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*"They are 'threats.'*

*"They are the 'enemy.'*

*"They are people who don't support the government, people who live in fast-growing urban communities, people who may be less well-off economically than the government and corporate elite, people who engage in protests, people who are unemployed, people who engage in crime (in keeping with the government's fast-growing, overly broad definition of what constitutes a crime).*

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~ John Whitehead

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The Danger Is Real: The Deep State's Plot to Destabilize the Nation Is Working

by [John & Nisha Whitehead](#), [The Rutherford Institute](#)

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"The most dangerous man to any government is the man who is able to think things out ... without regard to the prevailing superstitions and taboos. Almost inevitably he comes to the conclusion that the government he lives under is dishonest, insane, intolerable."

– H. L. Mencken

If the three-ring circus that is the looming presidential election proves anything, it is that the Deep State's plot to destabilize the nation is working.

The danger is real.

Caught up in the heavily dramatized electoral showdown between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris, Americans have become oblivious to the multitude of ways in which the government is goosestepping all over our freedoms on a *daily* basis.

Especially alarming is the extent to which those on both sides are allowing themselves to be gaslighted by both Trump and Harris about critical issues of the day, selectively choosing to hear only what they want to hear when it casts the opposition in a negative light.

This is true whether you're talking about immigration and border control, health care, national security, the nation's endless wars, protections for free speech, or the

militarization of the U.S. government.

For starters, there's the free speech double standard, what my good friend Nat Hentoff used to refer to as the "free speech for me but not for thee" phenomenon in which the First Amendment's protections only apply to those with whom we might agree.

Despite her claims to being a champion for the rule of law, which in our case is the U.S. Constitution, Harris isn't averse to [policing so-called "hate" speech](#). In this, Harris is not unlike those [on both the Right and the Left](#) who continue to express a distaste for unregulated, free speech online, especially when it comes to speech with which they might disagree.

Then there's Trump, never a fan of free speech protections for his critics, who has been particularly vocal about his desire to see the military vanquish "radical left lunatics," which he has dubbed "[the enemy from within](#)."

If it were only about muzzling free speech activities, that would be concerning enough.

But Trump's enthusiasm for using the military to target domestic enemies of the state should send off warning bells, especially coinciding as it does with the Department of Defense's recent re-issuance of [Directive 5240.01](#), which empowers the military to assist law enforcement "in situations where a confrontation between civilian law enforcement and civilian individuals or groups is reasonably anticipated."

This is what martial law looks like—a government of force that relies on the military to enforce its authority—and it's exactly what America's founders feared, which is why they opted for a republic bound by the rule of law: the U.S. Constitution.

Responding to concerns that the military would be used for

domestic policing, Congress passed the [Posse Comitatus Act in 1878](#), which makes it a crime for the government to use the military to carry out arrests, searches, seizure of evidence and other activities normally handled by a civilian police force.

The increasing militarization of the police, the use of sophisticated weaponry against Americans and the government's increasing tendency to employ military personnel domestically have all but eviscerated historic prohibitions such as the [Posse Comitatus Act](#).

Yet sometime over the course of the past 240-plus years that constitutional republic has been transformed into a military dictatorship disguised as a democracy.

Unfortunately, most Americans seem relatively untroubled by the fact that our constitutional republic is being transformed into a military dictatorship disguised as a democracy.

The seeds of chaos that have been sown in recent years are all part of the Deep State's plans to usher in martial law.

Observe for yourself what has been happening right before our eyes.

Domestic terrorism fueled by government entrapment schemes. Civil unrest stoked to dangerous levels by polarizing political rhetoric. A growing intolerance for dissent that challenges the government's power grabs. Police brutality tacitly encouraged by the executive branch, conveniently overlooked by the legislatures, and granted qualified immunity by the courts. A weakening economy exacerbated by government schemes that favor none but a select few. Heightened foreign tensions and blowback due to the military industrial complex's profit-driven quest to police and occupy the globe.

This is no conspiracy theory.

There's trouble brewing, and the government is masterminding a response using the military.

Just take a look at "[Megacities: Urban Future, the Emerging Complexity](#)," a [Pentagon training video created by the Army for U.S. Special Operations Command](#).

[The training video](#) is only five minutes long, but it says a lot about the government's mindset, the way it views the citizenry, and the so-called "problems" that the government must be prepared to address in the near future through the use of martial law.

Even more troubling, however, is what this military video doesn't say about the Constitution, about the rights of the citizenry, and about the dangers of locking down the nation and using the military to address political and social problems.

The training video anticipates that all hell will break loose by 2030, but the future is here ahead of schedule.

We're already witnessing a breakdown of society on virtually every front.

By waging endless wars abroad, by bringing the instruments of war home, by transforming police into extensions of the military, by turning a free society into a suspect society, by treating American citizens like enemy combatants, by discouraging and criminalizing a free exchange of ideas, by making violence its calling card through SWAT team raids and militarized police, by fomenting division and strife among the citizenry, by acclimating the citizenry to the sights and sounds of war, and by generally making peaceful revolution all but impossible, the government has engineered an environment in which domestic violence is becoming almost inevitable.

The danger signs are screaming out a message

The government is anticipating trouble (read: civil unrest), which is code for anything that challenges the government's authority, wealth and power.

According to the [Pentagon training video created by the Army for U.S. Special Operations Command](#), the U.S. government is grooming its armed forces to solve future domestic political and social problems.

What they're really talking about is martial law, packaged as a well-meaning and overriding concern for the nation's security.

The chilling five-minute training video, obtained by *The Intercept* through a FOIA request and made available [online](#), paints an ominous picture of the future—a future the military is preparing for—bedeviled by “criminal networks,” “substandard infrastructure,” “religious and ethnic tensions,” “impoverishment, slums,” “open landfills, over-burdened sewers,” a “growing mass of unemployed,” and an urban landscape in which the prosperous economic elite must be protected from the impoverishment of the have nots.

And then comes the kicker.

Three-and-a-half minutes into the [Pentagon's dystopian vision](#) of “a world of Robert Kaplan-esque urban hellscape – brutal and anarchic supercities filled with gangs of youth-gone-wild, a restive underclass, criminal syndicates, and bands of malicious hackers,” the ominous voice of the narrator speaks of a need to “drain the swamps.”

Drain the swamps.

Surely, we've heard that phrase before?

Ah yes.

Emblazoned on t-shirts and signs, shouted at rallies, and used as a rallying cry among Trump supporters, “drain the swamp”

became one of Donald Trump's most-used campaign slogans.

Now the government has adopted its own plans for swamp-draining, only it wants to use the military to [drain the swamps of futuristic urban American cities](#) of "noncombatants and engage the remaining adversaries in high intensity conflict within."

And who are these noncombatants, a military term that refers to civilians who are *not* engaged in fighting?

They are, according to the Pentagon, "adversaries."

They are "threats."

They are the "enemy."

They are people who don't support the government, people who live in fast-growing urban communities, people who may be less well-off economically than the government and corporate elite, people who engage in protests, people who are unemployed, people who engage in crime (in keeping with the government's fast-growing, overly broad definition of what constitutes a crime).

In other words, in the eyes of the U.S. military, noncombatants are American citizens a.k.a. domestic extremists a.k.a. enemy combatants who must be identified, targeted, detained, contained and, if necessary, eliminated.

In the future imagined by the Pentagon, any walls and prisons that are built will be used to protect the societal elite—the haves—from the have-nots.

If you haven't figured it out already, *we the people* are the have-nots.

Suddenly it all begins to make sense.

The events of recent years: the invasive surveillance, the

extremism reports, the civil unrest, the protests, the shootings, the bombings, the military exercises and active shooter drills, the color-coded alerts and threat assessments, the fusion centers, the transformation of local police into extensions of the military, the distribution of military equipment and weapons to local police forces, the government databases containing the names of dissidents and potential troublemakers.

The government is systematically locking down the nation and shifting us into martial law.

This is how you prepare a populace to accept a police state willingly, even gratefully.

You don't scare them by making dramatic changes. Rather, you acclimate them slowly to their prison walls.

Persuade the citizenry that their prison walls are merely intended to keep them safe and danger out. Desensitize them to violence, acclimate them to a military presence in their communities, and persuade them that there is nothing they can do to alter the seemingly hopeless trajectory of the nation.

Before long, no one will even notice the floundering economy, the blowback arising from military occupations abroad, the police shootings, the nation's deteriorating infrastructure and all of the other mounting concerns.

It's happening already.

The sight of police clad in body armor and gas masks, wielding semiautomatic rifles and escorting an armored vehicle through a crowded street, a scene likened to "[a military patrol through a hostile city](#)," no longer causes alarm among the general populace.

Few seem to care about the government's endless wars abroad that leave communities shattered, families devastated and our

national security at greater risk of blowback.

The Deep State's tactics are working.

We've allowed ourselves to be acclimated to the occasional lockdown of government buildings, [Jade Helm](#) military drills in small towns so that special operations forces can get "[realistic military training](#)" in "hostile" territory, and [Live Active Shooter Drill](#) training exercises, carried out at schools, in shopping malls, and on public transit, which can and do fool law enforcement officials, students, teachers and bystanders into thinking it's a real crisis.

Still, you can't say we weren't warned about the government's nefarious schemes to lock down the nation.

Back in [2008, an Army War College](#) report revealed that "widespread civil violence inside the United States would force the defense establishment to reorient priorities in extremis to defend basic domestic order and human security." The 44-page report went on to warn that potential causes for such civil unrest could include another terrorist attack, "unforeseen economic collapse, [loss of functioning political and legal order](#), purposeful domestic resistance or insurgency, pervasive public health emergencies, and catastrophic natural and human disasters."

In 2009, reports by the Department of Homeland Security surfaced that labelled [right-wing and left-wing activists and military veterans](#) as extremists (a.k.a. terrorists) and called on the government to subject such targeted individuals to full-fledged pre-crime surveillance. Almost a decade later, after spending billions to fight terrorism, the DHS concluded that the [greater threat is not ISIS](#) but *domestic right-wing extremism*.

Meanwhile, the [government has been amassing an arsenal of military weapons for use domestically](#) and equipping and training their "troops" for war. Even government agencies with

largely administrative functions such as the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Smithsonian have been acquiring body armor, riot helmets and shields, cannon launchers and police firearms and ammunition. In fact, there are now at least [120,000 armed federal agents carrying such weapons](#) who possess the power to arrest.

Rounding out this profit-driven campaign to turn American citizens into enemy combatants (and America into a battlefield) is a technology sector that has been colluding with the government to create a Big Brother that is [all-knowing, all-seeing and inescapable](#). It's not just the drones, [fusion centers](#), license plate readers, stingray devices and the NSA that you have to worry about. You're also being tracked by the [black boxes in your cars](#), your cell phone, smart devices in your home, grocery loyalty cards, social media accounts, credit cards, streaming services such as Netflix, Amazon, and e-book reader accounts.

All of this has taken place right under our noses, funded with our taxpayer dollars and carried out in broad daylight without so much as a general outcry from the citizenry.

And then you have the government's Machiavellian schemes for unleashing all manner of dangers on an unsuspecting populace, then demanding additional powers in order to protect "we the people" from the threats.

Are you getting the picture yet?

The U.S. government isn't *protecting* us from terrorism.

The U.S. government is *creating* the terror. It is, in fact, the source of the terror.

Just think about it for a minute: Cyberwarfare. Terrorism. Bio-chemical attacks. The nuclear arms race. Surveillance. The drug wars.

Almost every national security threat that the government has claimed greater powers in order to fight—all the while undermining the liberties of the American citizenry—has been manufactured in one way or another by the government.

Did I say Machiavellian? This is downright evil.

We're not dealing with a government that exists to serve its people, protect their liberties and ensure their happiness. Rather, these are the diabolical machinations of a make-works program carried out on an epic scale whose only purpose is to keep the powers-that-be permanently (and profitably) employed.

Mind you, by "government," I'm not referring to the highly partisan, two-party bureaucracy of the Republicans and Democrats.

I'm referring to "government" with a capital "G," the entrenched Deep State that is unaffected by elections, unaltered by populist movements, and has set itself beyond the reach of the law.

I'm referring to the corporatized, militarized, entrenched bureaucracy that is fully operational and staffed by unelected officials who are, in essence, running the country and calling the shots in Washington DC, no matter who sits in the White House.

Be warned: in the future envisioned by the government, we will not be viewed as Republicans or Democrats. Rather, "we the people" will be enemies of the state.

For years, the government has been warning against the [dangers of domestic terrorism](#), erecting [surveillance systems](#) to monitor its own citizens, creating [classification systems](#) to label any viewpoints that challenge the status quo as extremist, and [training law enforcement agencies](#) to equate anyone possessing anti-government views as a domestic terrorist.

What the government failed to explain was that the domestic terrorists would be of the government's own making, and that "we the people" would become enemy #1.

As I make clear in my book [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#) and in its fictional counterpart [The Erik Blair Diaries](#), we're already enemies of the state.

It's time to wake up and stop being deceived by Deep State propaganda.

Constitutional attorney and author **John W. Whitehead** is founder and president of [The Rutherford Institute](#). His most recent books are the best-selling [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#), the award-winning [A Government of Wolves: The Emerging American Police State](#), and a debut dystopian fiction novel, [The Erik Blair Diaries](#). Whitehead can be contacted at staff@rutherford.org. Nisha Whitehead is the Executive Director of The Rutherford Institute. Information about The Rutherford Institute is available at www.rutherford.org.

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