

It's Time to Fire Washington!

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When will United States Citizens ever decide enough is enough and fire Washington?

Congress is pulling another fast one and no one is paying attention. As if wanting to control the entire population via the latest proposed commission, H.R. 1955, otherwise known as the "**Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007**," is a slick piece of legislation. The way it reads, we are heading straight for an Authoritarian style government (like we are not in one already!).

This new bill is to be added to Title VIII of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, another questionable piece of legislation. Where, may one ask, is representation for "We the People?" The vote for passage in the House of Representatives was 404 ayes to 6 nays and 22 representatives not voting. People on the right or the left think their representation is the best, but quite frankly, there is clearly little difference. Of the fifteen sponsors for this bill, eleven of them are Democrats. The bill has now moved to the Senate for approval, with its two sponsors being Republican.

The title, alone, is offensive. "Homegrown Terrorism?" It will come as no surprise, but the language is also extremely vague. Take the very first line: "To prevent homegrown terrorism and for other purposes." The Senate version has similar language: "To establish the National Commission on the Prevention of Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism, and for other purposes."

Honestly, "...for other purposes?" We pay these people how much and we get "...for other purposes" in a piece of legislation governing the United States of America? Can they be more vague? Furthermore, why aren't more US citizens outraged at such unclear language?

The definitions for the phrases "violent radicalization," "homegrown terrorism," as well as "ideologically based violence" are almost as interesting as the terminology "...for other purposes."

To radicalize means to go through sweeping change, while radicalization means to go from an active or passive stance to one of a more militaristic or intense stance. Are they talking about the United States citizens or the US government? Our government has taken on a vastly more violently radicalized stance in this War on Terror, but, so far, the citizens are taking a more peaceful approach, that of public protests. Do they mean to say that these protests are somehow violently radicalizing? I attended the rather large End the War rally in Washington DC on September 15, 2007, and it wasn't violent at all. In fact, it was inspiring!

What about the oh-so-cleverly coined phrase "ideologically based violence?" According to the framers of this piece of legislation, this string of words is to mean the "use, planned use

or threatened use of force or violence by a group or individual to promote the group or individual's political, religious or social belief." First of all, planned use? Are they now referring to thought crimes? Secondly, what about the threats of government to try and force the Real ID card on us, or vaccines, or the loss of our civil liberties? Would that not fall under this same category? If so, it appears to me the first casualty of this new legislation should be...The USA PATRIOT Act!

In light of these definitions, one must wonder if the current Congress would see our founding father's actions as homegrown terrorism using violent radicalization and ideologically based violence to set our country free from the tyrannical government of England. Better yet, can the citizens of the United States consider the current administration as using violent radicalization and ideologically based violence to promote their agenda around the world or promote an idea, here at home?

This is sounding more and more like the War on Terror is coming home, and not in a good way! The internet has been cited as an aid in "facilitating violent radicalization...." (Our government hasn't figured out a way to take a controlling interest in the internet yet, now have they?) Also, according to HR 1955, preventing such behavior cannot be readily brought about by the "traditional Federal intelligence or law enforcement efforts." They plan to include state and local efforts, as well as including the US Postal Service and university-based Centers of Excellence, these latter being established by the Secretary of Homeland Security. This Commission sounds like it is being governed by...The USA PATRIOT Act!

If I'm not mistaken, though, I do believe President Bush did say, "...either you are with us, you are with the terrorists." In light of the growing disenchantment of the US citizens with regards to this illegal war, does that make United States citizens the enemy of the United States government it elects? Apparently so, hence the need for this commission and legislation!

This newly proposed ten member Commission for the prevention of these so-called violent radicalizations, homegrown terrorists, and ideologically based violent groups and individuals is going to look toward governments in other countries that have knowledge and "significant experience" in dealing with such behavior, such as the UK, Canada and Australia. We know that the UK is one of the most surveilled countries on the planet and Canada was financially worse off than the US, until recently. I guess I didn't realize the UK, Canada, and Australia had such problems with their citizens behaving so badly!

It is past time for us, as good US Citizens, to hold our elected officials responsible for the shoddy legislation they are enacting, especially since they are enacting it on our behalf! When will we learn? When will we take up the fight for our own freedoms? When will we be educated enough to realize we need to fire our representatives in Washington and find a better way to preserve our way of life that doesn't include thousands of pieces of unnecessary legislation?

Endnotes:

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h110-1955> House of Representatives Text of H.R. 1955: Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/vote.xpd?vote=h2007-993> House Vote for HR 1955

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=s110-1959> Senate Text of S. 1959: Violent Radicalization and Homegrown Terrorism Prevention Act of 2007

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radicalization> Radicalization is the transformation from passiveness or activism to more revolutionary, militant or extreme postures. Radicalization is often associated with youth, adversity, alienation, social exclusion, poverty or the perception of injustice to self or others.

http://encarta.msn.com/dictionary/_radicalization.html Radicalize-change fundamentally: to undergo fundamental change, or introduce sweeping change in something. Make or become politically radical: to adopt politically radical views or cause somebody to do this.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html> Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People

<http://www.undersiegemovie.com/moreinfo.html> Documentary "One Nation Under Siege"

http://www.dhs.gov/xres/programs/editorial_0498.shtm Homeland Security Centers of Excellence

<http://www.washingtonyourefired.com/>

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