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Views: Here We Go Again

In October of 2001, right after the USA PATRIOT Act was passed, without having ever been read by any Congressman or Senator, the first step to the progressive dismantling of the US Constitution was under way. Rights of personal privacy gone, the freedom of the corporate-owned press was under tight scrutiny, various books considered unpatriotic were banned from libraries and schools across the country. Meanwhile, the spindocors from DC have much of the public so paralyzed with fear that they are willing to give up their rights in order to "be protected."

I realize that I'm not the only person to see how ludicrous our government has become. But I'm terrified to think that I'm still in the minority.

Since the 1860s it has been a requirement in the United States to teach history in public schools. However, history was not added to the curriculum to teach factual knowledge of past events, it was added to teach patriotism. So it comes as no surprise that so few people look at what direction the US is headed without becoming painfully aware that all these events have happened before.

For example, as a result of the US entering WWI, in 1917 Congress passed and Woodrow Wilson signed the Espionage Act, which was sold to the public as a protection for the US from foreign spies. The provisions under the Espionage Act were identical to the PATRIOT Act, with just a few time-appropriate adjustments to allow wire tapping and invading personal email. And just like now, in WWI the public as a whole sat complacently by feeling "protected" from foreign spies. Those who did speak out about the egregious violations of Constitutional rights were jailed for an average of 20 years, and in some cases for life.

A similar act was also imposed during WWII, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and of course, now. No threats from foreign spies or terrorists have ever been thwarted by enacting such laws. And indeed, the PATRIOT Act has also done absolutely nothing to protect the average citizen from terrorism.

**paul
cook**

In fact "homeland security" has resulted in a huge loss of police throughout the nation, because many police officers also serve in the guard and have been sent to the Middle East to kill innocent Iraqis for oil and, of course, Jesus ...

In one chapter of *Mein Kampf (My Struggle)*, Adolf Hitler described how to control the hearts and minds of a society as "quite simple": "One must create a propaganda campaign that is simplistic enough for the masses to comprehend, and it must be repeated continuously until it is believed as fact. Truth is merely secondary. When the masses are in synchronicity, the leader must single out an enemy and dehumanize them in order for the masses to focus their hatred towards them." Sound familiar? Many may not be aware of this but Hitler used Christianity to incite hatred for the Jews, much like Bush is using Christianity to incite fear and hatred towards Muslims.

The similarities get even more disturbing. In order to gain full control of the German government, the NAZI party burned the Reichstag on February 27, 1933. They blamed the fire on the communist party, and Hitler pressured Hindenburg into appointing him Chancellor. Hitler and the Nazi party consequently passed the Enabling Act, an exact parallel to the USA PATRIOT Act. All civil rights were suspended, freedom of the press was abolished, personal privacy ceased to exist, and anyone who opposed the act was guilty of treason. And the Enabling Act was sold to the German public as a "protection from any further terrorist acts." We all know how that story ends.

In October of 2001 I had some bumper stickers printed: "Mao, Stalin, Hitler, Bush - Will we ever learn?" Although some people have purchased them, many others reacted with extreme anger. I was screamed at, called a traitor, seditious, had my car windows broken, etc. What is most shocking to me is that some of those who took the time to calmly register a verbal complaint, accused me of, among other things, being paranoid and insane. Of course many feel that my refusal to bow down to the new King George eliminated my constitutional rights. I was now a traitor to my country because I refuse to support the actions of a murderous Texan. ☹

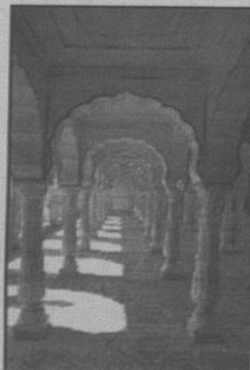
The truly shocking and disturbing thing is that we live in a country where we'll try to impeach a president for lying about a blow-job, but a president who lies about a cause for war, and is responsible for killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people in a sovereign nation is considered perfectly acceptable. And in fact he is suspiciously reelected.

If there was ever a time for a national outcry for impeachment, it's now. Or are we just destined by pure ignorance and stupidity to just keep recreating the past?

All dictators throughout history with a quest for world domination ended in total failure with massive loss of lives. We're once again headed in the same direction. The only difference is, in past wars the madman at the helm didn't have nuclear weapons at his disposal.

If there was ever a time to get involved, it's now! ▼

Paul Cook is an activist / writer / comedian and a contributor to Frontiers Magazine and The Progressive. He lives in Burlington.



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