that we are Soylent Green, being cannibalized by a government greedily looking to squeeze every last drop out of us.

The 1973 film *Soylent Green*, starring Charlton Heston and Edward G. Robinson, is set in 2022 in an overpopulated, polluted, starving New York City whose inhabitants depend on synthetic foods manufactured by the Soylent Corporation for survival.

Heston plays a policeman investigating a murder who discovers the grisly truth about the primary ingredient in the wafer, Soylent Green, which is the principal source of nourishment for a starved population. "It's people. Soylent Green is made out of people," declares Heston's character. "They're making our food out of people. Next thing they'll be breeding us like cattle for food."

Oh, how right he was.

Soylent Green is indeed people or, in our case, Soylent Green is our own personal data, repossessed, repackaged and used by corporations and the government to entrap us in prisons of our own making.

Without constitutional protections in place to guard against encroachments on our rights when power, technology and militaristic governance converge, it won't be long before we find ourselves, much like Edward G. Robinson's character in *Soylent Green*, looking back on the past with longing, back to an age where we could speak to whom we wanted, buy what we wanted, think what we wanted, and go where we wanted without those thoughts, words and movements being tracked, processed and stored by corporate giants such as Google, sold to government agencies such as the NSA and CIA, and used against us by militarized police with their army of futuristic technologies.

We're not quite there yet, but as I make clear in my book [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#) and in its fictional counterpart [The Erik Blair Diaries](#), that moment of reckoning is getting closer by the minute.

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This article was originally published on [The Rutherford Institute](#).

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