Big Brother Getting Bigger

A Time for Courage in an Era of Disinformation

By Frank Serpico

Many readers may have read the book or seen the movie Serpico. What they may not know is that as a young, committed police officer in the NYPD I discovered corruption among my fellow officers, not realizing how widespread or institutionalized it was. My odyssey took me as far as Washington and no matter how high I went, the response was always the same. The concern was not how to eradicate the problem, for I was soon to discover they were all aware of its existence, but what kind of threat would my revelations pose to the system itself.

Soon after my return from Washington, I was shot in the line of duty under circumstances that were never fully investigated. Mayor John Lindsay, embarrassed by my revelations, appointed the Knapp Commission to look into police corruption and a few small fish got fried. Unfortunately, as is usually the case with large scale corruption, the real culprits of my story were never brought to justice. They went on to become judges, politicians, commissioners, and university professors. Men of base character are elected to the highest offices in the land. Such behavior may explain why we find ourselves in the mess we are in today.

Recently, I was asked by an old acquaintance to read the Declaration of Independence on the Fourth of July at the Mac-Haydn Theater in Chatham, NY, after a performance of the play “1776”. What an honor. Of course I would comply. Only if I could uphold the very tradition in which the Declaration was written. It would be hypocritical to do otherwise. Knowing I was in Ollie North country and that there might be some uninformed jingoist bigot in the audience thinking I was a draft dodging, un-American type, I informed the audience that my brothers and I had proudly served this country as youths filled with patriotic fervor.

I stated, “No one of sound mind would disagree, the Declaration of Independence is the nation’s most cherished symbol of liberty. It contains the convictions held in the minds and hearts of the American people. In my opinion, the 56 men who signed the Declaration were mostly of a quality and character one would be hard-pressed to find in our leadership today.

“Never before have we, as a nation, stood in greater danger of losing our individual liberties as we are today.

“We the people of this great nation are being punished for the transgressions of our leaders and their consorts. The leaders, who we have elected or not elected, as the case may be, to safeguard and protect our inalienable rights.”

Can anyone of sound mind dispute these facts?

Quoting Michel Parenti, I continued, “Here at home and throughout the world, people are fighting back against the forces of wealth, privilege, and militarism—some because they have no choice, others because they would choose no other course but the one that leads to peace and justice.”

A woman in the audience shouted, “Shut up and read the Declaration.” To which I replied, “I will as soon as you have the decency to stop interrupting.”

What an irony, after just viewing a performance of “1776” on the Fourth of July at a proposed reading of our Declaration of Independence, someone would dare deprive me of the very liberty America is meant to stand for.

I continued, “Michel Parenti said July 4 celebrates that moment in history, over 225 years ago, when American colonials launched a revolutionary fight for independence from the British Empire. In their campaign, they were assisted by people from various countries. Today, all over the world, peoples are struggling for independence from the power of global corporatization. Let’s celebrate this July 4th with an expression of support and solidarity for people who want to use their land, labor, natural
resources, and markets for self-development and popular well-being rather than for the enrichment of the powerful few.”

Barbara Peduzzi, assistant producer at the M ac-H aydn, who had welcomed meto the theater with praise and gratitude, covered after my reading. D ay after, in a letter to the editor of a local newspaper, she said, “One of us knew he was now selling his own agenda. The person who asked him to do the reading included.”

This was a false statement as I had read the text of my speech to the person who had invited me several days before my appearance.

Interestingly enough, the body of the speech contained the following statement: “Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient Causes. And accordingly all Experience hath shewn, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while Evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed.”

Indeed, said but true that “mankind are more disposed to suffer, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.”

With the passage into law of the Patriot Act, our government, who will not ratified the World Court, may enter our homes, whether we are present or not, without a search warrant, seize our property, plant listening devices, etc. — without our consent or knowledge.

This is what is happening today in the land where Americans have fought and died, to safeguard our freedom.

If this was not tragic enough, M r. Bush, whom we did not elect, and who is waging a war in which he has declared victory, is in league with his vice president and attorney general, all having questionable association with corporations that have robbed millions of Americans of their life savings, are about to implement TIPS.

The Bush administration next month is set to test this little-known program that will recruit one in 24 U.S. citizens as domestic spies. The Terrorism Information and Prevention System, also known as Operation TIPS, will rely on truckers, letter carriers, train conductors, utility employees, and other workers whose jobs allow them access to private homes to spy on their fellow Americans.

About one million workers will kick off the pilot project in August in ten cities nationwide as part of President Bush’s Citizen Volunteer program. Participants can report suspicious activity to a toll-free hotline that will record information into a database available to the Justice Department and local and state officials.

But Justice Department officials have released few details of the program, prompting criticism from both conservatives and civil libertarian groups who say the use of well-meaning citizens to search homes without warrants is reminiscent of George Orwell’s 1984.

Someone had better take the blindfold off M s. Justice soon because someone is making a mockery of justice, democracy and our Bill of Rights right here in the U.S.A. God help us if our own Government becomes the oppressor of its people.

On June 27, 2002, Congressman Ron Paul, (R-TX) a libertarian and advocate of less government, gave a disturbingly thoughtful speech to the House of Representatives. He argued that it was a relic of the Cold War Era. Even the Pentagon had recommended that the “war” on terrorism continue with the firing of each Crusader missile.

The Carlyle Group, known as “The Iron Triangle” of defense, government and industry.

Interestingly enough, its list of former and current associates includes a solid assortment of some of the most powerful men in the world. By some strange coincidence, on America’s darkest day 9/11/01, at the posh Ritz-Carlton in Washington, DC, the company was holding its annual investor conference. Present were former secretary of defense Frank Carlucci, former Secretary of State James Baker III, and representatives of the Bin Laden family.

The Carlyle Group has ties to the Pentagon and connections within the White House itself.

As the world watched the towers crumble, this group watched their company’s stock rise like the phoenix out of the ashes. And their stock will continue to rise as long as the “war” on terrorism continues with the firing of each Crusader missile. M ade by Carlyle’s United Defense company, the controversial Crusader is a 42-ton bomb that has been in the sights of Pentagon budget-cutters since the Clinton administration, which argued that it was a relic of the Cold War Era. Even the Pentagon had recommended that the Crusader be discontinued.

But thanks to the Carlyle Group, the $11 billion contract for the Crusader is still alive. It seems this war on terrorism is a boom in business for the “Big Boys” and a burden on the masses. Although G W keeps telling us we are “at war” and that the “terrorists” are out to retali ate against a powerful military state...the cost in terms of lost liberties and unnecessary exposure to terrorism is difficult to assess, but in time, it will become apparent to all of us that foreign interventionism is of no benefit to American citizens, but instead is a threat to our liberties.

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