

From representative “democracy” to an effective dictatorship? The new despotic legislation

JOHN SARGIS

The despotic Administration of George W. Bush is solidifying its grab for dictatorial power. Congress, on 29 September, granted the Bush regime total authority to detain persons indefinitely without legal access, to torture detainees with impunity, to hold special military tribunals where evidence can be withheld and coerced testimony accepted as truth.

The Senate Bill S 3930, passed by a margin of 65-34, legitimizes the Bush Administration’s war crimes by providing justification through the authority of law (Americans are law-abiding citizens). The Bill protects Bush and his Administration for illegal acts they have committed by being retroactive to 2001. Bush and his butchers, thus cannot be arrested for their war crimes. The Bill eliminates any criminal liabilities by providing immunity, and in essence pardons Bush and his Administration for war crimes in the past and for future war crimes. Bush and his Administration, who admitted to ordering torture, holding persons without charges, and creating kangaroo courts, are now free to continue US sponsored terror. Furthermore, the Bill contains language that redefines the legal black hole called “enemy combatants” by stripping green card holders (legal residents) of the right to *habeas corpus*. This is part of the neocons’ efforts to replace the word “persons/people” in the Constitution with the word “citizens”. But this is even laughable, not only because the term ‘citizen’ is meaningful only in a genuine direct democracy but also because Bush’s gestapo have already plucked citizens off the streets and held them without charges. If a citizen is labeled as someone who wants to abolish the government (which is a right declared in the Declaration of Independence), then that person/citizen is proclaimed an “enemy combatant” and stripped of all rights. As of 29 September ’06 the Bush Administration’s bloodless coup has strengthened their totalitarian rule as well as that of the political and economic elite in general.

In June of this year, the US Supreme Court ruled that the Bush Administration had illegally tortured, detained people without charges, and established kangaroo military tribunals. These Bush creations, it said, went beyond the rule of law. Being lawless, Bush and his Administration at that moment became war criminals. Instead of the Supreme Court issuing a warrant for their arrest, the highly conservative Court gave them a loophole for which their criminal actions could become legal. “Nothing prevents the President from returning to Congress to seek the authority he believes necessary,” the Court opined. Within two weeks Bills were floating through Congress legitimizing and authorizing war crimes.

War criminals Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Rice and company can now repeat their serial killer behavior with even more bravado, because their acts have the authority of Congress. It's all good, and the US is not a dictatorship. The Bush Administration now makes good the terror they perpetrate abroad and at home. It is official. The US claims itself a state sponsor of terror which proves that it never was, starting as a British colony and throughout its history, the basis of a free society.^[1] Bush can now mockingly say that he is utilizing the authority provided to him by the people. By crowning Bush as the unitary President with this bill (and a further entrenching of his dictatorial powers with the spying act soon to be realized), Congress handed to Bush the authority he wants to ignore any law Congress passes. After signing the Military Commissions Act 2006 into law on 17 October Bush arrogantly threw down his pen with his usual contemptuous smirk as the “decider”.

As members of the transnational economic elite, Bush and his Administration have set a dangerous precedent by redefining the Geneva Conventions. The transnational economic elite's proxies in Congress relinquished their power to Bush and his Administration so that they together can continue to plunge the world into a new stage of barbarism, since now there is no pretense that the US stands for justice. Needless to say, the myths of an independent Congress and Supreme Court, and freedom are now dead and buried. The elites do not hide their disdain for their own legal system in seeking to further concentrate their political and economic power. The international economic elite (market economy) and their political puppets (representative democracy) in Congress have established the rule of force and abandoned the myths about the rule of reason and democratic decision-making. It is time to refuse allegiance to and to resist this despotic regime. The System (the market economy and its political complement representative “democracy”) is fundamentally destructive. It throws more and more people into increasingly obscene poverty as it creates an increasingly narrow group of people with a growing concentration of economic power. (America now boasts of over 400 billionaires!) The gap between the wealthy and poor continually widens. Incomes of the poorest 20 percent of families nationally grew by an average of \$2,660, or 19 percent, over the 20 years from 1983-2003. Meanwhile, during the same time the incomes of the richest fifth of families grew by \$45,100, or nearly 59 percent.^[2] The concentration of economic and political power in the hands of fewer and fewer people exacerbates the present multidimensional crisis in the economic, social, and political spheres abroad and at home. As a result people are effectively kept out from any political or economic decision-making: the System's rules are in accord with neoliberal modernity.^[3] With decision-making power out of the peoples' hands the US is not anymore even a proper representative “democracy”—as it not only claims to be, but is also attempting to export its model of ‘democracy’ all over the world, with the force of arms if necessary. US society is decaying in extreme ways. There is a spike in murders, robberies, and other violent crimes. In one week, three public schools in America were assaulted by armed perpetrators who murdered at least 9 children, and public schools in six states were on lockdown because of threats of violence. A little over one year ago Hurricane Katrina brought to light in a grim and tragic way that the System of the market economy and representative “democracy” is not intended to meet the needs of the people. The Katrina disaster is not a failure of the System, but its “normal” functioning ^[4]. Only those with the ability to pay are afforded a place in the System. The Jack Abramoff/K-street/Congress scandal has proven that the transnational economic elite through their goons in Congress see to it that the policies of the transnational elite are implemented. The transnational elite's (The coalition of the willing. The unwilling were those of the transnational elite who disagreed with the strategy.) invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq are raining death and destruction in their extended planetary

barbarism where no one is safe from neoliberal globalization.

Nobody asks questions. Dissent is smashed. Civil liberties eradicated. Propaganda is veiled as news. The people have become superfluous through the systemic elements of consumerism, the mass media, hierarchical relations, etc., which start in the family and continue through education. This is what ‘democracy’ is all about today!

[1] Leo Bonfanti, *Biographies and Legends of the New England Indians*, (Pride Publications Inc., 1974) The 17th C. colonies were really militaristic regions where the indigenous tribes presented danger, not the other way round. Bounty was given to those colonists, many of whom served in Cromwell’s army, who scalped, beheaded, and brought in live natives, to be sold in Boston as slaves to the West Indies.

[2] See, Mark Johnson, “[Study Finds Rich-Poor Income Gap Growing](#),” *Associated Press/San Francisco Chronicle* (January 26, 2006).

[3] see for an analysis of neoliberal modernity, ‘[The End of Traditional Anti-systemic Movements and the Need for a New Type of Anti-systemic Movement Today](#)’, *Democracy and Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (November 2001).

and ‘[Globalisation, the Reformist Left and the Anti-Globalisation “Movement”](#)’, *Democracy and Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2001).

[4] see ‘[New Orleans: the “normal” functioning of a system](#)’, Newsletter #20 (22 September 2005) and ‘[The truth about hurricane Katrina \(or the American dream as nightmare\)](#)’, Newsletter # 19 (10 September 2005).