

Silence is the Death of Liberty

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [History](#)

First they tortured [a U.S. citizen and gang member ...](#)

I remained silent;

I wasn't a criminal

Then they tortured a [U.S. citizen, whistleblower and navy veteran ...](#)

I remained silent;

I wasn't a whistleblower

Then they locked up [an attorney](#) for representing accused criminals ...

I remained silent;

I wasn't a defense attorney

Then they [arrested a young father walking with his son simply because he told Dick Cheney that he disagreed with his policies ...](#)

I remained silent;

I've never talked to an important politician

Then they said an [entertainer should be killed because she questioned the government's version of an important historical event ...](#)

I remained silent;

I wasn't an entertainer

Then they [arrested people for demanding that Congress hold the President to the Constitution ...](#)

I did not speak out;

I've never protested in Washington

Then they [arrested a man for holding a sign ...](#)

I held my tongue;

I've never held that kind of sign

Then they [broke a minister's leg](#) because he wanted to speak at a public event ...

I said nothing;

I wasn't a religious leader

Then they [shot a student with a taser gun and arrested him](#) for asking a question of a politician at a public event ...

I remained silent;

I wasn't a student

Then they declared that they could [label U.S. citizens as “unlawful enemy combatants” and imprison them indefinitely](#) – and even [assassinate them](#) – all without trial ...

I remained silent;

I assumed I wasn't on a list

When they came for me,

Everyone was silent;

there was no one left to speak out.

Inspired by the poem [First They Came](#) by Martin Niemöller, which was written about the Nazis.

I originally wrote this poem in 2007. I have updated it with the additional verse about assassinations.

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