

Imperialism and Fascism are on the Rise in the USA

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If Tyranny and Oppression come to this land, it will be in the guise of fighting a foreign enemy.”

James Madison (1751-1836), 4th U.S. President and author of the U.S. Constitution

“When fascism comes to America, it will be wrapped in the flag and carrying the cross.”

Sinclair Lewis, (It Can't Happen Here, 1935)

“Unhappy events abroad have retaught us two simple truths about the liberty of a democratic people. The first truth is that the liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of a private power to a point where it becomes stronger than the democratic state itself. That, in its essence, is fascism – ownership of government by an individual, by a group, or by any other controlling private power.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945), 32nd US President

“...An empire is a despotism, and an emperor is a despot, bound by no law or limitation but his own will; it is a stretch of tyranny beyond absolute monarchy. For, although the will of an absolute monarch is law, yet his edicts must be registered by parliaments. Even this formality is not necessary in an empire.”

John Adams (1735-1826), 2nd American President

“I’m the commander in chief, see, I don’t need to explain, I do not need to explain why I say things. That’s the interesting part about being president. Maybe somebody needs to explain to me why they say something, but I don’t feel like I owe anybody an explanation.”

George W. Bush, quoted in Bob Woodward’s book ‘Bush at War’

It may be partly a consequence of the [terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001](#), and the perceived rising external threat coming from [fanatical Islamists](#), but it is undeniable that imperialism abroad and fascism at home are on the rise in 21st Century America. This is amazing, because, along with totalitarian communism, these were precisely the two most

disastrous political diseases of the 20th Century against which the United States and other democracies fought. They led to two world wars and turned the 20th Century into the most murderous century in the history of mankind. —Such a development is important for the United States, but it is also of paramount importance for all the other democracies, because if the United States, which has one of the best democratic constitutions in the world, falls to a form of benign totalitarianism, what is the fate of democracy elsewhere?

Before we proceed, let us define a few terms. Indeed, what is imperialism? What is fascism? What is totalitarianism? And what is democracy?

Firstly, [imperialism](#) is the use of force in international relations outside the realm of international law and the requirements of self-defense, with the purpose of taking control of foreign countries, their populations and their resources, and with the express intention of changing their cultures or systems of government.

—The best [book on imperialism](#) is J.A. Hobson's *Imperialism: A Study* (1902).

Secondly, [fascism](#) is a political regime that is characterized by a high degree of concentration of power in the state, in one political party or in one person, accompanied by a messianic and belligerent form of nationalism, by the usurpation of legislative and judicial prerogative by the executive branch of the government, by the suppression of individual freedoms at home, by the worshipping of national symbols such as flags, and by a rise of militarism and the pursuit of military expansions abroad, often so as to avenge some perceived humiliation.

—One of the best [books on fascism](#) is Robert O. Paxton's *The Anatomy of Fascism* (2004).

Thirdly, [totalitarianism](#) is a broad concept concerning the exercise of power by one party or one person within a country through force, while being unrestrained by laws or by rules.

—Perhaps the best [book on totalitarianism](#) is Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1958).

Finally, [democracy](#) is a form of government where the citizens' preferences are paramount in adopting public policies and where people elect a government of the people, by the people and for the people. It rests on the rule of law, the decentralization and separation of powers, and the protection of fundamental liberties and individual rights. It is the antithesis of imperialism, fascism and all types of totalitarianism.

— A classic analysis of American-style [democracy](#) is Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1835).

Now, let us look at a few facts and events that have recently taken place in the United States. When they are placed together to form a whole, they form a powerful political and legal framework that could allow President George W. Bush or any other politician to run the United States by decree rather than by the will of the people.

First, there is the September 2002 [Neocon imperialist doctrine](#) adopted by the Bush-Cheney administration that was used to launch the March 2003 illegal military invasion of Iraq. This was done according to the imperialistic "[Bush Doctrine](#)" of pre-emptive wars¹, of international unilateralism, and of American assertive military supremacy around the world.

—According to this hubristic foreign policy doctrine, the United States could invade any country, especially in the Middle East, in order to impose a local democratic government friendly to the United States and its allies. The occupied country would then become a model to other countries which would adopt the same type of political regime and the same policies. —We all know how this new imperialistic doctrine has fared in Iraq and what have been its disastrous consequences.

The 2002 ‘Bush Doctrine’, in asserting the right for the U.S. to invade other nations for vague reasons of social engineering, nation building or regime change, represents a repudiation of the [Nuremberg Principles](#) and the [United Nations Charter’s](#) ban on wars of aggression, both strongly supported by American leaders sixty years ago. For example, the Nuremberg Charter stipulates that *“To initiate a war of aggression...is not only an international crime, it is the supreme international crime.”* As for the U.N. Charter, its Preamble says that it has been established *“to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.”*

Second, in a manner somewhat reminiscent of the regime of Adolf Hitler suspending the right of [habeas corpus in Germany](#) on February 28, 1933, the Bush-Cheney regime also suspended the right of habeas corpus in the United States. Indeed, on October 17, 2006, President [George W. Bush](#) signed into law S.3930, the [Military Commissions Act](#), a law that cancels the right of habeas corpus for foreigners accused of terrorism and for both Americans and foreigners who have been designated as “enemy combatants” by the Executive branch. Under this law, any individual, citizen or non-citizen, can be deprived of the protection of due process at the whim of the [Executive branch](#), and be imprisoned indefinitely without legal recourse. —The United States is probably the only country in the world where the right of habeas corpus has been suspended and yet is still being called a ‘democratic’ country.

Third, the [Defense Authorization Act of 2006](#) (H.R. 1815), passed by Congress on September 30 2006, and signed into law by President George W. Bush on October 17, 2006, empowers the president to impose [martial law](#) in the event of a terrorist “incident,” if he or other federal officials perceive a shortfall of “public order”. The resort to martial law could come, for example, as a response to a terrorist attack, but it is not excluded that it could be imposed if some antiwar protests were to get unruly or after any major political disturbance. Since the current Bush-Cheney administration got away with declaring a war abroad on a pretext, what would prevent them from imposing martial law at home also on a pretext?

Fourth, let us consider that when Congress passed the Insurrection Act in 1807, the purpose was to severely restrict the president’s ability to deploy the military within the United States. The [Posse Comitatus Act](#) of 1878, tightened these restrictions, imposing a two-year prison sentence on anyone who used the military within the U.S. without the express permission of Congress. Indeed, its Section 1385 (Use of Army and Air Force as posse comitatus), as later amended, states that *“Whoever, except in cases and under circumstances expressly authorized by the Constitution or Act of Congress, willfully uses any part of the Army or the Air Force as a posse comitatus or otherwise to execute the laws shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than two years, or both”.*

These protections are all gone now. —Indeed, the adoption of the John Warner [National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007](#) (H.R. 5122) changed the name of the key provision in the statute book from “Insurrection Act” to “Enforcement of the Laws to Restore Public Order Act.” —While the U.S. Insurrection Act of 1807 stated that the

president could deploy troops within the United States only “to suppress, in a State, any insurrection, domestic violence, unlawful combination, or conspiracy”, the new law allows the president not only to declare martial law and rule by decree, but it also gives the president the power to take charge of United States National Guard troops without the states’ governors’ authorization. The law also expands the list of such permissible cases for martial law to include “natural disaster, epidemic, or other serious public health emergency, terrorist attack or incident, or other condition”—and such “condition” is not defined or limited in scope. All the safeguards against the use of the military at home have been removed in favor of new powers being given to the president to do so nearly at his whim.

Fifth, the [National Security and Homeland Security Presidential Directive](#), signed by President George W. Bush on May 4, 2007, an event that was generally not covered by [U.S. mainstream media](#) or discussed by the U.S. Congress, goes even further and declares that in the event of a “catastrophic event”, the president can become what is best described as a *de facto* dictator: “The President shall lead the activities of the Federal Government for ensuring constitutional government.”

Sixth, on March 15, 2004, the National Security Agency’s wire-tapping and [domestic spying program](#), without proper judicial supervision, was authorized by the Bush-Cheney White House, without Justice Department approval and over the objections of then-[Attorney General John Ashcroft](#). This was an illegal program of domestic spying, because it violated the [1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act](#), which established a panel of judges to hear wiretap requests in secret. When a government begins to [violate the law](#), there is no way of knowing in advance where this will lead and how far it will go. It is an open field.

And seventh, there is the practice of submitting detainees to torture and to other degrading treatments despite the clear obligation not to do so under international law and under U.S. law. It is truly amazing that the Bush-Cheney White House had to be reminded by the Supreme Court, in June 2006, that it had to abide by the [Geneva Conventions](#). —It seems they could not figure that out by themselves.

These are seven ominous developments among the most serious, some having gone nearly unnoticed within the United States, but which would have the Fathers of the U.S. Constitution turning in their graves, if they could see what has been done to their work. Technically, there is still a fair amount of personal liberty and freedom in the United States for the average person, but this could change at the drop of a hat, or more likely, at the stroke of a pen. Over the last six years, the Bush-Cheney administration has been unmistakably shifting the USA toward [imperialism](#) and toward [fascism](#).

—This is not to deny that we live in dangerous and taxing times, but Americans should pray that no major catastrophic event occur under George W. Bush’s watch, because all the necessary apparatus has been set into place to suspend liberties and freedoms and impose a fascist-like regime upon the American people when the pretext presents itself. This is a sobering thought.

[1] -Bush’s March 20, 2003 Iraq War was a preventive war, not a pre-emptive war, since there was no imminent military threat coming from Iraq. However, the Bush administration, in its September 19, 2002, so-called “Bush Doctrine” document, asserted that they were ready to “act preemptively”, “to forestall or prevent such hostile acts by our adversaries.” Also, when they raised the issue of the “mushroom cloud”, they justified (wrongly, I agree) their coming war as a pre-emptive one, not as a preventive one. So, in its official political

vocabulary, the Bush-Cheney regime has affirmed that the Iraq War was a pre-emptive one, even if legally it was not.

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