

# Looking to Leave Your Homeland for Police State USA? Think Again.

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Global Research, September 11, 2017

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Law and Justice](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#), [Poverty & Social Inequality](#)

*So you dream of leaving your class-infected, corrupt, and poor homeland oligarchy for America's legendary freedoms? All the glamour and freedoms generated by Hollywood is irresistible, I know. Today however, in the wake of a new US administration, the ugliness which our tranquil college campuses, Hollywood creations, and Silicon Valley innovations had obscured, is exposed for all to witness. If you want an [American reality check](#), follow attorney John Whitehead.*

I really don't like being a downer; better to avoid reality and watch gritty college football, *American Idol*, *Mad Men*, or *Ellen DeGeneres*. Or take up meditation or organic food. For sure.

Somewhere at the back of my consciousness I had been aware that the USA is a police state. I didn't let it bother me though; it didn't seem to interfere with my life agenda.

Perhaps I'm like millions of other immigrants who slide into an economy needing my talents and naivety, along with a fine education acquired elsewhere. No one needed to instruct me about surviving; it was evident: keep your head down (and uncovered), your mouth shut (about abuses you witness), work your butt off, and you may slip below the radar and pass as white. (I didn't give the price of white privilege much thought, namely my ethnic pride and the challenge all the family faces holding to slivers of our heritage.) Notwithstanding my doctorate from U. London, my quoted academic papers and invitations to international conferences, I remained oblivious to inequities in US society. The police state seemed to operate only in sleazy corners of the underworld.

My career shift to journalism focusing on the Arab lands and my fellow Arab and Muslim peoples changed all that. Witnessing first hand the deceit and murderousness US embargo on Iraq championed by America's free media, I matured.

I recall a NY gathering in the mid-90s, when those of us challenging US policies complained about newly threatened civil liberties. In response to our alarm, an African American colleague remarked:

"Ah, now you feel it. We have been living with this police terror for more than 400 years, since our arrival as slaves here. Now it's reaching you (non-Blacks); now you too taste it."

He had no sympathy for our anxiety.

Reality sunk in when individuals distanced themselves from me; next, I knew I was being watched; then opponents of my journalistic reports shunned me. (Forget about the professors I'd worked with; they'd slithered away long before).

Following the 9/11 attacks, the US police state ballooned and restraints lifted on how police/FBI and the courts treated 'suspects'. In this phase the targets were Muslim residents, and Muslim visitors. From the start of this period to the present white citizens largely ignored the interrogations, jailings and deportations of Muslim residents. Even civil rights attorneys were scared to defend Muslim suspects. (There is no record of the fate of thousands of affected families; only in recent years, commendable investigative work has revealed that many terror suspects were in fact victims of government 'sting' operations.)

Today, under the Trump administration, the sweep has broadened; police are more aggressively targeting undocumented workers, bold white journalists, and non-violent demonstrators. Their invasion is more penetrating thanks to enhanced (digitized) state surveillance tools. I shudder when I read attorney Whitehead's Sept 7<sup>th</sup> "What Country Is This?" and share a few passages for you to ponder.

Whitehead writes: "Our freedoms—especially the Fourth Amendment—are being choked out by a prevailing view among government bureaucrats that they have the right to search, seize, strip, scan, shoot, spy on, probe, pat down, taser, and arrest any individual at any time and for the slightest provocation.

"Forced cavity searches, forced colonoscopies, forced blood draws, forced breath-alcohol tests, forced DNA extractions, forced eye scans, forced inclusion in biometric databases: just a few ways in which Americans are being forced to accept that we have no control over our bodies, our lives and our property, especially when it comes to interactions with the government.

"Worse, on a daily basis, Americans are being made to relinquish the most intimate details of who we are—our biological makeup, our genetic blueprints, and our biometrics (facial characteristics and structure, fingerprints, iris scans, etc.)—in order to clear the nearly insurmountable hurdle that increasingly defines life in the United States: we are now guilty until proven innocent.

"Such is life in America today that individuals are being threatened with arrest and carted off to jail for the least hint of noncompliance, homes are being raided by police under the slightest pretext, property is being seized on the slightest hint of suspicious activity, and roadside police stops have devolved into government-sanctioned exercises in humiliation and degradation with a complete disregard for privacy and human dignity.

"Consider, for example, what happened to Utah nurse Alex Wubbels after a police detective demanded to take blood from a badly injured, unconscious patient without a warrant. Wubbels refused, citing hospital policy that requires police to either have a warrant or permission from the patient in order to draw blood. The detective had neither.irate, the detective threatened to have Wubbels arrested if she didn't comply. Wubbels respectfully stood her ground only to be [...while hospital police looked on.](#)

"Michael Chorosky didn't have an advocate like Wubbels ... Chorosky was surrounded by police, strapped to a gurney and then [had his blood forcibly drawn after refusing to submit to a breathalyzer test.](#) "What country is this? What country is this?" cried Chorosky during the forced blood draw.

What country is this indeed?... forced blood draws are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the indignities and abuses being heaped on Americans in the so-called name of “national security.”

“Forced cavity searches, forced colonoscopies and forced roadside strip searches are also becoming par for the course in an age in which police are taught to have no respect for the citizenry’s bodily integrity whether or not a person has done anything wrong.

“...21-year-old Charnesia Corley was [allegedly pulled over by Texas police in 2015](#) for “rolling” through a stop sign. Claiming they smelled marijuana, police handcuffed Corley, placed her in... the police cruiser, then searched her car.... No drugs were found.

“The Houston Chronicle [reported](#): Returning to his car where Corley was held, the deputy said he smelled marijuana and called in a female deputy to conduct a cavity search. ...the female deputy...told Corley to pull her pants down, but Corley protested because she was cuffed and had no underwear on. The deputy ordered Corley to bend over, pulled down her pants and began to search her. ...Corley stood up and protested...the deputy threw her to the ground and restrained her while another female was called to assist. When backup arrived, each deputy held one of Corley’s legs apart to conduct the probe. The cavity search lasted 11 minutes. This practice is referred to as [“rape by cop.”](#)

“Although Corley was [charged with resisting arrest and with possession of 0.2 grams of marijuana](#), those charges were subsequently dropped.

“David Eckert was forced to undergo [an anal cavity search, three enemas, and a colonoscopy](#) after allegedly failing to yield to a stop sign at a Wal-Mart parking lot. Cops...suspected Eckert was carrying drugs because his “posture [was] erect” and “he kept his legs together.” No drugs were found.

“During a routine traffic stop, Leila Tarantino was subjected to two roadside strip searches in plain view of passing traffic, while her two small children waited inside her car. During the second strip search, presumably in an effort to ferret out drugs, [a female officer “forcibly removed” a tampon from Tarantino](#). No contraband or anything illegal was found.

“Thirty-eight-year-old Angel Dobbs and her 24-year-old niece, Ashley, were [pulled over by a Texas state trooper](#) on July 13, 2012, allegedly for flicking cigarette butts out of the car window. Insisting that he smelled marijuana, the trooper proceeded to interrogate... “Despite the fact that both women denied smoking or possessing any marijuana, the police officer then called in a female trooper, who carried out a roadside cavity search, [sticking her fingers into the older woman’s anus and vagina, then.. on the younger woman](#)... No marijuana was found.

These few examples from Whitehead’s review reflect common US police behavior. More frightening when we consider that this is the nation (like Israel) where many governments worldwide send their police for training.

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