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It Is Now Official: The US Is a Police State

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Americans have been losing the protection of law for years. In the 21st century the loss of legal protections accelerated with the Bush administration's "war on terror," which continues under the Obama administration and is essentially a war on the Constitution and U.S. civil liberties.

The Bush regime was determined to vitiate *habeas corpus* in order to hold people indefinitely without bringing charges. The regime had acquired hundreds of prisoners by paying a bounty for terrorists. Afghan warlords and thugs responded to the financial incentive by grabbing unprotected people and selling them to the Americans.

The Bush regime needed to hold the prisoners without charges because it had no evidence against the people and did not want to admit that the U.S. government had stupidly paid warlords and thugs to kidnap innocent people. In addition, the Bush regime needed "terrorists" prisoners in order to prove that there was a terrorist threat.

As there was no evidence against the "detainees" (most have been released without charges after years of detention and abuse), the U.S. government needed a way around U.S. and international laws against torture in order that the government could produce evidence via self-incrimination. The Bush regime found inhumane and totalitarian-minded lawyers and put them to work at the U.S. Department of Justice (*sic*) to invent arguments that the Bush regime did not need to obey the law.

The Bush regime created a new classification for its detainees that it used to justify denying legal protection and due process to the detainees. As the detainees were not U.S. citizens and were

demonized by the regime as "the 760 most dangerous men on earth," there was little public outcry over the regime's unconstitutional and inhumane actions.

As our Founding Fathers and a long list of scholars warned, once civil liberties are breached, they are breached for all. Soon U.S. citizens were being held indefinitely in violation of their *habeas corpus* rights. Dr. Aafia Siddiqui, an American citizen of Pakistani origin, might have been the first.

Dr. Siddiqui, a scientist educated at MIT and Brandeis University, was seized in Pakistan for no known reason, sent to Afghanistan, and was held secretly for five years in the U.S. military's notorious Bagram prison in Afghanistan. Her three young children, one an 8-month-old baby, were with her at the time she was abducted. She has no idea what has become of her two youngest children. Her oldest child, 7 years old, was also incarcerated in Bagram and subjected to similar abuse and horrors.

Siddiqui has never been charged with any terrorism-related offense. A British journalist, hearing her piercing screams as she was being tortured, disclosed her presence. An embarrassed U.S. government responded to the disclosure by sending Siddiqui to the U.S. for trial on the trumped-up charge that while a captive, she grabbed a U.S. soldier's rifle and fired two shots attempting to shoot him. The charge apparently originated as a U.S. soldier's excuse for shooting Dr. Siddiqui twice in the stomach, resulting in her near death.

On Feb. 4, Dr. Siddiqui was convicted by a New York jury for attempted murder. The only evidence presented against her was the charge itself and an unsubstantiated claim that she had once taken a pistol-firing course at an American firing range. No evidence was presented of her fingerprints on the rifle that this frail and broken 100-pound woman had allegedly seized from an American soldier. No evidence was presented that a weapon was fired, no bullets, no shell casings, no bullet holes. Just an accusation.

Wikipedia has this to say about the trial: "The trial took an unusual turn when an FBI official asserted that the fingerprints taken from the rifle, which was purportedly used by Aafia to shoot at the U.S. interrogators, did not match hers."

An ignorant and bigoted American jury convicted her for being a Muslim. This is the kind of "justice" that always results when the state hypes fear and demonizes a group.

The people who should have been on trial are the people who abducted her, disappeared her young children, shipped her across international borders, violated her civil liberties, tortured her apparently for the fun of it, raped her, and attempted to murder her with two gunshots to her stomach. Instead, the victim was put on trial and convicted.

This is the unmistakable hallmark of a police state. And this victim is an American citizen.

Anyone can be next. Indeed, on Feb. 3 Dennis Blair, director of national intelligence told the House Intelligence Committee that it was now "defined policy" that the U.S. government can murder its own citizens on the sole basis of someone in the government's judgment that an

American is a threat. No arrest, no trial, no conviction, just execution on suspicion of being a threat.

This shows how far the police state has advanced. A presidential appointee in the Obama administration tells an important committee of Congress that the executive branch has decided that it can murder American citizens abroad if it thinks they are a threat.

I can hear readers saying the government might as well kill Americans abroad as it kills them at home – Waco, Ruby Ridge, the Black Panthers.

Yes, the U.S. government has murdered its citizens, but Dennis Blair's "defined policy" is a bold new development. The government, of course, denies that it intended to kill the Branch Davidians, Randy Weaver's wife and child, or the Black Panthers. The government says that Waco was a terrible tragedy, an unintended result brought on by the Branch Davidians themselves. The government says that Ruby Ridge was Randy Weaver's fault for not appearing in court on a day that had been miscommunicated to him. The Black Panthers, the government says, were dangerous criminals who insisted on a shootout.

In no previous death of a U.S. citizen by the hands of the U.S. government has the government claimed the right to kill Americans without arrest, trial, and conviction of a capital crime.

In contrast, Dennis Blair has told the U.S. Congress that the executive branch has assumed the right to murder Americans who it deems a "threat."

What defines "threat"? Who will make the decision? What it means is that the government will murder whomever it chooses.

There is no more complete or compelling evidence of a police state than the government announcing that it will murder its own citizens if it views them as a "threat."

Ironic, isn't it, that "the war on terror" to make us safe ends in a police state with the government declaring the right to murder American citizens whom it regards as a threat.