

**The
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It's About Time
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BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentator

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I am extremely pleased to participate in this reunion of some of the boldest, most idealistic, patriotic, inspiring young people that this country has ever seen. I celebrate who you are and what you have done to cause the United States Government and all of its instruments of power to write one of the most ignominious chapters in this country's history. I consistently use you as a gauge: if they would do it to the Black Panther Party, then all of America must know that they will, without hesitation, also do it to the rest of us. And so, it is incumbent upon those of us who know and want to know, to share the information about your experiences, because there were efforts as you well know, to denigrate your name and neutralize your mission of self-determination for Black people in this country, and to instill fear into the population - both black and white - at the very mention of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense.

I begin with this question: If the decision - and policy-makers at that time would do it when it was "illegal and un-American," as Senator Frank Church described the actions of those working inside the COINTELPRO framework, what are individual actors with access to power and technology within the government today capable of doing now? You, the members of the Black Panther Party, are living testament that too many individuals with access to power were willing to commit the highest crimes and misdemeanors in order to achieve their objective - and that was clearly stated in the opening document: to neutralize you. You are also living testament that even though the actions carried out against you were illegal, they were largely done with impunity. Who among the actors inside government - the coordinators, conceivers, managers, approvers - of these activities has been punished? And what we must never forget is what the U.S. government means when it uses the word "neutralize." I think you all know all too well.

Your experience with the Counter-Intelligence Program of yesterday is instructive today now that the Patriot Acts, the Secret Evidence Act, the Military Commissions Act, the Funding for the War on Terror Act are all carved into the law. Kathleen and Natsu and,

of course, King Downing, and others can describe how vastly the legal landscape has changed. But there is one aspect of the operation to neutralize your good works and your good name that has not changed. And that's what I want to talk about today.

How many times has the corporate press used the word "spoiler" in reference to the 2000 Presidential election and every Presidential election since then and how many times have they reported accurately the number of black votes cast and not counted or the way in which black voters were disfranchised?

How many times did the corporate press use the word "conspiracy," not in conjunction with the September 11th tragedy, but in conjunction with those who want to know the truth about what happened on that day?

How many times did the corporate media lie to the people of this country and the world in the lead-up to the war against Iraq?

In the wake of accounts of torture and prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib, how many times were prisoner abuse and torture inside this country mentioned? How many times was Attica, the Angola 3, Chicago's Area 2, or the San Francisco 8 mentioned?

In this, an election year, how many times have stories on election integrity been written that inform and warn potential voters of the problems they might face at the polling place and what their rights are if they encounter them?

When we read accounts that the CIA stationed psychological operations agents inside the newsroom at CNN, we must understand that the Propaganda Matrix is real and the sad fact is that COINTELPRO could not have been as effective as it was without the cooperation and complicity of the corporate media, known as the 4th Estate. I read a very interesting piece recently that asked if the 4th Estate is really a Fifth Column.

During the 1999 Memphis, Tennessee trial on the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who joined Black Panther Party members as a target of COINTELPRO, and was murdered because of it:

On November 30, 1999 testimony in that trial reveals the lengths to which the government would go to eliminate a problem of conscience and the extent of cooperation between the government's operatives and the esteemed members of the journalistic community. The testimony on that date reveals the presence of the US military operating inside this country in civilian clothing. Testimony from one such operative revealed special operations forces charged with assassinations operating with instructions directly from the White House. The testimony included information on the role of Jeb Bush who, as Governor of Florida, saw to it that certain "civilian operations" went forward from the port of Miami, Florida. Including drug shipments from Colombia into the U.S.

The testimony in Dr. King's trial starkly portrays the collusion of the paragons of the press with suppression and omission of important information, regarding the murder of Dr. King as well as in the efforts to smear Dr. King and the movement he was leading. The testimony of Bill Schapp is frightening reading about propaganda and disinformation in the information lifeline of this country. He testified that approximately one-third of the entire CIA budget and hundreds of millions of FBI dollars are dedicated to media propaganda operations. That the CIA actually owned, at the time of the Church Committee hearings, about 250 media organizations and employed thousands of journalists actually on the CIA payroll. Mr. Schapp testified that the FBI had friendly journalists at AP, Copley News Service, U.S. News and World Report, and at the Atlanta

Constitution, The New Orleans Times Picayune, The New York Times, The Christian Science Monitor, even The Washington Post. Schapp testified that Frank Wisner called control over information flows the "Great Wurlitzer."

And what is to be made of the [Brasscheck TV](#) claim that video they have posted shows the Prime Ministers of Australia and the soon-to-be Prime Minister of Canada giving the exact same speech in support of the U.S.-led war in Iraq?

Among the top 25 censored stories for 2009, according to Project Censored, include "Over One Million Iraqi Deaths Caused by U.S. Occupation"; "Security and Prosperity Partnership: Militarized NAFTA"; "InfraGard: the FBI Deputizes Business"; "ILEA: Is the US Restarting Dirty Wars in Latin America"; "Seizing War Protesters' Assets"; "Cruelty and Death in Juvenile Detention Centers"; "Marijuana Arrests Set New Record"; and in light of the bailout blowout, "Bush's Real Problem with Eliot Spitzer." A recent immigration court case uncovered what is, according to Sibel Edmonds - who is probably the most-gagged woman in the country right now - an illegal, covert CIA operation involving the intentional "Islamization" of Central Asia using Turkey as its front for the purpose of establishing US control over the vast energy resources of the region. All of this is to say that the corporate press does not inform us of the activities of our own government. Indeed, on Valentine's Day in 2003, a Florida Appeals Court ruled that the media can legally lie.

So, if it's the truth or real information we want, we have to go elsewhere - not the corporate press. In this election year, don't expect talk about civil liberties or human rights, don't expect discussion of a full employment economy or even of a single payer health care system, recently described by 5,000 physicians as the only morally and fiscally responsible way to deliver health care in this country.

Now we learn that special surveillance units have been formed to track our hip hop icons as was done with our cultural icons of the past, including Paul Robeson and Bob Marley. No wonder. We get more straight talk from political hip hop than we do from today's journalists charged with informing the people of their voting choices and policy options. Artists like Immortal Technique, who writes in his song on the media entitled "Fourth Branch:"

"It's like MK Ultra controlling your brain..."

Michael Franti writes:

"We can bomb the world to pieces, but we can't bomb it into peace."

Finally, Paris speaks to the character of our country when he asks:

"If you saw all the things that's wrong, would you stand tall and strong, or would you turn and walk away?"

You, members of the Black Panther Party saw all the things that's wrong, you stood tall and strong.

Thank you.

"And advanced forms of biological warfare that can 'target' specific genotypes may transform biological warfare from the realm of terror to a politically useful tool."

-PNAC, Rebuilding America's Defenses, p. 60

The argument that the two parties should represent opposed ideals and policies, one, perhaps, of the Right and the other of the Left, is a foolish idea acceptable only to doctrinaire and academic thinkers. Instead, the two parties should be almost identical, so that the American people can "throw the rascals out" at any election without leading to any profound or extensive shifts in policy.

-Carroll Quigley, [Tragedy & Hope: A History of the World in Our Time](#)

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BlackCommentator.com Guest Commentator, Cynthia McKinney, is [running for President of the United States](#). To read more of Cynthia McKinney's writings, please visit www.allthingscynthiamckinney.com. Click [here](#) to contact Ms. McKinney.

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