

2022's Danger Signs: From Totalitarian Paranoia to Authoritarian Madness

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The danger signs were everywhere in 2022.

With every new law enacted by federal and state legislatures, every new ruling handed down by government courts, and every new military weapon, invasive tactic and egregious protocol employed by government agents, we were reminded that in the eyes of the government and its corporate accomplices, "we the people" possess no rights except for that which the Deep State grants on an as-needed basis.

Totalitarian paranoia spiked. What we have been saddled with is a government so power-hungry, paranoid and afraid of losing its stranglehold on power that it has conspired to wage war on anyone who dares to challenge its authority. In a Machiavellian attempt to expand its powers, the government unleashed all manner of dangers on an unsuspecting populace in order to justify its demands for additional powers to protect "we the people" from emerging threats, whether legitimate, manufactured or overblown.

The state of our nation suffered. The nation remained politically polarized, controlled by forces beyond the purview of the average American, and rapidly moving the nation away from its freedom foundation. The combined blowback from a contentious presidential election and the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in Americans being subjected to egregious civil liberties violations, invasive surveillance, martial law, lockdowns, political correctness, erosions of free speech, strip searches, police shootings of unarmed citizens, government spying, and the criminalization of lawful activities.

Thought crimes became a target for punishment. For years now, the government has used all of the weapons in its vast arsenal—surveillance, threat assessments, fusion centers, pre-crime programs, hate crime laws, militarized police, lockdowns, martial law, etc.—to target potential enemies of the state based on their ideologies, behaviors, affiliations and other characteristics that might be deemed suspicious or dangerous. In other words, if you dare to subscribe to any views that are contrary to the government's, you may well be suspected of

being a domestic terrorist and treated accordingly. In 2022, those who criticized the government—whether that criticism manifested itself in word, deed or thought—were flagged as dangerous alongside consumers and spreaders of “mis- dis- and mal-information.”

Speech was muzzled. Those who want to monitor, muzzle, catalogue and censor speech continued to push for social media monitoring, censorship of flagged content that could be construed as dangerous or hateful, and limitations on free speech activities, particularly online. Of course, it’s a slippery slope from censoring so-called illegitimate ideas to silencing truth. Eventually, as George Orwell predicted, telling the truth will become a revolutionary act. If the government can control speech, it can control thought and, in turn, it can control the minds of the citizenry.

Kill switches aimed to turn off more than just your car. Vehicle “kill switches” were sold to the public as a safety measure aimed at keeping drunk drivers off the roads, but they were a perfect metaphor for the government’s efforts to not only take control of our cars but also our freedoms and our lives. For too long, we have been captive passengers in a driverless car controlled by the government, losing more and more of our privacy and autonomy the further down the road we go.

Currency went digital. No matter how much money the government pulls in, it’s never enough, so the government came up with a new plan to make it even easier for its agents to seize Americans’ bank account. In an Executive Order issued in March 2022, President Biden called for the federal government to consider establishing a form of digital money. Digital currency will provide the government and its corporate partners with a mode of commerce that can easily be monitored, tracked, tabulated, mined for data, hacked, hijacked and confiscated when convenient.

The government spoke in a language of violence. Police violence killed three people a day. Warrior cops—trained in the worst-case scenario and thus ready to shoot first and ask questions later—did not make us or themselves any safer. Despite this, President Biden’s pledged to expand law enforcement and so-called crime prevention through a \$30 billion “Fund the Police” program.

Cancel culture became more intolerant. Cancel culture—political correctness amped up on steroids, the self-righteousness of a narcissistic age, and a mass-marketed pseudo-morality that is little more than fascism disguised as tolerance—shifted us into an Age of Intolerance, policed by techno-censors, social media bullies, and government watchdogs. Everything has now become fair game for censorship if it can be construed as hateful, hurtful, bigoted or offensive provided that it runs counter to the established viewpoint.

Homes were invaded. Government agents routinely [violated the Fourth Amendment at will](#) under the pretext of public health and safety. This doesn’t even begin to touch on the many ways the government and its corporate partners-in-crime used surveillance technology to invade homes: with wiretaps, thermal imaging, surveillance cameras, and other monitoring devices.

Political theater kept the public distracted. Having devolved into a carefully calibrated exercise in how to manipulate, polarize, propagandize and control a population, the political scene provided ample diversions with its televised Jan. 6 committee hearings, the Russia-

Ukraine crisis, the Ketanji Brown Jackson confirmation hearings, and more.

Bodily integrity was undermined. Caught in the crosshairs of a showdown between the rights of the individual and the so-called “emergency” state, concerns about COVID-19 mandates and bodily integrity remained part of a much larger debate over the ongoing power struggle between the citizenry and the government over our property “interest” in our bodies. This debate over bodily integrity covered broad territory, ranging from abortion and forced vaccinations to biometric surveillance and basic healthcare. Although the Supreme Court overturned its earlier rulings recognizing abortion as a constitutional right under the Fourteenth Amendment, it did nothing to resolve the larger problem that plagues us today: namely, that all along the spectrum of life—from the unborn child to the aged—the government continues to play fast and loose with the lives of the citizenry.

The government’s fiscal insanity reached new heights. The [national debt](#) (the amount the federal government has borrowed over the years and must pay back) hit [\\$30 trillion](#). That translates to roughly [\\$242,000 per taxpayer](#). It’s estimated that the amount this country owes is now 130% greater than its gross domestic product (all the products and services produced in one year by labor and property supplied by the citizens). That debt is also growing exponentially: it is expected to be [twice the size of the U.S. economy](#) by 2051.

Surveillance got creepier. On any given day, the average American going about his daily business was monitored, surveilled, spied on and tracked in more than 20 different ways, by both government and corporate eyes and ears. In such a [surveillance ecosystem](#), we’re all suspects and databits to be tracked, catalogued and targeted. With every new AI surveillance technology that was adopted and deployed without any regard for privacy, Fourth Amendment rights and due process, the rights of the citizenry were marginalized, undermined and eviscerated.

Precrime became more fact than fiction. Under the pretext of helping overwhelmed government agencies work more efficiently, AI predictive and surveillance technologies were used to classify, segregate and flag the populace with little concern for privacy rights or due process. All of this sorting, sifting and calculating was done swiftly, secretly and incessantly with the help of AI technology and a surveillance state that monitors your every move. Where this becomes particularly dangerous is when the government takes preemptive steps to combat crime or abuse, or whatever the government has chosen to outlaw at any given time.

The government waged psychological warfare on the nation. The government made clear in word and deed that “we the people” are domestic enemies to be targeted, tracked, manipulated, micromanaged, surveilled, viewed as suspects, and treated as if our fundamental rights are mere privileges that can be easily discarded. Aided and abetted by technological advances and scientific experimentation, the government weaponized violence; surveillance, pre-crime and pre-thought campaigns; digital currencies, social media scores and censorship; desensitization campaigns; fear; genetics; and entertainment.

Gun confiscation laws put a target on the back of every American. Red flag gun laws (which authorize government officials to seize guns from individuals viewed as a danger to themselves or others) gained traction as a legislative means by which to allow police to remove guns from people suspected of being threats. Red flag gun laws merely push us that much closer towards a suspect society where everyone is potentially guilty of some crime or another and must be preemptively rendered harmless.

The burden of proof was reversed. Although the Constitution requires the government to provide solid proof of criminal activity before it can deprive a citizen of life or liberty, the government turned that fundamental assurance of due process on its head. Each and every one of us is now seen as a potential suspect, terrorist and lawbreaker in the eyes of the government. The groundwork has been laid for a new kind of government where it won't matter if you're innocent or guilty, whether you're a threat to the nation, or even if you're a citizen. What will matter is what the government—or whoever happens to be calling the shots at the time—thinks. And if the powers-that-be think you're a threat to the nation and should be locked up, then you'll be locked up with no access to the protections our Constitution provides.

The Supreme Court turned America into a Constitution-free zone. Although the Court's rulings on qualified immunity for police who engage in official misconduct were largely overshadowed by its politically polarizing rulings on abortion, gun ownership and religion, they were no less devastating. The bottom line: there will be no consequences for cops who brutalize the citizenry and no justice for the victims of police brutality.

The FBI went rogue. The FBI's laundry list of crimes against the American people ran the gamut from surveillance, disinformation, blackmail, entrapment, and intimidation tactics to harassment and indoctrination, governmental overreach, abuse, misconduct, trespassing, enabling criminal activity, and damaging private property, and that's just based on what we know.

The government waged war on political freedom. In more and more cases, the government declared war on what should be protected political speech whenever it challenges the government's power, reveals the government's corruption, exposes the government's lies, and encourages the citizenry to push back against the government's many injustices.

The military industrial complex waged more wars. America's part in the showdown between Russia and the Ukraine conveniently followed on the heels of a long line of other crises which have occurred like clockwork in order to keep Americans distracted, deluded, amused, and insulated from the government's steady encroachments on our freedoms.

The Deep State went global. We've been inching closer to a new world order for the past several decades, but COVID-19, which saw governmental and corporate interests become even more closely intertwined, shifted this transformation into high gear. This new world order—a global world order—made up of international government agencies and corporations owes its existence in large part to the U.S. government's deep-seated and, in many cases, top-secret alliances with foreign nations and global corporations. This powerful international cabal, let's call it the Global Deep State, is just as real as the corporatized, militarized, industrialized American Deep State, and it poses just as great a threat to our rights as individuals under the U.S. Constitution, if not greater.

Authoritarian madness escalated. You didn't have to be a conspiracy theorist or even anti-government to recognize the slippery slope that starts with well-meaning intentions for the greater good and ends with tyrannical abuses no one should tolerate. When any government is empowered to adopt a comply-or-suffer-the-consequences mindset that is enforced through mandates, lockdowns, penalties, detention centers, martial law, and an utter disregard for the rights of the individual, there should be reason for concern.

The takeaway: the more things changed, the more they stayed the same.

As I make clear in my book [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#) and in its fictional counterpart [The Erik Blair Diaries](#), if there is any means left to us for thwarting the government in its relentless march towards outright dictatorship, it rests—as it always has—at the local level, with “we the people.”

Unless we work together to push back against the government’s overreach, excesses and abuse, 2023 will be yet another terrible, horrible, no good, very bad year for freedom.

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