

Spying on the US Security State: Countermeasures for US Citizens

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Whew! Life is imitating art. President Bush stars as Sgt. Bob Barnes, the maniacal soldier in Oliver Stone's Platoon, who proclaims that he "is reality". Vice President Cheney is Dr. Phibes as portrayed by Vincent Price in the movie classic, The Abominable Doctor Phibes.

You want torture? Talk to Dr. Phibes. Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld brings to life Colonel Walt Kurtz, the rogue US Army soldier from Francis Ford Coppola's Apocalypse Now. American society is modeled on Starship Troopers' militarized society at war with the insects from another galaxy. A great scene in Troopers is a segment which shows children stamping out bugs with glee as the narrator says, "Support the war effort. Do your part to kill the bug!" Welcome to the USA

Is anyone really surprised that the USA now openly advocates torture, spying on its own citizens, or equates dissent with aiding and abetting the "brutal killers" as Bush describes them. Ummm, should US homegrown serial killers be designated enemy combatants? Who could argue with a clear conscience that the US didn't have 911 coming. Civilians are innocent, the American fundamentalists say. Oh me, oh my, the victimized USA and so much innocence lost on that day. That sentimental dream went out the window long ago with the Allied bombing of Dresden in WWII and the fire-bombing and subsequent use of nuclear weapons against Japan. Add Rwanda and Darfur to that and, right at home, add decades of US government approved racial segregation, plus the US government's response to Katrina and, for that matter, 911. Useless commissions, staged congressional hearings, senseless senses of congress, a presidential press conference. All by formula, of course. What's the point? Nothing changes.

The USA is no victim or innocent bystander in the world's machinations. Each and every US citizen is responsible for the actions of its leaders—such as they are. If the American people want a militarized state, then so be it. Have some brass and go for it. If they want to torture, then they should have the guts to stick a knife in the throat of a living human being and watch'em gurgle and die. The NO TORTURE amendment of John McCain is a joke. The US government is a government by and for loopholes. It'll go on as long as the USA exists.

Of Mice and Evil Doers

Why limit the game to waterboarding or electric shock? Use the Spanish Inquisition era Mouse Trap. Put a bunch of mice into an open metal container and then secure it and them on the abdomen of the evil doer/dissenter. Slowly apply heat to the metal. Mice burrow when they can't run. Use your imagination. The "Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave." What nonsense! Special operators are brave, some journalists and citizens are

brave, fire fighters and first responders are brave, but most Americans are from the Land of the Cowardly.

The overthrown regimes, the assassinations, the support for murderous regimes, silencing dissidents, eliminating politicians and sanctioning the use of torture and murder of civilians the world over is the standard mode of operations. The leaders of the USA work hard to ensure that they are not charged with war crimes or plain old violation of US law—such as it is. And the American people tolerate it. At the pace the USA is pissing off the rest of the world, expect more 911's.

We have to, in all seriousness, thank Bush and his crew for speaking bluntly about what has been known for so long by so few, but never really exposed. Yes, Americans, your leaders authorize torture, domestic spying, and are adept at creating threats that lead to wars. After all, it's good for business and anyway, how would "you", White Collar Proletariat, know what it takes to keep the gas pumps in operation or what threats are out there. Since most Americans are, as President Nixon once said, "children", they'll do what they are told.

And the President's toys are the US military. There are 18,000 warfighters, those Americans killed, maimed, and mentally demolished in the ongoing Iraq War. And for what? The Shia and Kurds have their day in the historic election in Iraq that puts orthodox Islam in charge and creates a Kurdish state. Good for them. Now the USA cries foul over the election as if it has any democratic authority to do so. Protecting and

defending the Constitution of the United States is the military's gig. Yet the high flying generals seem to want to protect individual players rather than the country.

Exceeding the Speed Limit Becomes Terrorism

For a time, US citizens were spared the ruthlessness of the USA's actions abroad primarily because the government and its corporate partners could control the images, the stories, the facts from reaching Americans. Recognizing they've lost that ability, the PATRIOT ACT is a sort of government-corporate last ditch effort to retain control over information flows. Now the security police can whip up a file on you containing credit ratings, health records, spending patterns, reading preferences, travel destinations and even sexual preferences. All you have to do to get the honor is to get on a watch list by asking a hypothetical question like this, Is there any other way to change the US government-corporate system other than by overthrowing it? Perhaps one day an innovative lawyer will argue that elements of the US government, and its contractors, are engaging in terrorist activity contrary to the PATRIOT ACT. Now wouldn't that be interesting.

Every state in the union has its own version of the PATRIOT ACT and has empowered their own state and local law enforcement departments with "the tools to fight the terror." The day is not far off when speeding will be a terrorist act because it endangers other drivers, pedestrians, and national security, the latter due to the crime of excess fuel usage that could've been used in the War on those insect-like evil doers.

"Forget about it", as Donnie Brasco from the movie of the same name would say. The New York Times or Washington Post report on the NSA/Pentagon's extensive domestic spy network is shocking? And Congress? With its unwillingness to perform its oversight function, departments like Defense, Homeland Security, and Justice are too big to be controlled, too powerful to be stopped from the routine violations of the US Constitution/Bill of Rights. Think

about it: the US Congress has become a nuisance to the Presidency and its bureaucracy, and the judicial system. That is a fact. So just Forget About It!

Countermeasures

The first and most important countermeasure is to get off your lazy behind and become a responsible US citizen. Instead of being fed the news, hunt it down yourself. Start with foreign newspaper websites, other country news agencies and get used to the images of death and destruction. USA. One of the best data resources is the US government's own data. The CIA Factbook is also an excellent tool. They pull no punches on the weaknesses of each country including the USA. Want to know how many hydroponic devices are monitoring water conditions in the Gulf of Mexico (lots of oil rigs there too), or sick of the Weather Channel? Go to www.noaa.gov and do the work yourself. Your taxes paid for it. Why let some actor feed you the weather story on TV when you can get a lot more info from those who really know about what storm is coming your way.

Want to know your odds about getting away with murder? Visit the Justice Department's website and look for statistics on homicides cleared. You'll be surprised that the odds are pretty good on the criminal side of the equation.

Check out US military unit websites like Camp Bondsteel, or the dynamite special operators' website at Hurlburt Air Force Base in Florida. Visit Stars and Stripes. If it's military matters that interest you, there are plenty of bits and pieces of information that can help you paint a picture of what the civilian policy makers are up to. The US military is their tool.

Visit trade association web sites. The US government security masters don't want anyone to know where critical infrastructure is located. No problem. If you want to know where all the nuclear power plants in the USA are—and who owns them, visit the Nuclear Energy Institute at www.nei.org and click on Nuclear Data. While there, visit the whole site. It's very well done. And what about oil and gas pipeline maps? No

problem. Visit Duke Energy at www.duke-energy.com and click on the Interactive Asset Map. Many energy companies provide asset maps as do their trade groups. If you've got cash, you can access digital maps that detail all the pipelines, hydroelectric plants and dams in the USA.

There are dozens of superb dataminers running websites that are invaluable in the effort to figure out what the US government-corporate enterprise is up to. They are the 21st Century equivalent of the American Colonist's Committees of Correspondence. There are far too many to list here but three are simply indispensable. Want to know how a member of congress is likely to vote or the stock portfolio they have? Visit www.opensecrets.org and look at the congressperson's campaign contributions and stock holdings. Research yields some interesting results. Want to know when and where US government-corporate groups are meeting to set policy? Visit www.cryptome.org and check out the Federal Register postings.

Want to know if the media and the two party system is promoting a powerful individual as the voice of America? Take Brent Scowcroft, for example, the American Turkish Council's Board Chair (another site to visit to figure out why the US has so much invested in Turkey—www.americanturkishcouncil.org). He's the on the good side of the dark side, if there is such a thing in Star Wars. As recently reported, Scowcroft assailed the US Congress for

debating the Armenian Genocide because it's bad for business which, as it happens, is national security (meanwhile the Turkish government is prosecuting its top novelist for alluding to the Armenian Genocide—so much for democracy there). Ole Brent is portrayed as such a caring fellow by the media, yet it turns out that Mr. Nice Guy was complicit with Henry Kissinger, et al, in providing support to the Indonesian government during the invasion and occupation of East Timor from 1975-1999. Thanks to the National Security Archive at www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/, the world knows that Scowcroft is as ruthless as they come.

If you really want to know about national security, join a defense association like the National Defense Industrial Association (www.ndia.org). Each year they sponsor a special operations/low intensity conflict (SO/LIC) conference, exhibition and awards dinner. Embassy officials (Intel types), DOD officials, media members and active duty US/Foreign military and their contractors show up to give the attendees the latest on SO/LIC matters. It's a most excellent production by the NDIA staff who run the event. There are dozens of presentations dealing with civil-military relations, psyops, tactics, etc. Conference proceedings can be had right off the Net.

What can't be had, though, is the happy hour off-the-record (OTR) conversations in the hotel lounge or the exhibition hall. The awards dinner features

commendations read aloud for active special operators for their "classified" activity all over the world (well deserved, they should be recognized). The certificate presentations sometimes tip the hat as to where the operations have taken place.

Want to know about counterinsurgency technology? Go to www.tswg.gov. The folks at the Technical Support Working Group hate publicity and despise those who question the US government-corporate rule of law, but they are to be respected for fielding technologies that help save the lives of the warfighters who are being sacrificed for the delusional schemes of the governing apparatus.

There are dozens of defense related associations in the DC Metro area and many have chapters nationwide and overseas—among them are: NDIA, Armed Forces Communications and Electronics Association (AFCEA), Association of the United States Army (AUSA), The Navy League, Old Crows, Association of Former Intelligence Officials (AFIO), and the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Association (AUVA). They all perform studies and reports that are available on the Net or for free or a small fee.

Most have monthly publications that exclude politics providing just nuts and bolts commentary on the tradecraft. The dirty little secret about the mainstream press is that they comb through the trade publications to get their next story on US military policy or

technology. They know that the trade associations tell Congress what to think and often house former government officials or future ones.

The associations have a lot of clout and insider information.

Don't Just Sit IN Front of the CRT

Good, solid information is to be had frequenting pubs near the agency/issue you are exploring. For defense/Intel purposes, pubs near military-Intel sites are the home of raucous debate coming from greybeard warfighters to those of the present day. Respect doesn't

come easy but once earned, the information flow is grand. It's all strictly OTR and, if you're partial to friendly argument and good cheer—and sometimes heart wrenching stories—it's the place to learn more about what you are not supposed to know of operations past and present.

Finally, don't get emotional. "Use the dark side..." How far would you go to save your own life, your residence, your job, your children, your wife/girlfriend—husband/boyfriend? That's pretty much the operational mentality of your leaders—such as they are.

Will Americans become responsible US citizens? Will they restructure the US government? Will they return to the practice of public executions and torture? Will they destroy or engage the world?

Find out at a theater near you. It's as close to reality as you'll get.

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