

New U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) Indictments Criminalize Dissent—Weaponizing the Very Censorship Tactics They Condemned in Russia

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Transcript

A new indictment from the Biden Justice Department is one of the most disturbing and extremist yet in the ongoing attempt by the U.S. government – under the guise of a domestic War on Terror – to criminalize any real dissidence and any real dissent.

In one sense, these charges are just yet another manifestation of the dreariest and most cliched Russiagate paranoia, seeing Russians under every bed. But if you look under the hood of these charges just a bit, as we'll do along with you tonight, you'll see that the framework being constructed is dangerous and extreme, nothing less than a tactic for empowering the federal government to transform its harshest critics into felons.

At its core, the indictment targets numerous American citizens, five of whom are part of radical black leftist groups. As such, they have very harsh words for Joe Biden and his administration, harbor contempt for U.S. foreign policy in the U.S. Security State, including the FBI, and are very vocal opponents of U.S. proxy war in Ukraine, even going so far as to argue that the provocations of the U.S. and NATO in Ukraine render the Russian invasion justifiable as a legal and ethical means for combating Western control over their border and violent anti-Russian extremism in the provinces in Eastern Ukraine. You may not agree with those views, but it's certainly not a crime in any way to express them.

Yet those charged today, in addition to those views, often denounce many of the same police brutality cases on which more mainstream liberal and Black Lives Matter activists, such as Michael Brown and George Floyd, but from a radical black lens.

So how does an American citizen, or five of them, end up criminally charged by the Justice Department for expressing these views?

Because prosecutors, in this case, can't claim that they were acting on behalf of the Russian government by disseminating messaging designed to, "sow discord" among Americans, all because they received trivial amounts of funding that the DOJ claims emanated from the Russian government.

None of that is a crime either. You're allowed to receive funding from other governments the way dissidents in those countries often receive funding from the United States government. So, the indictment really amounts to a claim that these Americans failed to file the proper paperwork notifying the government that they were agents of a foreign power, which means they now face ten years in prison for that offense and another five years in prison for allegedly inducing others to do the same without their knowledge.

So why is this indictment so threatening? Because, as we will show you, the charges are so plainly motivated by the political dissent of these American citizens and not by concern that they failed to file the right forms, and much less so by the belief that these are somehow real Kremlin agents who are doing anything other than expressing the views they have long held.

Quite tellingly, the U.S. government and the media and think tank elite to serve it have frequently denounced every enemy state, starting with Russia, China and Iran, for doing exactly what the Biden administration's Justice Department is doing in this case, namely using the laws that require, "foreign agents" to register to turn dissidents into criminals.

We'll go through the indictments and the implications of this case and then speak with Nick Cruse of the Revolutionary Blackout Network, who has been a frequent guest on System Update, about these groups that have been indicted or the individuals who have been indicted and why this indictment is so menacing to the right to dissent.

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For now, welcome to a new episode of System Update starting right now.

One of the issues on which I focused journalistically most in the first year of the Biden administration is the fact that a top priority for Joe Biden and his leading foreign policy and domestic advisers was to create a new War on Terror in the United States. Only this one, unlike the first one, would have as its primary focus, not foreign enemies, and al-Qaida or ISIS but, instead, domestic enemies right here at home. And in fact, this priority of the Biden administration was announced well before January 6. He emphasized it during the campaign and then, when he was declared the winner of the election, in the transition, before January 6 ever happened, The riot on January 6 obviously gave the Biden administration the pretext it needed to implement what has been a real new War on Terror. Only this time, the enemies are American citizens. And they've done that in multiple ways.

I spent the first year of my reporting in the Biden administration probably focused on that issue more than any other. The official position of the U.S. Security State and of the Biden administration is that the greatest threat to American national security comes not from

foreign terrorist groups like al-Qaida or ISIS, or from foreign adversaries like China or Iran, or Russia, but from violent domestic extremists here at home. The definition of what an extremist is is incredibly broad – it basically includes anybody who in any way is a real critic of establishment pieties.

If you're somebody who supports the establishment wings of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party, if you're somebody who stays within what President Obama once called "playing within the 40-yard lines," meaning the establishment wings of all parties, about which President Obama rightly observed have far more in common with one another than differences with one another, then you have nothing to worry about. You're not considered a dissident.

If you want to support Jeb Bush or Mitt Romney or Nikki Haley or Joe Biden or Hillary Clinton or people of that nature, you're well within the guidelines set by the government and by their supporters of where people can safely reside without being regarded as an enemy. They don't mind at all the power switches back and forth between those two wings because they know that the fundamental precepts will remain the same. What they really fear, especially now, is actual dissidents. And, as I said, this idea was in place long before January 6. January 6 became the pretext, just like neocons used the attack on September 11 to justify a war in Iraq, a regime-change war in Iraq, that if you go back and look before 9/11, they were long advocating war and craving. They used the 9/11 attacks as a tool for ushering in what they long had planned. That is the same with this new domestic War on Terror that the Biden administration has been craving for a long time and has successfully implemented.

This indictment today is an extension of it. It cannot be understood simply by looking at it in isolation. The context is critical.

Just to take a look at that history, we have an article from The Wall Street Journal, the headline is "Biden Administration Urged to Take Fresh Look at Domestic Terrorism." This is an article from The Wall Street Journal on November 13, 2020. So just a few days after the 2020 election, obviously two months or so before the riot on January 6. The Wall Street Journal reported about the Biden administration, what they were thinking two months before January 6:

The first-ever White House post and more funding to combat violent extremists floated by a working group that advised [president-elect team]. President-elect Joe Biden, who has said he plans to make a priority of passing a law against domestic terrorism, has also been urged to create a White House post overseeing the fight against ideologically inspired violent extremists, increasing funding to combat them, according to people who have advised his team.

A proposal for the Biden presidency's first 100 days, now with Mr. Biden's transition team for consideration, also calls for passing more red flag laws, which allow authorities to temporarily take guns from people deemed dangerous, some of the people said.

While domestic terrorism spans extremist ideologies across the spectrum [...]

I think that's an important point. When they talk about domestic terrorism or domestic extremism, it usually ends up targeting the right, under the Biden administration. But it also sometimes, as this indictment today targets the left. The idea is to create a

precedent or a framework to criminalize either upon any win. The Wall Street Journal says:

[...] it has been predominantly a far-right phenomenon in recent decades, according to researchers, according to researchers, who also say attacks by anti-fascist and other leftist groups rose this year.

Mr. Biden has said he decided to run for president after the 2017 Charlottesville, Va., rally, during which an avowed neo-Nazi killed a woman and injured scores of other people. According to a campaign website, Mr. Biden intends to work "for a domestic terrorism law that respects free speech and civil liberties, while making the same commitment to root out domestic terrorism as we have to stop international terrorism."

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