

When Government Evil Triumphs, Freedom Falls

By John Whitehead, The Rutherford Institute, 5 April 2017

“Government is said to be a necessary evil. The saying appears to be without merit. For can anything be at once necessary and evil? True, all governments have had a history of evil-doing, more or less. However, it does not follow from this experience that their good is indistinguishable from their evil. Governments—assuming a proper limitation of their activities—are necessary and not evil. [Their evil begins when they step out of bounds.](#)”—Economist Leonard Read

It is often said that if America ever ceases to be good, *she will cease to be great*. Unfortunately, *the American government has been the opposite of good for too long now*. In fact, the American government has been very, very, very bad: so bad, in fact, as to be **almost indistinguishable at times from the evil it claims to be fighting**, whether that evil takes the form of terrorism, torture, drug trafficking, sex trafficking, murder, violence, theft, pornography, scientific experimentations or some other diabolical means of inflicting pain, suffering and servitude on humanity.

Philosopher Susan Neiman suggests that referring to something as [“evil is a way of marking the fact that it shatters our trust in the world.”](#)

It’s an apt description for a government that keeps violating the sacred trust of its citizenry.

“We the people” should have learned early on that a government that repeatedly lies, cheats, steals, spies, kills, maims, enslaves, breaks the laws, overreaches its authority, and abuses its power at almost every turn can’t be trusted.

We haven’t learned.

We didn’t learn this lesson under George W. Bush. We didn’t learn it under Barack Obama. Although it has become [fashionable among the media elite to blame the Trump Administration](#) for all that is wrong with the country, where Americans go wrong is in becoming so fixated on a particular politician that they fail to understand that the fault rests with the Government: the permanent, entrenched Deep State that continues to call the shots in the halls of power.

Indeed, the evils perpetrated by the U.S. government have been going on for some time now.

Consider just a few of the ways in which the government—in a misguided, ill-conceived, flawed, bureaucratic and downright Orwellian attempt to fight evil with evil—continues to inflict evil on the citizenry.

Peddling child pornography to catch child porn consumers: As part of an effort to crack down on child porn consumers and traffickers, for two weeks in 2015, the [FBI secretly hijacked a child porn website, improved the technical functionality of the site, and uploaded tens of thousands of images of child pornography to the site](#). In doing so, the government not only became the largest distributor of child pornography, but it also became the largest exploiter of children. All told, the FBI was accused of hosting an estimated 22,000 images, videos and links of child pornography that more than 100,000 people accessed.

This is what Douglas Anderson, chair of the University of North Texas' philosophy and religion department, refers to as a [cost-benefit analysis](#). In this instance, the government weighed the

cost of inflicting damage on innocent children who were being victimized and preyed upon against the benefits of catching people who download child porn. “It’s a moral conundrum for anyone who takes the view that we are committed to protecting them in all ways,” Anderson said in an [interview with the Dallas Morning News](#). “They’re weighing it against these kids’ lives. World opinion says we have a basic duty to protect children. You’d have to have something pretty overwhelming to offset damaging more people. It would have to be awfully extreme to allow even one child to be harmed.”

Incredibly, after going to such morally questionable depths to catch child porn consumers, the [government chose to drop its case rather than be forced to reveal the surveillance and hacking tools it used](#) to set its trap.

Trafficking weapons to catch drug traffickers. They referred to it as [Operation Fast and Furious](#): a 15-month sting operation carried out by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives aimed at dismantling Mexican drug cartels and disrupting drug trafficking routes within the United States. Only it didn’t quite work out that way. As the *National Review* reports, “Under ‘Operation Fast & Furious,’ the [U.S. government became a de facto arms dealer](#) to Mexican drug cartels and Islamist criminals.”

The concept was straight-forward enough: the U.S. government allowed gun sellers and informants to sell approximately 2,000 weapons to gun traffickers in the hopes that the weapons would be tracked to the drug cartels, which would then be targeted and disrupted. Although it appears that the weapons did make it into the hands of the drug cartels, [government agents lost track of an estimated 1,400 weapons](#), many of which were linked to crimes, including the fatal shooting of a Border Patrol agent in 2010.

Dealing drugs to catch drug dealers. Taking advantage of federal and state asset forfeiture laws that allow police to seize and keep money if they suspect it may be related to criminal activities, law enforcement agencies have been raking in millions of dollars in entrapment schemes in which they [sell cocaine to drug users and then bust them for buying it](#), or lure big-city drug dealers to suburban towns with promises of big sales and then bust them in the act.

As the *Sun Sentinel* reports:

[Police in this suburban town best known for its sprawling outlet mall have hit upon a surefire way to make millions. They sell cocaine.](#) Undercover detectives and their army of informants lure big-money drug buyers into the city from across the United States, and from as far north as Canada and as far south as Peru. They negotiate the sale of kilos of cocaine in popular family restaurants, then bust the buyers and seize their cash and cars. Police confiscate millions from these deals, money that fuels huge overtime payments for the undercover officers who conduct the drug stings and cash rewards for the confidential informants who help detectives entice faraway buyers... Undercover officers tempt these distant buyers with special discounts, even offering cocaine on consignment and the keys to cars with hidden compartments for easy transport. In some deals, they’ve provided rides and directions to these strangers... Many of the drug negotiations and busts have taken place at restaurants around the city’s main attraction, Sawgrass Mills mall, including such everyday dining spots as TGI Fridays, Panera Bread and the Don Pan International Bakery.

Fighting wars abroad by fueling wars abroad. The United States, the [world’s largest exporter of arms](#), has been selling violence to the world for too long now. Controlling more than 50 percent of the global weaponry market, the U.S. has [sold or donated weapons to at least 96 countries](#) in the past five years, including the Middle East.

Some of these weapons inevitably [end up in our enemies’ hands](#), as well as those of terrorists. For instance, the Pentagon’s efforts to train Syrian fighters ended with most of the infantrymen [voluntarily surrendering their U.S.-provided equipment to extremist groups](#). These weapons—precision guided weapons or smart bombs, [cluster bombs](#), and depleted

uranium shells, among others—are also [responsible for the deaths of innocent civilians](#) in Yemen, Syria and elsewhere.

As *Mother Jones* [reports](#):

Arms deals are a way of life in Washington. [From the president on down, significant parts of the government are intent on ensuring that American arms will flood the global market](#) and companies like Lockheed and Boeing will live the good life. From the president on his trips abroad to visit allied world leaders to the secretaries of state and defense to the staffs of US embassies, American officials regularly act as salespeople for the arms firms. And the Pentagon is their enabler. From brokering, facilitating, and literally banking the money from arms deals to transferring weapons to favored allies on the taxpayers' dime, it is in essence the world's largest arms dealer.

Creating terrorists in order to snare terrorists. The FBI has a long, sordid history of inventing crimes, breeding criminals and [helping to hatch and then foil terrorist plots](#) in order to advance its own sordid agenda: namely, amassing greater powers under the guise of fighting the war on terrorism.

Investigative journalist Trevor Aaronson argues convincingly that “[the FBI is much better at creating terrorists](#) than it is at catching terrorists.” According to Aaronson’s calculations, the [FBI is responsible for more terrorism plots in the United States](#) than al Qaeda, al Shabaab and the Islamic State combined.

One of the government’s tactics involves [radicalizing impressionable young men in order to create and then “catch” terrorists](#). Under the guise of rooting out terrorists before they strike, the FBI targets mentally ill or impressionable individuals (many of whom are young and have no prior connection to terrorism), indoctrinates them with anti-American propaganda, [pays criminals \\$100,000 per case to act as informants](#) and help these would-be terrorists formulate terror plots against American targets, [provides them with weapons and training](#), and then arrests them for being would-be terrorists. This is [entrapment](#), plain and simple, or what former FBI director Robert Mueller referred to as a policy of “[forward leaning – preventative – prosecutions](#).”

Spreading disease in order to cure disease. For years, the American government [conducted secret experiments on an unsuspecting populace](#)—citizens and noncitizens alike—making healthy people sick by spraying them with chemicals, injecting them with infectious diseases and exposing them to airborne toxins. The government reasoned that it was legitimate to experiment on people who did not have full rights in society such as prisoners, mental patients, and poor blacks.

The mindset driving these programs has, appropriately, been likened to the [unethical experiments](#) carried out by Nazi doctors. In Alabama, for example, 600 black men with syphilis were allowed to suffer without proper medical treatment in order to study the natural progression of untreated syphilis. In Connecticut, mental patients were injected with hepatitis. In Maryland, sleeping prisoners had a pandemic flu virus sprayed up their noses. In Georgia, two dozen “volunteering” prison inmates had gonorrhea bacteria pumped directly into their urinary tracts through the penis. In Michigan, male [patients at an insane asylum were exposed to the flu](#) after first being injected with an experimental flu vaccine. In Minnesota, 11 public service employee “volunteers” were injected with malaria, then starved for five days. In New York, [dying patients](#) had cancer cells introduced into their systems. And in Staten Island, [children with mental retardation were given hepatitis orally and by injection](#) to see if they could then be cured.

These incidents are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the atrocities the government has inflicted on an unsuspecting populace in the name of secret experimentation. For instance, there was the U.S. military’s [secret race-based testing of mustard gas on more than 60,000 enlisted men](#). And then there was the CIA’s [MKULTRA program in which hundreds of](#)

[unsuspecting American civilians and military personnel were dosed with LSD](#), some having the hallucinogenic drug slipped into their drinks at the beach, in city bars, at restaurants.

Are you starting to notice a pattern here?

For too long now, the American people have been persuaded to barter their freedoms for phantom promises of security and, in the process, have rationalized turning a blind eye to all manner of government wrongdoing—asset forfeiture schemes, corruption, surveillance, endless wars, SWAT team raids, militarized police, profit-driven private prisons, and so on—because they were the so-called lesser of two evils.

No matter how you rationalize it, the lesser of two evils is still evil.

There's a scene in *The Third Man*, Carol Reed's influential 1949 film starring Joseph Cotten and Orson Welles in which a rogue war profiteer (Harry Lime) views human carnage with a callous indifference, unconcerned that the diluted penicillin he's been trafficking underground has resulted in the tortured deaths of young children.

Challenged by his old friend Holly Martins to consider the consequences of his actions, Lime responds, "In these days, old man, nobody thinks in terms of human beings. Governments don't, so why should we?"

"Have you ever seen any of your victims?" asks Martins.

"Victims?" responds Lime, as he looks down from the top of a Ferris wheel onto a populace reduced to mere dots on the ground. "Look down there. Tell me. Would you really feel any pity if one of those dots stopped moving forever? If I offered you twenty thousand pounds for every dot that stopped, would you really, old man, tell me to keep my money, or would you calculate how many dots you could afford to spare?"

Lime's callous indifference is no different from the U.S. government's calculating cost-benefit analyses. After all, to the government, "we the people" are little more than faceless numbers, statistics and economic units to be bought, sold, bartered, traded, tracked, tortured, spied upon, caged like animals, treated like slaves, experimented upon, and then discarded and left to suffer from the after-effects.

As John Lennon summed it up, "We're being run by maniacs for maniacal ends."

Is the government evil? You tell me.

The same government that [laced the fog over San Francisco with bioweapons](#), [sprayed bacteria from Navy ships off the coast of Norfolk and San Francisco](#), exposing all of the city's 800,000 residents, and [staged "mock" anthrax attacks](#) covering territory as wide-ranging as Ohio to Texas and Michigan to Kansas has also taken every bit of technology sold to us as being in our best interests—GPS devices, surveillance, nonlethal weapons, [behavioral methods](#), etc.—and used it against us, to track, control and trap us.

The same government that propelled us into endless oil-fueled wars and military occupations in the Middle East that wreaked havoc on our economy, stretched thin our military resources and subjected us to horrific blowback has also turned America into a battlefield, transforming law enforcement agencies into extensions of the military, conducting military drills on domestic soil, distributing "free" military equipment and weaponry to local police, and desensitizing Americans to the menace of the police state with active shooter drills, color-coded terror alerts, and randomly conducted security checkpoints at "soft" targets such as shopping malls and sports arenas.

Likewise, the same government that—as part of its so-called "war on terror"—passed laws subjecting us to all manner of invasive searches and surveillance, censoring our speech and

stifling our expression, rendering us anti-government extremists for daring to disagree with its dictates, locking us up for criticizing government policies on social media, encouraging Americans to spy and snitch on their fellow citizens, and allowing government agents to grope, strip, search, taser, shoot and kill us has also—in a so-called effort to keep the schools safe—locked down the schools by installing metal detectors and surveillance cameras, adopting zero tolerance policies that punish childish behavior as harshly as criminal actions, and teaching our young people that they have no rights, that being force-fed facts is education rather than indoctrination, that they are not to question governmental authority, that they must meekly accept a life of censorship, round-the-clock surveillance, roadside blood draws, SWAT team raids and other indignities.

How can you ever trust the government again?

As I make clear in my book *Battlefield America: The War on the American People*, you shouldn't have trusted the government in the first place. It was Thomas Jefferson who warned, "In questions of power then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution."

Unfortunately, as Carl Sagan recognized, ***"If we've been bamboozled long enough, we tend to reject any evidence of the bamboozle. We're no longer interested in finding out the truth. The bamboozle has captured us. It's simply too painful to acknowledge, even to ourselves, that we've been taken. Once you give a charlatan power over you, you almost never get it back."***

How do you fight evil? Start by recognizing it. Talk about it. Refuse to play politics with your principles. Don't settle for the lesser of two evils. Stop being apathetic.

As British statesman Edmund Burke warned, **"The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men [and women] to do nothing."**