

U.S. Holds the World Record of Killings of Innocent Civilians

Interview with Prof. John McMurtry

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A world-renowned Canadian philosopher argues that the United States holds the world record of illegal killings of unarmed civilians and extrajudicial detention and torturing of prisoners who are detained without trial.

Prof. John McMurtry says that the U.S. government is a gigantic mass-murdering machine which earns profit through waging wars, and is never held accountable over its unspeakable war crimes and crimes against humanity. He also believes that the U.S. has become a police state, which treats its citizens in the most derogatory manner.

"I have travelled alone with only backpack possession through the world, and have found no state in which police forces are more habituated to violent bullying, more likely to draw a gun, more discriminatory against the dispossessed, and more arbitrarily vicious in normal behavior," said McMurtry. "The US now leads the globe in an underlying civil war of the rich against the poor."

"The US can ... detain, kidnap and imprison without trial or indictment any US citizen or other citizen anywhere by designating them enemies to the US," Prof. John McMurtry noted in an exclusive interview with Fars News Agency.



According to the Canadian intellectual, the United States statesmen have long supported dictatorial and tyrannical regimes and even funded and armed the Nazi regime of Adolf Hitler in the period between 1939 and 1945.

John McMurtry is a Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at the University of Guelph, Canada. In 2001, Prof. McMurtry was named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada for his outstanding contributions to the study of humanities and social sciences. His latest major works are his 15-year study, "The Cancer Stage of Capitalism: From Crisis to Cure" and three monumental volumes commissioned by UNESCO for its Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems entitled "Philosophy and World Problems." McMurtry's articles and writings regularly appear on different newspapers and online magazines across the world.

Prof. McMurtry took part in an in-depth interview with FNA and responded to some questions regarding the U.S. project of the War on Terror, its military interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan and the September 11, 2001 attacks. The following is the text of the interview.

Q: Prof. McMurtry; it was following the 9/11 attacks that the United States launched its project of War on Terror. The venture has so far cost the lives of thousands of innocent, unarmed civilians across the world, including in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia and Libya; however, the civilian cost of the Global War on Terror has been mostly ignored by the mainstream media and the politicians in the West. Why do you think they've overlooked the enormous rate of civilian casualties resulting from an endeavor which was purportedly aimed at exporting democracy and liberal values to the world?

A: In the US's so-called War on Terror, by far the greatest and most systematic terrorization of civilians is in fact perpetrated by the US state itself. Unarmed citizens are murdered across the world as 'collateral damage', 'illegal enemy combatants' or other license of impunity. The US state conceives itself as above international law along with ally Israel, but this reality is taboo to report and so too all the killing and terrorization of civilians. One can truly say that "the historical record demonstrates the US is provably guilty of continual lawless mass murder of civilians across the world", but the truth is unthinkable within the ruling ideological regime. Consider for example, the US-led deadly civil wars and coup d'états in Venezuela and Ukraine as well as Libya and Syria. They mass terrorize and destroy societies into defenseless dependency so that their resources, lands and markets are "free" for transnational corporate exploitation. Yet the meaning is un-decoded. Ignorance is built into the syntax of acceptable thought.

Q: Many immigrants who seek refuge in United States from the four corners of the globe in search of a better and more prosperous life think of America as an absolutely free, democratic and open society with abundant opportunities for economic and social progress. However, you've argued, as many scholars did, that the United States is a police state. Would you please elaborate more on that? Do you believe that these immigrants and asylum-seekers are not told the whole truth about the United States or are somehow deceived?

A: Deception allies with ignorance. I define a police state as a society in which there is unlimited state power of armed force freely discharged without citizen right to stop it. While the men at the top always proclaim their devotion to the public good, an endless litany of crimes against human life is permitted by legally terrorist offices, central directives, and bureaucratic channels. Thus in "free and democratic America", more citizens are caged than any country in the world, and over 80% have perpetrated no violence against [any] person. While the US accuses others of inhuman persecution and despotism, it holds the world records for caging non-violent people, for violent killings of civilians, for spy surveillance of everyone, and for mass murders of innocent people across international borders. Even

kicking the tire of a VIP vehicle may be prosecuted as an act of “terrorism”. I have travelled alone with only backpack possession through the world, and have found no state in which police forces are more habituated to violent bullying, more likely to draw a gun, more discriminatory against the dispossessed, and more arbitrarily vicious in normal behavior. The US now leads the globe in an underlying civil war of the rich against the poor.



Q: What’s your viewpoint on the recent laws and legislations that have stipulated limitations on the civil liberties of the U.S. citizens, including the PATRIOT Act of 2001, which was widely criticized and protested at? It’s seen as a discriminatory measure that violates the privacy of the American citizens and the foreign nationals traveling in the States. Isn’t it so?

A: The repression of civil rights by the US goes far deeper than violation of citizen privacy to which the media confine themselves. The Patriot Act together with other laws like the Military Commissions Act, the Defense Authorization Act, the Homeland Security Act and the Protect America Act, mutating to the Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, form a systematic curtailment of civil rights and freedoms. Spying on everyone across borders is the accompanying apparatus of the National Security Agency which has been recently exposed in its totalitarian global snooping and dirty tricks. Department analyst Daniel Ellsberg of the Pentagon Papers summarizes the post-9/11 situation in the US as “a coup ... a steady assault on every fundamental of our Constitution for executive government to rule by decree”. What makes these new laws and licenses tyrannical is their selective suspension of established constitutional rights to habeas corpus, the right of the accused to see evidence against him/her, the right to one’s chosen legal defense, the right to trial without indefinite detention, and other rights of due process of law including to free speech and organization that can be construed as supporting “illegal enemies”. As to who these “illegal enemies” are, this is determined by the US president without legal criterion, proving evidence or verification required. The US can thus detain, kidnap and imprison without trial or indictment any US citizen or other citizen anywhere by designating them enemies to the US. This arbitrary power has most infamously instituted US presidential right to kill individuals and those around them at will by robot killer drones – all crimes against humanity and war crimes under international law, but again taboo to report in the mass media or question in international security meetings themselves.

Q: The U.S. government has traditionally supported the oppressive regimes that are widely considered as dictatorial and tyrannical. Some examples include the successive U.S. governments’ support for the regimes in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Egypt and Israel. Isn’t such an approach contrary to the democratic principles which the U.S. Constitution is said to be oriented on?

A: Certainly the US has long supported dictatorial and tyrannical regimes. In fact US

corporations and banks led the funding and arming of Hitler and the Nazis even during the 1939-45 War, and official US support of murderous dictatorships afterwards has been normalized since the CIA's foundation in 1947. In the years since 9/11, US government has covertly directed funding and arming of the most destructive armed forces including jihadists, not only in the nations you mention, but in Syria and before that Libya, Iraq, Somalia, and Afghanistan and many much less known places like Mali. Ukraine has been similarly launched into civil war and escalated oppression by US-led destabilization, covert Special Forces, and local fascists.

Yet the US Constitution itself has no clear resource to prevent such international crimes, the founding US fathers themselves being mainly rich slave owners and leaders of the genocidal Western expansion against first peoples which England had forbidden in 1763. In fact, despite some stirring phrases without binding force, the ultimate concern of the US Constitution is the protection of private property and wealth at the top against the masses and democratic reversal. The ultimately governing value is profitable and unfettered private commerce, the "commerce clause" being the only way found to enforce the civil rights of Blacks. The opening slogans of "life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" seem inspiring except that happiness cannot be pursued, life needs do not ever enter into consideration, and liberty without the means to exercise it is nonsense.

Bear in mind that Supreme Court decisions have further granted the constitutional freedom of private money hoards to control politicians, public speech and elections themselves. Transnational corporations which are the global vehicles of the world's ruling money sequences have at the same time multiplying powers with no obligations, while other societies' rights have been effectively erased by international trade treaties which recognize only corporate rights and strip societies of their economic sovereignty and public resources. Corporate rights to dominate public speech and elections have been twisted out of even the Constitution's Fifth Amendment protecting the civil rights of ex-slaves. In short, a near total expropriation of rights by Big Money has shown how anti-democratic the US Constitution has been made. I think that only the rule of life-protective law with the force of international law can regulate this global money-power dictatorship back into coherence with life support requirements now violated at every level, with or without a revolutionary uprising.

Q: Over the course of 20th century, the United States has been involved in several covert foreign regime change actions, and as the Foreign Policy magazine notes, it has toppled seven governments in the last 100 years through masterminding and engineering coups across the world, including the 1953 coup d'état against the popular government of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh or the 1973 coup in Chile that brought down the government of President Salvador Allende. Is such sponsorship of coups and regime change actions the characteristic feature of a democratic, peace-loving government?

A: There has been almost no coup or government overthrow since 1945 not led by the US. The examples you give of Mosaddegh and Allende are sea-changes of history in which elected, socially responsible and peaceful governments led by men of the very highest quality have been criminally usurped. This perpetual and increasing destabilization of other states and societies along with other gravely degenerate trends are systematically tracked in my 15-year study *The Cancer Stage of Capitalism/ from crisis to cure*. In the US itself, the three powers of supreme legislature, executive and court are now all controlled by the same money party selecting for the same full-spectrum predation of life and life support systems everywhere to multiply themselves. Yet still the long record of the US state and its oligarch allies destroying societies across the world is unspeakable in the mass media because they

themselves are financed and advertised in by the same transnational corporations that demand the resources and territories of societies everywhere. The carcinogenic global causal mechanism is ever more evident and catastrophic, but not recognized.

Q: More than a decade after the 9/11 attacks, there are still several unanswered questions about the tragic event, including the origins and motives of the perpetrator, the role of foreign intelligence organizations in masterminding the attacks and the behind-the-scenes benefits of the attacks for the U.S. military-industrial complex. As you note in your writings, it was not Osama bin Laden who spearheaded the 9/11 attacks. Who is the real culprit? Did the 9/11 attacks play into the hands of the Bush administration to set in motion its lethal project of War on Terror and start invading different countries?

A: My recent monograph on the Internet, "The Moral Decoding of 9-11: Beyond the U.S. Criminal State" is a definitive answer to these questions. The turning-point event is laid bare step by step as a mass-murderous construction whose scenario is anticipated and contrived by US geostrategic planners with the official investigation completely concealing the basic fact that fireproofed steel infrastructures collapsed at the speed of gravity into their own footprints against the laws of physics. Moreover the first question of forensic justice – cui bono, who benefits? – is ruled out from the start, although every subsequent policy, decision and new power served the interests of the Bush Jr. regime and the US military-oil complex against the welfare of the American public and the world, especially Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran.

Unfortunately conspiracy theories miss the inner logic of the strategic event and the system disorder driving it. The official conspiracy theory is absurd, but every disbeliever in it is pilloried as a 'conspiracy theorist' – the reverse projection which is the signature operation of US propaganda. Always blame others for what the US does as the reason for attacking them. One might laugh at the same old propaganda psy-op and fabrications trotted out endlessly, but the terrible reality is the 9/11 construction has had effectively sabotaged international progress in solving the world's gravest problems. It has dismantled the global peace movement that was reaching an historical peak in 2001 to stop US-led militarism after the Cold War. It has successfully suppressed world-wide uprisings against a US-led global corporate dictatorship despised and opposed by ever more citizens across America, Europe and the world. It has even formed the draconian laws and police practices needed to squash the world-wide environmental movement across the world at same time. 9/11 has, in short, vastly empowered the corporate money system devouring human and planetary life by falsifying opponents as "terrorists". But who joins the dots of the Great Repression?

Q: Since its inception 66 years ago, CIA has been involved in numerous covert sabotage, anti-sabotage, assassination, propaganda, destruction and subversion plans against other countries, and during the course of all these covert actions, it has violated different internationally recognized treaties and regulations as well as the sovereignty and territorial integrity of these nations. Are these actions and gambits legal or illegal? If they are illegal, then why doesn't any international organization investigate the crimes and hold the U.S. government accountable?

A: Yes this is a turning-point issue of the world. But the US record as a rogue state is unspeakable in the mass media because they are financed and advertised in by the same transnational corporations that demand the resources and territories of the world by threat of trade-investment embargo and the point of the gun of US and NATO forces. This is what the lawless but unnamed US reign of terror achieves – not only by war crimes and crimes

against humanity, but by economic ruin for any society resisting transnational trade treaties and demands which recognize only foreign corporate rights to profit. If the underlying causal mechanism is taboo to recognize, unaccountability is the result. Blame is instead diverted to US-designated enemies - like Iran or Russia or Venezuela - and the society-destroying disorder rampages on.

In fact there are many life-protective international laws to hold the US accountable to, but every one of them is repudiated by the US so as not to apply to itself ; laws and conventions against nuclear weapons, biological weapons, chemical weapons, landmines, small arms, international ballistic missiles, torture, racism, sexism, child abuse, arbitrary seizure and imprisonment, crimes against humanity and war crimes, military weather distortions, biodiversity loss, and international climate destabilization. Yet this record remains taboo to track or publish even as the US demonizes others for “defying the laws and norms of the international community”.

The US and ally Israel thus violate the laws against armed aggression, occupation and crimes against humanity at will, but who even knows or cites the laws? For example, when the US was about to perpetrate the supreme crime of invasion against Iraq in 2003 with no lawful grounds, no-one raised the issue at the Security Council, including the Iraqi diplomat there. As one who later debated on Canadian public television a leading US geostrategic analyst three days before the criminal bombing of Baghdad began, my statement that he was “advocating war crime and should be arrested for doing so” was deleted from the live broadcast. The cornerstone of international law is thus silenced while the media go on calling opponents “unpatriotic” or “terrorists” - as in Nazi Germany. If law-abiding states do not stand and join for the rule of international life-protective law, there seems no end.

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