

Sacred Terror: The Global Death Squad of George W. Bush

By [Chris Floyd](#)

Global Research, December 10, 2005

[ChrisFloyd.com](#) 10 December 2005

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#),
[Terrorism](#)

The much-belated, poll-prompted outcry of a few American elected officials against the widespread use of torture by the Bush Administration – following [years of silent acquiescence](#) in the face of incontrovertible evidence of deliberate atrocity – is a welcome development, of course. But it has left an even more sinister aspect of Bushist policy untouched, one that likewise has been hidden in plain sight for years.

On September 17, 2001, George W. Bush signed an executive order authorizing the use of “lethal measures” against anyone in the world whom he or his minions designated an “enemy combatant.” This order remains in force today. No judicial evidence, no hearing, no charges are required for these killings; no law, no border, no oversight restrains them. Bush has also given agents in the field carte blanche to designate “enemies” on their own initiative and kill them as they see fit.

The existence of [this universal death squad](#) – and the total obliteration of human liberty it represents – has not provoked so much as a crumb, an atom, a quantum particle of controversy in the American Establishment, although it’s no secret. The executive order was first bruited in the Washington Post in [October 2001](#). I first wrote of it in my Moscow Times column [in November 2001](#). The New York Times added further details [in December 2002](#). That same month, Bush officials made clear that the dread edict also applied to American citizens, as the Associated Press reported.

The first officially confirmed use of this power was the [killing of an American citizen](#) in Yemen by a CIA drone missile on November 3, 2002. A similar strike occurred [in Pakistan this month](#), when a CIA missile destroyed a house and purportedly killed Abu Hamza Rabia, a suspected al Qaeda figure. But the only bodies found at the site were those of two children, the houseowner’s son and nephew, Reuters reports. The grieving father denied any connection to terrorism. An earlier CIA strike on another house missed Rabia but killed his wife and children, Pakistani officials reported.

But most of the assassinations are carried out in secret, quietly, professionally, like a contract killing for the mob. As a Pentagon document [unearthed by the New Yorker in December 2002](#) put it, the death squads must be “small and agile,” and “able to operate clandestinely, using a full range of official and non-official cover arrangements to...enter countries surreptitiously.”

The dangers of this policy are obvious, as a UN report on “extrajudicial killings” [noted in December 2004](#): “Empowering governments to identify and kill ‘known terrorists’ places no verifiable obligation upon them to demonstrate in any way that those against whom lethal

force is used are indeed terrorists... While it is portrayed as a limited 'exception' to international norms, it actually creates the potential for an endless expansion of the relevant category to include any enemies of the State, social misfits, political opponents, or others."

It's hard to believe that any genuine democracy would accept a claim by its leader that he could have anyone killed simply by labeling them an "enemy." It's hard to believe that any adult with even the slightest knowledge of history or human nature could countenance such unlimited, arbitrary power, knowing the evil it is bound to produce. Yet this is what the great and good in America have done. Like the boyars of old, they [not only countenance but celebrate](#) their enslavement to the ruler.

This was vividly demonstrated in one of the revolting scenes in recent American history: Bush's [State of the Union address](#) in January 2003, delivered to Congress and televised nationwide during the final frenzy of war-drum beating before the assault on Iraq. Trumpeting his successes in the Terror War, Bush claimed that "more than 3,000 suspected terrorists" had been arrested worldwide - "and many others have met a different fate." His face then took on the characteristic leer, the strange, sickly half-smile it acquires whenever he speaks of killing people: "Let's put it this way. They are no longer a problem."

In other words, the suspects - and even Bush acknowledged they were only suspects - had been murdered. Lynched. Killed by agents operating unsupervised in that shadow world where intelligence, terrorism, politics, finance and organized crime meld together in one amorphous, impenetrable mass. Killed on the [word of a dubious informer](#), perhaps: a tortured captive willing to say anything to end his torment, a business rival, a personal foe, a bureaucrat looking to impress his superiors, a paid snitch in need of cash, a zealous crank pursuing ethnic, tribal or religious hatreds - or any other purveyor of the garbage data that is coin of the realm in the shadow world.

Bush proudly held up this hideous system as an example of what he called "the meaning of American justice." And the assembled legislators...applauded. Oh, how they applauded! They roared with glee at the leering little man's bloodthirsty, B-movie machismo. They shared his sneering contempt for law - our only shield, however imperfect, against the blind, brute, ignorant, ape-like force of raw power. Not a single voice among them was raised in protest against this tyrannical *machtpolitik*: not that night, not the next day, not ever.

Not even now, when the American people's growing revulsion at Bush's bloody handiwork has emboldened a few long-time enablers of atrocity to criticize the "excesses" of his gulag and his "mishandling" of the war of aggression in Iraq. [A few nips at the flank](#) of the beast have been permitted. But the corroded heart of Bush's system of state terror - officially sanctioned murder by presidential fiat - remains curiously sacrosanct.

The original source of this article is [ChrisFloyd.com](#)
Copyright © [Chris Floyd](#), [ChrisFloyd.com](#), 2005

[Comment on Global Research Articles on our Facebook page](#)

[Become a Member of Global Research](#)

Articles by: [Chris Floyd](#)

Disclaimer: The contents of this article are of sole responsibility of the author(s). The Centre for Research on Globalization will not be responsible for any inaccurate or incorrect statement in this article. The Centre of Research on Globalization grants permission to cross-post Global Research articles on community internet sites as long the source and copyright are acknowledged together with a hyperlink to the original Global Research article. For publication of Global Research articles in print or other forms including commercial internet sites, contact: publications@globalresearch.ca

www.globalresearch.ca contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available to our readers under the provisions of "fair use" in an effort to advance a better understanding of political, economic and social issues. The material on this site is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving it for research and educational purposes. If you wish to use copyrighted material for purposes other than "fair use" you must request permission from the copyright owner.

For media inquiries: publications@globalresearch.ca