

Investigative reporter Seymour Hersh describes 'executive assassination ring'

By Eric Black | Published Wed, Mar 11 2009 11:17 am



REUTERS/Fadi Al-Assaad Journalist Seymour Hersh speaking in Doha at an Al Jazeera forum on the media in 2007.

At a [“Great Conversations” event](#) (MP3) at the University of Minnesota last night, legendary investigative reporter Seymour Hersh may have made a little more news than he intended by talking about new alleged instances of domestic spying by the CIA, and about an ongoing covert military operation that he called an “executive assassination ring.”

Hersh spoke with great confidence about these findings from his current reporting, which he hasn’t written about yet.

In an email exchange afterward, Hersh said that his statements were “an honest response to a question” from the event’s moderator, U of M Political Scientist Larry Jacobs and “not something I wanted to dwell about in public.”

Hersh didn’t take back the statements, which he said arise from reporting he is doing for a book, but that it might be a year or two before he has what he needs on the topic to be “effective...that is, empirical, for even the most skeptical.”

The evening of great conversation, featuring Walter Mondale and Hersh, moderated by Jacobs and titled “America’s Constitutional Crisis,” looked to be a mostly historical review of events that have tested our Constitution, by a journalist and a high government official who had experience with many of the crises.

And it was mostly historical, and a great conversation, in which Hersh and Mondale talked about the patterns by which presidents seem to get intoxicated by executive power, frustrated by the limitations on that power from Congress and the public, drawn into improper covert actions that exceed their constitutional powers, in the belief that they can get results and will never be found out. Despite a few references to the Founding Fathers, the history was mostly recent, starting with the Vietnam War with much of it arising from the George W. Bush administration, which both men roundly denounced.

At the end of one answer by Hersh about how these things tend to happen, Jacobs asked: "And do they continue to happen to this day?"

Replied Hersh:

"Yuh. After 9/11, I haven't written about this yet, but the Central Intelligence Agency was very deeply involved in domestic activities against people they thought to be enemies of the state. Without any legal authority for it. They haven't been called on it yet. That does happen.

"Right now, today, there was a story in the New York Times that if you read it carefully mentioned something known as the Joint Special Operations Command -- JSOC it's called. It is a special wing of our special operations community that is set up independently. They do not report to anybody, except in the Bush-Cheney days, they reported directly to the Cheney office. They did not report to the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff or to Mr. [Robert] Gates, the secretary of defense. They reported directly to him. ...

"Congress has no oversight of it. **It's an executive assassination ring essentially, and it's been going on and on and on.** Just today in the Times there was a story that its leaders, a three star admiral named [William H.] McRaven, ordered a stop to it because there were so many collateral deaths.

"Under President Bush's authority, they've been going into countries, not talking to the ambassador or the CIA station chief, and finding people on a list and executing them and leaving. That's been going on, in the name of all of us.

"It's complicated because the guys doing it are not murderers, and yet they are committing what we would normally call murder. It's a very complicated issue. Because they are young men that went into the Special Forces. The Delta Forces you've heard about. Navy Seal teams. Highly specialized.

"In many cases, they were the best and the brightest. Really, no exaggerations. Really fine guys that went in to do the kind of necessary jobs that they think you need to do to protect America. And then they find themselves torturing people.

"I've had people say to me -- five years ago, I had one say: 'What do you call it when you interrogate somebody and you leave them bleeding and they don't get any medical committee and two days later he dies. Is that murder? What happens if I get before a committee?'

"But they're not gonna get before a committee."

Hersh, the best-known investigative reporter of his generation, writes about these kinds of issues for The New Yorker. He has written often about JSOC, including, last July that:

“Under the Bush Administration’s interpretation of the law, clandestine military activities, unlike covert C.I.A. operations, do not need to be depicted in a Finding, because the President has a constitutional right to command combat forces in the field without congressional interference.”

(“Finding” refers to a special document that a president must issue, although not make public, to authorize covert CIA actions.)

Here is a tape of the full Mondale-Hersh-Jacobs colloquy, a little over an hour, without the audience Q and A. If you want to look for the Hersh statement quoted above, it’s about at the 7:30 mark. **Error! Filename not specified.**

The rest of the evening was, as expected, full of worry and wisdom and quite a bit of Bush-bashing. Jacobs walked the two elder statesmen through their experiences of:

- **The My Lai massacre**, which Hersh first revealed publicly and which he last night called “the end of innocence about us and war.”
- **The Pentagon Papers case**, which Mondale called the best example of the “government’s potential for vast public deception.”
- **Henry Kissinger’s secret dealings**, mostly relating to the Vietnam War. (Hersh, who has written volumes about Kissinger, said that he will always believe that whereas ordinary people count sheep to fall asleep, Kissinger “has to count burned and maimed Cambodian babies.”)
- **The Church Committee investigation** of CIA and FBI abuses, in which Mondale played a major role. (He talked about the fact that FBI director J. Edgar Hoover not only spied on Martin Luther King but literally tried to drive him to suicide.)
- **The Iran Contra scandal**. (Hersh said the Reagan administration came to office with a clear goal of finding a way to finance covert actions, such as the funding of the Nicaraguan Contras, without appropriations so that Congress wouldn’t know about them. Mondale noted that Reagan had signed a law barring further aid to the Contras, then participated in a scheme to keep the aid flowing. Hersh said that two key veterans of Iran-Contra, Dick Cheney and national security official Elliot Abrams, were reunited in the George W. Bush White House and decided that the key lesson from Iran-Contra was that too many people in the administration knew about it.)
- **And the Bush-Cheney years**. (Said Hersh: “The contempt for Congress in the Bush-Cheney White House was extraordinary.” Said Mondale of his successor, Cheney, and his inner circle: “they ran a government within the government.” Hersh added: “Eight or nine neoconservatives took over our country.” Mondale said that the precedents of abuse of vice

presidential power by Cheney would remain "like a loaded pistol that you leave on the dining room table.")

Jacobs pressed both men on the question of whether the frequent abuses of power show that the Constitution fails, because these things keep happening, or whether it works, because these things keep coming to light.

Mondale stuck with the happy answer. "The system has come through again and again," he said. Presidents always think they will get away with it, but eventually reporters like Hersh bring things to light, the public "starts smelling this stuff," the courts and the Congress get involved. Presidents "always, in the long run, find out that the system is stronger than they are."

Hersh seemed more troubled by the repetitions of the pattern. The "beautiful thing about our system" is that eventually we get new leaders, he said. "The evil twosome, Cheney and Bush, left," Hersh said. But he also said "it's really amazing to me that we manage to get such bad leadership, so consistently."

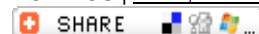
And he added that both the press and the public let down their guard in the aftermath of 9/11.

"The major newspapers joined the [Bush] team," Hersh said. Top editors passed the message to investigative reporters not to "pick holes" in what Bush was doing. Violations of the Bill of Rights happened in the plain sight of the public. It was not only tolerated, but Bush was re-elected.

And even Mondale admitted that one of his greatest successes, laws reforming the FBI and CIA in the aftermath of the Church Committee, were supposed to fix the problem so that "we would never have these problems again in the lifetime of anyone alive at the time, but of course we did."

UPDATE: [The CIA responds to Seymour Hersh \(via MinnPost\)](#)

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(#1) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Erich Russell says:

"The best and the brightest" involved in murder and we get an apologia. How male on male! They were just following orders after all. I think we've heard it before.

(#2) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Howard Salute says:

Wouldn't it have been nice to have this discussion balanced with opposing views? Walter Mondale has done many great things for this state and for the country. However, most do not consider him, or the Carter administration, to be remarkable. Minnesotans long ago saw his sparkle fade.

(#3) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Loretta Holscher says:

<http://holscherhomes.com/>

When I first read the headlines of this article, my mind flashed to the CIA investigating Corporate CEO's. I expected to hear about covert operations to keep them honest and cut their outrageous pay and bonuses. Maybe meet with an "accident" or two. Wishful thinking on my part.

Washington is a known snake pit. Send the CIA to help get rid of corporate greed monsters.

(#4) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Carl Karasti says:

We get varying degrees of poorness in our leadership because our elected leaders are all human, as well as because the rest of us who watch over them, make demands on them, berate them or ignore them are also all human.

We humans are all limited by our own egoic concerns and fears. The more fearful, separated and isolated we become as individuals or as groups, the narrower our vision becomes, which only leads to greater limitations of our potentials.

Only when we can begin to unify behind our true common interests and concerns will we be able to broaden the scope of our vision and optimistically move beyond the fears of our small egos and towards our higher ideals.

A leader has little to offer him/herself. True leadership can only be manifested when called forth by those willing, able and open to being inspired and guided towards higher ideals. We are all in this together.

Our Constitution may not be perfect, but it does provide us with a very good and very high set of ideals to inspire and guide us if we would only raise up our eyes, individually and collectively, and strive forward in unity, always remembering that unity does not demand uniformity and that unified strength thrives on diversity.

This is our true political calling.

(#5) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Cal Dones says:

Since 757's have 124 foot wing span, is this why there were no wing marks on the Pentagon on 9/11?

(#6) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor John McCarthy says:

<http://johnmccarthy90066.tripod.com/>

Feb 13, 2009, a Continental Airlines Turboprop airliner with 49 souls aboard crashed attempting to land in Buffalo, NY.

Two Titanium Steel Engines and Two Titanium Wheel Assemblies survived the crash and ensuing long lasting fire.

Titanium melts at 3000 degrees and boils at 3220.

Why were there no Titanium Steel Engines and Wheel Assemblies at the WTC, Pentagon and Shanksville, PA.???

This "newly found evidence" begs for the reopening of the Congressional Report on 911.

The governments conspiracy theory on what happened on 911 has just added new holes to its contention.

Additionally, the presence of Deuterium and Tritium, two elements of Hydrogen, are only FOUND TOGETHER AS A RESULT OF A PURE HYDROGEN NUCLEAR DETONATION. In the age of fourth generation nuclear weapons and quantum mechanics, such a device could fit into a matchbox, and have the power to obliterate steel and concrete and throw 105 ton configurations of steel in an arc over 350 feet to be impaled in the Deutsch Bank Building across the street from the WTC.

How can we continue to sit back and allow mass murderers and war criminals to live among us, free of any concept of justice?

Without 911 there would be no Patriot Act, War Powers Act nor preemptive invasions of two sovereign nations who did not attack us!

God Bless America should be changed to God Forgive America.

(#7) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Stephen Keese says:

Hersh said "The contempt for Congress in the Bush-Cheney White House was extraordinary." Unfortunately that contempt was well deserved. The Republicans weren't about to challenge their President and Veep, and the Democrats were true to form and incapable of asking anything harsh in an organized way.

(#8) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Karen Silver says:

I would want to see the evidence. What is so sad is that it is so plausible. If Hersh can prove it, it would probably make a board of inquiry almost inevitable.

(#9) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Joey Tranchina says:

There is no justice for murder. The victim is dead and beyond remedy. At the very least, Dick Cheney should be forced to admit under oath that George Bush was the Charlie McCarthy of the administration that bares his name; that Bush is innocent because his head is made out of wood and his mouth moves only when the strings are pulled. Then the contemptuous ex-VP should be forced to justify his crimes. There is that old Texas murder defense: "Some folks just need killin'." Maybe he could convince a jury that he was doing the public's good in our name. I think Mr. Cheney deserves the opportunity to present that defense.

We had a nun in the 4th grade who taught us that, in the end, we all get the vocabulary that we deserve. I think that works for government too.

(#10) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Shawn Fynn says:

"Since 757's have 124 foot wing span, is this why there were no wing marks on the Pentagon on 9/11?"

Beer cans (and 757 wings) are made out of aluminum, go stand on an empty beer can and report back to us on what happened.

(#11) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor karen boerboom says:

There was no "re-election" in 2004; it was another steal via computer software. How does the Ohio vote switch with 2,000,000 votes in favor of the Democratic candidate, then make Kerry the loser after midnight and the Cheney/Bush the winners? Corrupted software transmitted to, was it Tennessee? Tell me how it was done? The person who was to reveal some of it, not surprisingly died in an airplane crash recently! Hmm...wonder about that, just like the three suspicious deaths involving ENRON.

(#12) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Mark E. Smith says:

This JSOC sounds a lot like the "jackals" that John Perkins refers to in his book, "Confessions of an Economic Hitman."

Running a Ponzi scheme (like capitalism which is predicated upon unlimited growth) is one thing, but forcing foreign leaders to invest in it by bribing them and, when that doesn't work, killing them, may explain why so many countries are being harmed by the bursting of our economic bubble.

Hersh says, "...the guys doing it are not murderers, and yet they are committing what we would normally call murder."

That's not complicated at all. We don't like to call it murder when we do it, but it is still murder, pure and simple.

It is an element of classic tragedy for a naive young person to be fooled into killing somebody who doesn't need killing because the young 'un is trying to impress or curry favor with that person's competitor. When business describes a competitor as an "enemy" and government is at the service of business (fascism), the result is predictable. The United States has always eliminated competition by literally eliminating the competition, and requires ever greater military power because it has never been capable of competing fairly.

The JSOC is our "edge," without which the Ponzi scheme we call an economy would have failed a lot sooner.

(#13) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Richard Green says:

Jacobs, Hersh, and Mondale all seemed unable to figure out why our recent presidents have been so willing to over step the bounds of the Constitution and their office. The reason is a simple one: none have been brought to account. Nixon was pardoned by Ford. Reagan was never held accountable for Iran/Contra. Bush 1's adventures were never investigated. Bush 2 and his crime syndicate seem to be getting off scot free. Why should our current president or a future president have second thoughts about violating laws and treaties when so many have done that and worse

with no real consequences? If we want this criminality to stop we must investigate and prosecute wrong doing by the previous administration. There is no other way folks. Are we a country of laws to which all are accountable or not?

(#14) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Herb Neu says:

<http://chantix.com/>

It is a shame that most Americans are so "dumbed down" that revelations like this fall upon deaf ears. This should be front page news across America. I hope that the Daily Show will pick this up.

(#15) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Ned Delaney says:

<http://myspace.com/NDelaney47>

I have just completed a report on FBI files preceding 9/11. In lieu of what I have discovered, the Hersh investigation is equivalent to cracking an egg. This is either a country based on Constitutional law or one bordering a fascist state as found in Nazi Germany. Extreme accusations maybe, but not if its confirmed that this government has been responsible for the deaths of individuals outside of international law, notwithstanding concerns pertaining to domestic assassinations. One has only to explore the data to conclude that domestic intelligence had more of a handle on 9/11 than would meet the eye. This goes beyond theory. It's only theory if you don't have the facts. Quoting Thomas Jefferson: "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

(#16) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor B Dan Forth says:

<http://freedom.blog.googlepages.com/home>

MN has other plane crashes to concern itself about beyond 9/11 Illogic (if you have bombs you don;t need planes and vice versa). On the other hand if you have an 'executive assassination ring' (and there was/is ample evidence before Hersh) Why limit it to other countries?

The real trouble with plausible deniability is that once you start down that road there is no denial that is plausible. Like any serial murderer if someone dies mysteriously, and even if you had nothing to do with it, there is no statement or action you can make that will not be seen as a cover up.

The only way for the US to recover deniability is to vigorously investigate and punish all cases you can discover, and make it clear that any future action will be treated the same.

(#17) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Edward Cate says:

<http://greatreddragon.com/>

Becoming a law unto themselves means only one thing to me: The puppeteers who pull the strings and finance these American sociopaths are of the same source that finance their counterparts in other countries. Cheney, Hoover, Church, Kissinger and others are merely agents in the political realm. Corporate presidents who get rich running major corporations into the ground are merely agents that do what they're told by those who actually profit the most from the situation. Extremely large bonuses from failed corporations simply means that those agents successfully did exactly what they were supposed to do. Everyone else be damned. Imagine your neighborhood bully being financed

by the biggest banker in your city for doing what he does best. Yeah, you just got the idea. Legally, all you can do is stop doing business with that banker. Invest in Main Street, not Wall Street, and you'll do just fine. In fact, that's what will have to happen anyway, sooner or later.

(#18) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor Mike Smith says:

Mr. Hersh,

I read the excerpted conversation between you and Mr. Mondale. It was interesting, enlightening and educational. However, either you or Mr. Mondale made the statement to the effect, that while Presidents may try to grab "absolute power" (my interpretation - not yours) it was doomed to fail because Congress, the Press and the people won't allow it. I do not concur with that assessment. We have lost our "4th estate" for the most part do to these cabals buying up and controlling our media outlets. Our "enlightened" citizenry is not anymore. Education in the Arts - at the very least, has starved the intellectual pool of our people because education itself has been starved. I could blaviate further, but my point is simple. Given the negative forces working against our democracy - the likes of Orwell's "1984" is no longer a work of fiction. I have already heard about little tidbits of actions of the Obama Administration which lead me to believe he could succumb to the "dark side" almost as easily as the Bush Administration. Bill Moyers said it best when he said this grand experiment of ours has come close to failure many times, but we may not be so lucky the next time.

(#19) On March 11, 2009, Author Editor William Wallace says:

<http://blog.coincidence theories.com/>

This guy has been watching too much 24.

(#20) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Paul Magill Smith says:

For the gullible dolts who think Obama will be any major difference from Bush, here are some of Obama's appointees so far. Notice the common thread in both the outgoing and incoming administrations.

1. TIMOTHY GEITHNER ? TREASURY SECRETARY Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission, president and CEO of Federal Reserve Bank of New York, director of policy development for IMF, member Group of Thirty (G30), employed at Kissinger & Associates, architect of the recent 2008 financial bailouts, mentored by Lawrence Summers and Robert Rubin.
2. PAUL VOLCKER ? ECONOMIC RECOVERY ADVISORY BOARD Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, North American chairman of Trilateral Commission, Federal Reserve chairman during Carter and Reagan administrations, president of Federal Reserve Bank of New York, G30 member, chairman Rothschild Wolfensohn Company, key figure in the collapse of the gold standard during the Nixon administration, longtime associate of the Rockefeller family.
3. RAHM EMANUEL ? CHIEF OF STAFF Member of Israeli Defense Force, staunch Zionist, senator, Board of Directors for Freddie Mac, member of Bill Clinton's finance campaign committee, made \$16.2 million during 2.5 years as an investment banker for Wasserstein Perella. His father was a member of the Israeli Irgun terrorist group.
4. LAWRENCE SUMMERS ? NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission, treasury secretary during Clinton administration, chief economist at World Bank, former president of

Harvard University, Brookings Institute board member, huge proponent of globalization while working for the IMF, protégé of David Rockefeller, mentored by Robert Rubin.

5. DAVID AXELROD ? SENIOR ADVISOR Political consultant whose past clients include Sens. Hillary Clinton, John Edwards and Christopher Dodd; main Obama fixer in the William Ayers and Reverend Wright scandals.

6. HILLARY CLINTON ? SECRETARY OF STATE Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission, clandestine CIA asset used to infiltrate the anti-war movement at Yale University and the Watergate hearings, senior partner at the Rose Law Firm, key figure in the Mena drug trafficking affair, architect of the Waco disaster, implicated in the murder/ cover-up of Vince Foster, and many other deaths.

(#21) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Paul Magill Smith says:

(Continued)

7. JOSEPH BIDEN ? VICE PRESIDENT Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senator since 1972, member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, current chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, strong Zionist sympathizer who recently told Rabbi Mark S. Golub of Shalom TV, "I am a Zionist. You don't have to be a Jew to be a Zionist."

8. BILL RICHARDSON ? COMMERCE SECRETARY Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, former U.S. congressman, chairman of the Democratic National Convention in 2004, employee of Kissinger Associates, UN ambassador, governor of New Mexico, energy secretary, major player in the Monica Lewinsky cover-up with Bilderberg luminary Vernon Jordan.

9. ROBERT GATES ? DEFENSE SECRETARY Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, former CIA Director, defense secretary under President Bush, co-chaired CFR task force with Zbigniew Brzezinski, knee-deep in the Iran-Contra scandal, named in a 1999 class action lawsuit pertaining to the Mena drug trafficking affair.

10. TOM DASCHLE ? HEALTH SECRETARY Bilderberg, Council on Foreign Relations, former Senate majority leader, Citibank lackey, mentored by Robert Rubin.

11. ERIC HOLDER ? ATTORNEY GENERAL Key person in the pardon of racketeer Marc Rich, deputy attorney general under Janet Reno, facilitated the pardon of 16 Puerto Rican FALN terrorists under Bill Clinton.

12. JANET NAPOLITANO ? HOMELAND SECURITY DIRECTOR Council on Foreign Relations, Arizona governor, attorney for Anita Hill during the Clarence Thomas hearings, U.S. attorney during the Clinton administration, instrumental in the OKC cover-up, where she declared, "We'll pursue every bit of evidence and every lead," described as another Janet Reno, soft on illegal immigration (i.e. pro-amnesty and drivers licenses to illegals).

13. GEN. JAMES L. JONES ? NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR Bilderberg, Trilateral Commission, European supreme allied commander, special envoy for Middle-East Security during Bush administration, board of directors for Chevron and Boeing, NATO commander, member of Brent Scowcroft's Institute for International Affairs along with Zbigniew Brzezinski, Bobby Ray Inman, Bilderberg luminary Henry Kissinger and former CIA Director John Deutch.

14. SUSAN RICE ? U.N. AMBASSADOR Council on Foreign Relations, Rhodes scholar, campaign foreign policy advisor to presidential candidates John Kerry and Michael Dukakis, member of Bill Clinton's National Security

Council and assistant secretary of state for Africa, member of the Brookings Institute (funded by the Ford Foundation and the Rockefellers), and member of the Aspen Strategy Group (teeming with Bilderberg insiders such as Richard Armitage, Brent Scowcroft, and Madeleine Albright).

Obviously, these people have compromised loyalties, and the only way to get our country back is force all of them out.

(#22) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Dwight baker says:

WHY DO WE NEED ANOTHER OF WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE???????

DO SOME THINK ON CAPITOL HILL WE NEED ANOTHER FALL GUY???????

THAT GETS AWAY WITH BILLIONS AND SAYS TO CONGRESS ----

SO WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT IT NOW?????

Public opinion is important to me ----- because I am just one more part of the populous. Skepticism about the way our Federal Government is run and performers or those that do not perform is a matter too for most all --- that is very unsettling. And at this time in our American History the Internet is about the only means we have to conduct a forum in a kind of like --- town meeting. So with those thoughts buried deep in my mind ----- and because I am an accomplished inventor I began to think about this and that with all the back slapping—hub bubs ---back rubs --- chit chat heard and seen by our Congress and was put aback in fears that nothing of good could come about soon for the saving of our Nation. Then a light come on and I thought WE GOT TO BEAT THEM AT THEIR OWN GAME. SO READ ON.

THUS IS HOPE YOUR FOUNDATION FOR YOUR FAITH IN GOD TO SHINE THROUGH

HOW many of us are plagued with so much unbelief and suspicions that we seem NOT to be able to carry our own loads anymore and have no help for the many less others that are part of our fabric and core of our rich and abundant America?

Only a very few will ever possess the tenacity to bring about change ----- at this time of 325 Million maybe 1% to 5% of us can carry the Banner of Freedom proclaiming the RIGHTS to LIFE for everyone and POWER PUSH Washington DC for actions needed in our LAWS to be re-invigorated and restored in our Republic.

Are you in that 1% to 5%? If so JOIN IN with the many others that have accepted the challenge to bring about change.

Do you have a personal issue that lies in your perceptions of the problems ----- laid out in televised views and those in print too ----- that chime at the dime as it comes in ---- on a TOO DO LIST ---- from those advertisers that in essence own the news reporting mediums big or small. Do you buy into the dire, despicable and dreadful messages that you get from network news? Or do you wait and hold all in abeyance until fully checked out ---- and compared with other more creditable, reliable and watchful sources?

Not only those as mentioned above but the other messages that makes NO NEVER MIND at all ----and brings nothing to awaken our conscious thoughts and concerns about making things better but all to often distraction comes

to subvert those thoughts with negative emotions.

Who are the TV consumers who would rather be informed about what is going on with the Hollywood Stars, paranormal events, UFO's, who done it crime accounts, who is still missing after 8 weeks of reporting and then just on and on so much gibberish and opinions from morons that has clogged our airwaves. While many times what should be told to all of us is that the DEMOCRATIC STATE OF OUR NATION is in jeopardy. Are NOT most of the TV media mogul's empty suits, using media gimmicks that keep the audience distracted, while the NEO CON agenda moves on? As our Empire is burning are some more concerned Jennifer might get back w/Brad and what will happen w/Jolie & the kids?

Now what about the lack of HOPE? When giving in and giving up seems to be the only path to take----- the lack of HOPE has devoured someone once again ----- but not all ----just in that realm where those that have that attitude reside and have been consumed.

Has NOT Cynicism become a safe platform for many, to jeer, deride all in disdain? And has NOT those doing such proved in them their lack of HOPE. Was eight years of talking about how much you hated Bush -while utterly failing to do anything to stop "him" - really not enough for you? Good Generals use diversion tactics to win wars can you really see the scam the NEO CONS are running while we just wait, hesitate and buy into public opinion?

For out, about and throughout our Nation many more will see that the glass is not half empty but half full. And in those kinds of folks ---- one will readily see a bursting out of HOPE on their faces and in their words and deeds.

Then if your HOPE is unwavering and you have got some fight left in you ---- to make sure right things get done in our Federal Government JOIN in.

SO IF THIS FITS WHO YOU ARE ----- THEN JOIN IN TODAY the Grass Roots Actions needed to form our own THE VOICES OF WE THE PEOPLES ADVOCACY ---WTPA -----in Washington DC.

For more info contact Dwight Baker ---

(#23) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Joey Tranchina says:

The big stories in Seymour Hersh's life have a unique pattern. Each of them has been so shocking; so confirming of the worst fears of paranoid outlanders; so monumentally terrifying as to the real intentions of our government, that he has, in each case, been called: "a fabricator," an unprincipled slanderer," even a "traitor," then in the end at the end of the dark tunnel of his investigation into the depths of our secret government, Mr. Hersh has cast his light on corruption deep inside where true treason has taken place. Mr. Hersh had better be careful or he is going to give journalism a good name. In this era of corporate media malpractice, the fact that such feats of genuine journalism are still accomplished, might be the most shocking fact of all.

Seymour Hersh has repeatedly fanned the frail flame of hope, that we may yet give this confederacy of dunces that runs us a run for their money.

(#24) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Mike Smith says:

"24" is hardly my template for a blueprint of how our country could lose its democracy. In the TV show the "bad guys" are clear. We have seen how over 8 years, our Congress was nearly made irrelevant, our Courts stacked with Right Wing ideologists, our Constitution ignored, the DOJ almost totally politicized, the Presidency elevated to a near dictatorship, and our 4th estate becoming a handmaiden for White House policy. Yet, even today, most people do not understand just how perilous things had become. I am not confident at all, that any future Administration - including Obama's can be held in check. We laud President Obama's efforts to address progressive ideas - to take this country in a much needed "new direction". However, we the people should never be put in a position of depending solely on the benevolence of our government. That is folly!

(#25) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Beryl John-Knudson says:

Hersh has been telling the story for some time and other voices support his words. History rolls out like a soiled carpet and we shuffle into a lecture hall and listen or read it in this alternate format...but nothing happens.

If there was a video clip attached to the audio that would show the Bush Gang all in a row; incarcerated performers in their treasonous operetta; all costumed appropriately in orange jump suits and lowering their heads in shame before being tried and found guilty, then words as history after-the-fact would have achieved justice and hope for change.

Otherwise, however genuine the revelations and the motives for exposing it in this scenario, comes too late, too late; and we can stomp or shuffle out of the auditorium after the lecture and wait for another in the 'series' telling us where we or they went wrong again?

Words establish foul, foul past deeds here. But only records history, but does not effect change...other than the janitor now working two jobs, who comes after the lecture, picking up the dropped flyers the crowd left behind...reads briefly then goes on mopping.

Dusting down the terrors of this past administration and telling it again as recent history won't change anything; most facts, informed citizens knew already but had no power to change. And we call this democracy? Where does all this get us but down the same old spiral to where?

How do we stop the madness rather than wait for a second lecture in the series, after-the-fact?

We can do a whole series documenting the dumbing, dooming down of democracy but once it's after-the fact, it's too late, too late. How do we change it before it becomes another dam, damming, dammed history lesson?

(#26) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Ryan Napp says:

What's amazing is that guys like Hersh and Mondale can acknowledge these grievous faults, even say they are systemic, but then NOT raise questions about other events like 9/11, the JFK/RFK/MLK assassinations, etc. Because that's going "too" far.

It's no surprise -- we're trained to it. When I scanned the posts above moments ago, the first 9/11 comments struck me as being that of "more 9/11 wackos" -- even though I don't believe the official story myself.

It's really our own form of classism, if you think about it: some truths belong to the "lower" class while others belong to the "higher" -- even though the supposed truths of the higher class imply those of the lower.

Since WWI this country has become the locus of international power, and with it, intrigue. There's no going back. It's fatal for a democracy to be caught up in international intrigues which by definition aren't democratic. Only there's no way to live with your head in the sand either. But: that's history. And it's a shame.

(#27) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Professor Emeritus Peter Bagnolo says:

<http://open.salon.com/blog/professoremerituspab>

My dear and revered journalist, thank you for the information above. I had no proof other than intuition but have written about my suspicions for several years. I believe that some domestic assassinations may have occurred as well. That and more are reasons we have broken with the new administration for not investigating and pursuing special prosecutors and hopefully indictments.

I am happy but not surprised that my suspicions were justified.

(#28) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Paul Kane says:

This is shocking to someone? That U.S. Special Ops have been assassinating terrorists? Sheesh, what do you think those guys do? Give me a break, these liberals and their fake outrage. What do you think Obama's doing with his little Predator base in Paki? CIA does it, Special Ops does it. Military does it. Of course they don't tell each other, for operational security purposes. You think JSOC is going to tell the embassy? It would be all over the morning papers.

(#29) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Mordecai Specktor says:

<http://ajwnews.com/>

The "Great Conversations" event was mentioned last night on MSNBC's "Countdown with Keith Olbermann" show. Specifically, Newsweek's Jonathan Alter said, "An amazing thing happened in Minnesota last night," and recounted Hersh's comment at the forum about "Cheney-sponsored assassination rings."

Alter suggested that Hersh's assertion about these extra-legal hit teams was "sketchy... I think Hersh is going to want to make us wait until his book comes out. But clearly there's a lot more that happened in that Bush administration, directly out of the vice president's office, that we don't know about yet."

Alter said the forthcoming revelations "will curl our hair."

(#30) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Steve Kele says:

As demonstrated by these articles, both Bush and Chaney had committed enough crimes to demand us that they be tried as war criminals. Bush had started a war in Iraq because, as he stated once, "...He (Sadam) had tried to have my Daddy killed..." Although, Bush wanted to justify the war under the "national security" blindfold that so many

Americans had fallen victims of. As a result of his crime against humanity, hundreds of thousand Iraqies died, and are still dying today, and wasted billions of precious resources that could have been, and should have been, used for foster living conditions in the States. Now, it comes out that Cheney has had his own little assassination ring accountable to no one but to himself. Both should be tried for their crimes as Sadam and have them join him in Hell!

(#31) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Robert Moreland says:

I beg to differ with Mr. Mondale. If the system worked both Bush and Cheney would have been impeached, indicted for treason, tried, convicted and sentenced by now. Equal Justice for all would prevail instead of the corrupt and powerful sheltering themselves and pronouncing edicts of death to their personal enemies.

It is not that JSOC exist, I've known about them for decades; and yes, they are the best of the best; but when they are being used by the worst of the worst ... they become just a weapon of extreme prejudice in the hands of autocratic megalomaniacs. This betrays their (the soldiers, airman, seaman, and marines of JSOC) trust as much as any citizens.

There is nothing worse to create than a supreme warrior to be abused and betrayed, and left to wonder about the error of those that used them for unjust ends. It creates many lethal ghosts just waiting for revenge.

Something Cheney and Bush probably never calculated, but then ... that administration is filled with an abundance of gross miscalculations and errors in judgment that go beyond the negligence that ignorance brings.

(#32) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Max Sparber says:

I don't know whether to be more discouraged by Hersh's news, which is both astonishing and unsurprising (what local writer Steve McPherson calls "shock and obvious"), or that this sort of news can't be published without the news site instantly being flooded by 9/11 truthers and Bush apologists.

(#33) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Vic Livingston says:

<http://My.NowPublic.com/scrivener>

MICROWAVE RADIATION WEAPONS BEING USED TO TORTURE AND SLOW-KILL INNOCENT BUT
"TARGETED" U.S. CITIZENS

Gang stalking, menacing with a motor vehicle, surreptitious home entries, vandalism of property and personal effects, and covert assault with hi-tech microwave radiation weapons have been unconstitutionally decriminalized throughout the nation under the convenient banner of the "war on terror"...

...as demonstrated by the Bush Justice Department "torture memos," which have been described as a blueprint for a police state.

Bush administration officials renounced the memos just days before the end of their term — but fact is, the programs and policies that these memos deigned to justify continue under President Obama.

The Bush torture memos, some still secret, appear to have laid the groundwork for a repressive “extrajudicial punishment network” — in effect, turning local police into secret agents acting on suspicions derived from “intelligence” that may have been supplied with ideological baggage attached.

Many innocent people have been “put on a list” by those who don’t like their politics, their social activism, or their ethnic background. Persons slandered as “troublemakers, ” “deviates,” “mental defectives” or disloyal “dissidents” have been subject to years of persecution at the hands of their neighbors — just as occurred in Nazi Germany in the years leading up to World War II and Hitler’s “Final Solution.”

(A former NSA analyst has revealed that journalists nationwide have been subject to 24/7 surveillance, a claim to which this reporter can attest).

A nationwide GPS satellite tracking network has been made available to “community gang stalkers” who hide behind federal- and county-funded volunteer organizations and public safety agencies such as fire departments and police auxiliaries.

These organizations provide taxpayer-funded vehicles and gasoline to local squads of hundreds of vigilante volunteers, who seem to delight in “swarming the target” when signal from a secreted GPS device planted in their vehicles shows up in the so-called “crown of evil” GPS video screen of the stalkers.

Some stalkers cause auto accidents and attempt to provoke confrontations that will draw police attention. The apparent motive: to portray the persecuted as mentally unbalanced.

This vehicle stalking causes a public safety hazard as vigilante squads violate the civil and human rights of their prey — many, if not most, of whom are upstanding citizens who were wrongly or maliciously targeted.

Victims say the gang stalkers also make surreptitious entry into their homes to vandalize property and personal effects, and to leave tell-tale signs that the privacy of their targets has been violated — a form of psychological harassment known as “gaslighting” (after “Gaslight,” the classic Ingrid Bergman movie, in which an evil husband manipulates his wife’s environment to make her think she is going crazy).

Every law enforcement agency in the nation is likely to know about the GPS-enabled stalking system and the community gang stalking — what some insiders call “the torture matrix.” The Bush torture memos specifically cited

anti-stalking laws as being exempt from enforcement when "terrorism" was suspected.

Portraying the "targets" as mentally unsound also appears to be the goal of what amounts to an American "slow-kill" genocide: The covert assault of these "targeted individuals" with classified, hi-tech microwave radiation weapons and devices referred to by officialdom as supposedly non-lethal "directed energy weapons."

The benign nomenclature notwithstanding, these powerful microwave weapons can stun, injure, induce illness, and, depending on exposure levels, kill. Victims say the weapons are being used on the "targets" to induce symptoms of mental illness and cognitive impairment — in a campaign to have them declared mentally ill and thus "neutralized."

These are crimes against humanity, enabled by federal programs and policies that have co-opted and corrupted local law enforcement, which is dependent upon federal funding from the agencies that devised these "programs of personal destruction."

– Vic Livingston

Lower Makefield Township, Bucks County, PA

Columnist, NowPublic.com/scrivener; former host, Sports Business Report on Madison Square Garden Network; former reporter, Phila. Fox 29 News; New York Daily News; Philadelphia Bulletin.

<http://My.NowPublic.com/scrivener>

(#34) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Vic Livingston says:

<http://My.NowPublic.com/scrivener>

An addendum to my earlier post:

Hersh revealed some duplicity when he first mentioned "domestic activities" against people regarded "enemies of the state..."

BUT in your follow-up email exchange, he seemed to limit his remarks to off-shore operations, and issued that lame apologia for the killers.

I AM A VICTIM OF THIS OPERATION or a related localized iteration of the "extrajudicial punishment network," the evidence strongly indicates.

My telecommunications also have been subject to censorship, prior restraint, and malicious tampering. I had much trouble trying to register to post this comment. I believe some "good people on the inside" have my back, however.

I'm a fairly well-known journalist who hasn't been able to get a single colleague to report on this.

Please read my articles. I was under attack as recently as last night (March 11). Victims continue to suffer.

Eric Black, help me tell this story. Now. The victims, and democracy, can't wait for Sy Hersh's book.

(#35) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Kenner Bisch says:

It all seems to "come out in the wash" eventually. I think we all experienced the tyranny of the Bush administration in various ways. The "LBJ wave" of corruption in politics has been a mainstay in US politics ever since the FDR days. GWB seems to have been riding the "LBJ wave" as well. Obama is probably riding the same wave as well. Sad but true.

Hints of tyranny is about all we got from the press in the early days of GWB's administration, but thanks to reporters like Mr. Hersh, and the Human Rights League, we have become more informed. The US Constitution bans tyranny. The US military fights wars against tyrants. We do not need, nor allow tyrants to run our government.

The direction we should have taken in this current whole mess especially after 9/11 is to enforce laws against tyrants, and not to make laws against terrorism. Laws against terrorism are laws for and by tyrants. Anyone can be labeled a terrorist and punished as such with the current Anti-Terrorism Laws. Everyone that utilizes murder against civilians in the name of the Jihad is a murderer full of tyranny.

Thank you Mr. Hersh for speaking out.

If you are interested in finding out some of the details of our current worldwide crisis we face from tyrants in the form of a fiction story, then look up a book titled "Death to Fool Boys Incorporated" published in 2005. It is about what could be called the "psychos of war" and the extremism they turn to to get their way.

(#36) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Tim Jones says:

I emailed this comment to Walter Mondale (hopefully Seymour Hersh will see it to), that is relevant the above discussion:

Dear Mr. Mondale:

I'm listening to the audio of "Great Conversations" event at the University of Minnesota where you and Seymour Hersh talk about the usurpation of power by Bush-Cheney administration and your work in the past. You say you stand for a reasonably open government, and yet why can't the big secret about the UFO's and how much technology we have developed, and how much of our budget is going into a black hole, be disclosed. I'm sure you're familiar with

the names below:

Col. Phillip Corso

Dr. Michael Wolf

Robert Dean

Charles Hall

Paul Hill

Why have all these individuals, all retired military with high level clearances come forward to tell their story about the covert nature of UFO contact and technology?

Where are the champions in Congress these days? Have you ever listened to the interviews of these individuals or read their books? All secrets pale in comparison to this secret. With this issue the entire political system hangs in the moral and ethical balance. It would be more than I could hope for to get a personal response so I would like you to write about this if possible. I am sure you are familiar with the work of Dr. Steven Greer, spearheading "The Disclosure Project" where twenty military ranking officers with high level clearances came forward like those in the list above and another 300-400 individuals more are willing to come forward if the circumstances are right.

American citizens like me are longing and hoping for voices to be raised in the halls of Congress by politicians, writers, scientists, thinkers, and the like, to demand that this issue be addressed.

Sincere Regards,

(my name is left off here)

(#37) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Vic Livingston says:

<http://My.NowPublic.com/scrivener>

Joey Tranchina:

Either you're a passionate humanist or a cruel and clever disinfo artist who is adopting the "enemy position" to ferret out more "enemies of the state."

Either way, Eric Black has put Minnpost.com on the map as living proof that mainstream media is dead and net-only journalism has arrived.

I am alerting my friends and former colleagues at the Poynter Institute that I have seen the future of American journalism and it is NOT written in ink.

Now, someone has to expose the fact that this "extrajudicial punishment network" isn't limited to a select number of hit squads, but permeates all of society -- including the health care system, where "targets" have been harmed, instead of healed.

(Also, perhaps, the ranks of journalism, but I will have to expose that some other time.)

(#38) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor Jenny Smolin says:

Quote from Hirsch:

"It's complicated because the guys doing it are not murderers, and yet they are committing what we would normally call murder. It's a very complicated issue. Because they are young men that went into the Special Forces. The Delta Forces you've heard about. Navy Seal teams. Highly specialized.

"In many cases, they were the best and the brightest. Really, no exaggerations. Really fine guys that went in to do the kind of necessary jobs that they think you need to do to protect America. And then they find themselves torturing people."

If they are the "best and the brightest" and "really fine guys" (wow!) then why do they still believe they are protecting "America"? Are they really bright but just deaf, dumb and blind? They haven't seen what the last administration was doing and what the current one is now doing? Brightest compared to what? "Really fine" compared to whom? Ask yourself what Jesus would do.

And, no, they are not murdering, because they are true blue American patriots - they kill people for "America" and therefore it can't be murder - while anyone else from any other country on Earth that kills for the same reasons, but for their own country, are murderers? puleeze! It's not complicated at all. Not in the least. And we all know it.

Who are they really killing for and to what purpose - the real one? We all know who it's for and ultimately for what reason(s). Search in your hearts. And it has nothing to do with "democracy", "NATIONAL" security OR the US as a country.

Just look at the bailouts to see who it's being done for and by.

(#39) On March 12, 2009, Author Editor John H Kennedy says:

WE ALL KNOW WHAT EVIL HAPPENED.

The Bush-Cheney Administration is the greatest threat to our democracy that we've had. It is an ongoing threat because it is an internal threat, the precedents are there, and have not been denounced by Congress or Obama in any effective way.

Hersh added: "Eight or nine neoconservatives took over our country."

Mondale said that the precedents of abuse of vice presidential power by Cheney would remain "like a loaded pistol that you leave on the dining room table."

"Top editors

passed the message to investigative reporters not to "pick holes" in what Bush was doing.

Violations of the Bill of Rights happened in the plain sight of the public. It was not only tolerated, but Bush was re-elected."

WE Cannot Wait For The National Media
To Do This For Us.

It is up to us as individuals to get justice for Bush, Cheney and their co-conspirators.

WE HAVE TO DO IT OURSELVES!

SIGN THE PETITION.... Pass it

<http://AngryVoters.org>

Individuals:

Sign The Petition To Prosecute those in the Bush Administration that violated Federal Laws. Have your organization pass this url to members with a recommendation to sign.

Groups:

Endorse the Joint Letter To Attorney General Holder asking him to appoint a Special Prosecutor for Bush, Cheney and appointees who approved TORTURE and violated other Federal Laws

<http://AngryVoters.org>

SIGN THE PETITION.... Pass it on.