

# Tyranny in the Forecast: The Outlook for the New Year

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Global Research, January 02, 2012

[paulcraigroberts.org](http://paulcraigroberts.org) 2 January 2012

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#), [US NATO War Agenda](#)

*Global Research announces Dr. Paul Craig Robert's New Website at <http://www.paulcraigroberts.org/>*

*In March 2010 when I resigned from my column with Creator's Syndicate and put down my pen, I received so many protests from readers that two months later I began writing again. This renewed activity has resulted in this new year in a website of my own.*

*My columns will first appear on my site. Sites on which readers are accustomed to find my columns are permitted to continue to post my columns as long as they link to my site and indicate my copyright.*

The site will stay up if reader support justifies it. Otherwise, I will conclude that the cost of the site exceeds the value of what I have to say.

This past year has not been a good one for the 99%, and the new year is likely to be even worse. This column deals with the outlook for liberty. The next will deal with the economic outlook.

The outlook for liberty is dismal. Those writers who are critical of Washington's illegal wars and overthrow of the US Constitution could find themselves in indefinite detainment, because criticism of Washington's policies can be alleged to be aiding Washington's enemies, which might include charities that provide aid to bombed Palestinian children and flotillas that attempt to deliver humanitarian aid to Gaza.  
<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/06/24/us-israel-usa-flotilla-idUSTRE75N4A620110624>

The Bush/Obama regimes have put the foundation in place for imprisoning critics of the government without due process of law. The First Amendment is being all but restricted to rah-rah Americans who chant USA! USA! USA! Washington has set itself up as world prosecutor, forever berating other countries for human rights violations, while Washington alone bombs half a dozen countries into the stone age and threatens several more with the same treatment, all the while violating US statutory law and the Geneva Conventions by torturing detainees.  
<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2008/06/18/41514/general-who-probed-abu-ghraib.html>

Washington rounds up assorted foreign politicians, whose countries were afflicted with civil wars, and sends them off to be tried as war criminals, while its own war crimes continue to mount. However, if a person exposes Washington's war crimes, that person is held without charges in conditions that approximate torture.

Bradley Manning is the case in point. Manning, a US soldier, is alleged to be the person who released to WikiLeaks the “Collateral Murder” video, which, in the words of Marjorie Cohn, “depicts U.S. forces in an Apache helicopter killing 12 unarmed civilians, including two Reuters journalists. People trying to rescue the wounded were also fired upon and killed.”

One of the Good Samaritans was a father with two small children. The video reveals the delight that US military personnel experienced in blowing them away from the distant skies. When it became clear that the Warriors Bringing The People Democracy had blown away two small children, instead of remorse we hear an executioner’s voice saying: “that’s what he gets for bringing children into a war zone.”

The quote is from memory, but it is accurate enough. When I first saw this video, I was astonished at the brazen war crime. It is completely obvious that the dozen or so murdered people were simply people walking along a street, threatening no one, unarmed, doing nothing out of the ordinary. It was not a war zone. The horror is that the US soldiers were playing video games with live people. You can tell from their commentary that they were having fun by killing these unsuspecting people walking along the street. They enjoyed killing the father who stopped to help and shooting up his vehicle with the two small children inside.

This was not an accident of a drone, fed with bad information, blowing up a school full of children, or a hospital, or a farmer’s family. This was American soldiers having fun with high tech toys killing anyone that they could pretend might be an enemy.

When I saw this, I realized that America was lost. Evil had prevailed.

I was about to write that nothing has been done about the crime. But something was done about it. An American soldier who recognized the horrific war crime knew that the *US military knew about it and had done nothing about it*. He also knew that as a US soldier he was required to report war crimes. But to whom? War crimes dismissed as “collateral damage” are the greatest part of Washington’s 21st century wars.

A soldier with a moral conscience gave the video to WikiLeaks. We don’t know who the soldier is. Washington alleges that the soldier is Bradley Manning, but Washington lies every time it opens its mouth. So we will never know.

All we know is that retribution did not fall on the perpetrators of the war crime. It fell upon the two accused of revealing it—Bradley Manning and Julian Assange.

Manning was held almost two years without charges being presented to a court. In December’s pre-trial hearings all Washington could come up with was concocted accusations. No evidence whatsoever. The prosecutor, a Captain Fein, told the court, if that is what it is, that Manning had been “trained and trusted to use multiple intelligence systems, and he used that training to defy that trust. He abused our trust.”

In other words, Manning gave the world the truth of a war crime that was being covered up, and Washington and the Pentagon regard a truth teller *doing his duty under the US military code* as an “abuser of trust.”

In the 1970 My Lai Courts-Martial of Captain Ernest L. Medina, the Prosecution Brief states:

“ A combat commander has a duty, both as an individual and as a commander, to insure that humane treatment is accorded to noncombatants and surrendering combatants. Article 3 of the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War specifically prohibits violence to life and person, particularly murder, mutilation, cruel treatment, and torture. Also prohibited are the taking of hostages, outrages against personal dignity and summary judgment and sentence. It demands that the wounded and sick be cared for. These same provisions are found in the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War. While these requirements for humanitarian treatment are placed upon each individual involved with the protected persons, it is especially incumbent upon the commanding officer to insure that proper treatment is given.

Additionally, all military personnel, regardless of rank or position, have the responsibility of reporting any incident or act thought to be a war crime to his commanding officer as soon as practicable after gaining such knowledge. Commanders receiving such reports must also make such facts known to the Staff Judge Advocate. It is quite clear that war crimes are not condoned and that every individual has the responsibility to refrain from, prevent and report such unwarranted conduct. While this individual responsibility is likewise placed upon the commander, he has the additional duty to insure that war crimes committed by his troops are promptly and adequately punished.  
[http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/mylai/Myl\\_law3.htm](http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/mylai/Myl_law3.htm)

At the National Press Club on February 17, 2006, General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that “It is the absolute responsibility of everybody in uniform to disobey an order that is either illegal or immoral.” General Pace said that the military is prohibited from committing crimes against humanity and that such orders and events must be made known.

However, when Manning followed the military code, his compliance with law was turned into a crime. Captain Fein goes on to tell the “court” [a real court would throw out the bogus charges, but Amerika no longer has real courts] that “ultimately, he aided the enemies of the United States by indirectly giving them intelligence through WikiLeaks.”

In other words, the “crime” is an unintended consequence of doing one’s duty—like the “collateral damage” of civilian casualties when drones, bombs, helicopter gunships, and trigger-happy troops kill women, children, aid workers, and village elders. Why is Washington only punishing Manning for the collateral damage attributed to him?

Captain Fein could not have put it any clearer. If you tell the truth and reveal Washington’s war crimes, you have aided the enemy. Captain Fein’s simple sentence has at one stroke abolished all whistleblower protections written into US statutory law and the First Amendment, and confined anyone with a moral conscience and sense of decency to indefinite detention and torture.

The illegal detention and treatment of Manning had a purpose, according to a number of informed people. Naomi Spencer, for example, writes that Manning’s long detention and delayed prosecution is designed to coerce Manning into implicating WikiLeaks in order that the US can extradite Julian Assange and either prosecute him as a terrorist or lock him away indefinitely in a military prison without any recourse to the courts, due process or the law.  
<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article30075.htm>

Assange’s case is mysterious. Assange sought refuge in Sweden, where he was seduced by

two women. Both admit that they had sexual intercourse with him voluntarily, but afterwards they have come forth with claims that as they were sleeping with him in the bed, he again had sexual intercourse with them, and that they had not approved this second helping and that he was asked to use a condom but did not.

The Swedish prosecutorial office, after investigating the charges, dismissed them. But, strangely, another Swedish prosecutor, a woman suspected of connections to Washington, resurrected the charges and is seeking to extradite Assange to Sweden from the UK for questioning.

The legal question is whether a prosecutor can seek extradition for investigative purposes. The UK Supreme Court thinks that this is a valid question, and has agreed to hear the case. Normally, extradition requests come from courts and are issued for persons formally charged with a crime. Sweden has not charged Assange with a crime.

The real question is whether the Swedish prosecutor is acting on behalf of Washington. Many who follow the case believe that Washington is behind the prosecutor's re-opening of the case, and if Sweden gets hold of Assange Sweden will send him to Washington to be put in indefinite detention and tortured until he says what Washington wants him to say—that he is an Al Qaeda operative.

This is the way that Washington intends to absolve itself of its war crimes revealed, allegedly, by Manning and Assange.

Meanwhile, Washington in a brazen display of hypocrisy accuses other countries of human rights abuses, while Congress has passed and President Obama has signed an indefinite detention and torture bill that US Representative Ron Paul says will accelerate America's "slip into tyranny" and "descent into totalitarianism."

In signing the Bill of Tyranny, President Obama indicated that he thought that the tyranny established by the bill did not go far enough. He announced that he was signing the bill with signing statements that reserved his right, regardless of any law, to send American citizens, deprived of due process and constitutional protection, abroad to be tortured.

This is the US government that claims to be a government of "freedom and democracy" and to be bringing "freedom and democracy" to others with bombs and invasions.

The past year gave us other ominous tyrannical developments. President Obama announced that he had a list of Americans whom he intended to assassinate without due process of law, and Homeland Security, itself an Orwellian name, announced that it had shifted its attention from terrorists to "domestic extremists." The latter are undefined and consist of whomever Homeland Security so designates.

None of this was done behind closed doors. The murder of the US Constitution was a public crime witnessed by all. But like Kitty Genovese, who was stabbed to death in New York in 1964 in front of onlookers who failed to come to her aid, the media, Congress, bar associations, law schools, and the American public failed to come to the defense of the Constitution.

In my lifetime the collapse in respect for, and authority of, the Constitution has been an

horrific event. Compare the ho-hum response to the Obama regime's police state announcements with the public anger at President Richard Nixon over his enemies list. Try to imagine President Ronald Reagan announcing that he had a list of Americans marked for assassination without impeachment proceedings beginning forthwith.

Local and state police forces have been militarized not only in their equipment and armament but also in their attitude toward the public. Despite the absence of domestic terror attacks, Homeland Security conducts warrantless searches of cars and trucks on highways and of passengers using public transportation. A uniformed federal service is being trained to systematically violate the constitutional rights of citizens, and citizens are being trained to accept these violations as normal. The young have no memory of being able to board public transportation or use public roadways without intrusive searches or to gather in protest without being brutalized by the police. Liberty is being moved into the realm of myth and legend.

In such a system as is being constructed in public in front of our eyes, there is no freedom, no democracy, and no liberty. What stands before us is naked tyranny.

While America degenerates into a total police state, politicians constantly invoke "our values." What are these values? Indefinite imprisonment without conviction in a court. Torture. Warrantless searches and home invasions. An epidemic of police brutality. Curtailment of free speech and peaceful assembly rights. Unprovoked aggression called "preemptive war." Interference in the elections and internal affairs of other countries. Economic sanctions imposed on foreign populations whose leaders are not in Washington's pocket.

If the American police state were merely an unintended consequence of a real war against terror, it could be dismantled when the war was over. However, the evidence is that the police state is an intended consequence. The PATRIOT Act is a voluminous and clever attack on the Constitution. It is not possible that it could have been written in the short time between 9/11 and its introduction in Congress. It was waiting on the shelf.

The dismantling of constitutionally protected civil liberties is purposeful, as is the accumulation of arbitrary and unaccountable powers in the executive branch of government. As there have been no terrorist events within the US in over a decade except for those known to have been organized by the FBI, there is no terrorist threat that justifies the establishment of a political regime of unaccountable power. It is being done on purpose under false pretenses, which means that there is an undeclared agenda. The threat that Americans face resides in Washington, D.C.

Of the presidential candidates, only Ron Paul addresses the Constitution's demise. Yet, the electorate is concerned with matters unimportant by comparison. Propagandized 24/7 by the Ministry of Truth, Americans are not sufficiently aware of their plight to elect Ron Paul president.

It might be too late for even a President Ron Paul to turn things around. A president has no power unless his government supports him. What prospect would President Ron Paul have of getting his appointees confirmed by the Senate? The military/security complex is not going to vacate power. Powerful monied interests would block his appointments. If he persisted in being a problem for the Establishment, he would be victimized by a scandal and

fail to be reelected if not forced to resign.

Remember what the Washington Establishment did to President Carter. His budget director and chief of staff were framed, thus depriving Carter of the powers of his office. Even Ronald Reagan had to give away more than half of his government, including the White House chief-of-staff and vice presidency, to the Establishment. President Reagan told me that he wanted to end stagflation in order that he could end the cold war, but that he could not sign a tax bill if I could not get one out of his administration that he could send to Congress.

I do not know, but I suspect that turning things around internally through the political system is not in the cards. Our chance to resurrect liberty might come from Washington's hubris. Imperial ambitions and drive for power can produce unmanageable upheavals and a loss of allies. Overreach abroad with a demoralized, unemployed and downtrodden population at home are not the ingredients of success.

How much longer will the Russian government permit NGOs funded by the US Endowment for Democracy to interfere in its elections and to organize political protests? How much longer will China confuse its strategic interests with the American consumer market? How much longer will Japan, Canada, Australia, Britain, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and the Middle East oil states remain US puppets? How much longer can the dollar retain the reserve currency role when the Federal Reserve is monetizing vast quantities of debt?

How much longer can a "superpower" survive when it is incapable of producing political leadership?

America's salvation will come when Washington suffers defeat of its hegemonic ambitions.

Many readers, especially those who watch Fox "News" and CNN and read the New York Times, might see hyperbole in my outlook for 2012. Surely, many believe, the draconian measures put in place will only be applied to terrorists. But how would we know? Indefinite detention and torture require no evidence to be presented. The American public has no way of knowing whether tortured detainees are terrorists or political opponents. The decision to detain and torture is an unaccountable decision. It relies on nothing but the subjective arbitrary decision of someone in the executive branch. Why are Americans prepared to take the word of a government that told them intentionally the lie that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and was a threat to America?

Like cancer, tyranny metastasizes. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, the Soviet Union's most famous writer, was a twice-decorated World War II Red Army commander. He made mild critical comments about Stalin's conduct of the war in a private letter to a friend, and for this he was sentenced, not by a court, but in absentia by the NKVD, the secret police, to eight years in the Gulag Archipelago for "anti-Soviet propaganda." Not even Stalin had indefinite detention. The closest the Soviets came to this medieval practice resurrected by the Bush and Obama regimes was internal exile in distant parts of the Soviet Union.

During much of the Soviet era, even art, literature and music were scrutinized for signs of "anti-Soviet propaganda." America's Dixie Chicks suffered a similar, but more frightening, fate. Bush did not need the NKVD. The American public did the job for the secret police. Wikipedia reports:

“During a [London](#) concert ten days before the [2003 invasion of Iraq](#), lead vocalist Maines said ‘we don’t want this war, this violence, and we’re ashamed that the President of the United States ([George W. Bush](#)) is from Texas.’ The statement offended many Americans, who thought it rude and unpatriotic, and the ensuing controversy cost the band half of their concert audience attendance in the United States. The incident negatively affected their career and led to accusations of the three women being “[un-American](#)”, as well as [hate mail](#), [death threats](#), and the public destruction of their albums in protest.”

In Nazi Germany, the mildest criticism could bring a midnight knock at the door.

People with power use it. And power attracts the worst kind of persons. As Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo prove, democracies are not immune to the evil use of power. Indeed, identical inhumane treatment of prisoners goes on inside the US prison system for ordinary criminals. <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article8451.htm>

A December 30, 2011, search on Yahoo for police brutality produced 20 million results. Over-fed goon cop thugs taser little children and people in wheel chairs. They body slam elderly grandmothers. The police are a horror. They represent a greater threat to citizens than do criminals.

Preventative war, indefinite imprisonment, rendition, torture of people alleged to be “suspects” (an undefined category), and assassination are all draconian punishments that require no evidence. Preventative war is an Orwellian concept.

How do you prevent a war by initiating a war?

How do we know that a country that did not attack us was going to attack us in the future?

Preventative war is like Jeremy Bentham’s concept of preventing crime by locking up those thought by the upper crust to be predisposed to criminal activity before they commit a crime. Punishment without crime is now the American Way.

The concepts that the Bush/Obama regimes have institutionalized are totally foreign to the Anglo-American concepts of law and liberty. In one decade the US has been transformed from a free society into a police state. The American population, to the extent it is aware of what has occurred, has simply accepted the revolution from the top.

Ron Paul is the only American seeking the presidency who opposes the tyranny that has been institutionalized, and he is not leading in the polls.

This tells us all we need to know about the value Americans place on liberty.

Americans seem to welcome the era of tyranny into which they are now entering.

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