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# WHY YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS ARE NOT PROTECTING YOUR RIGHTS

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By Rosalind Peterson  
September 23, 2007  
NewsWithViews.com

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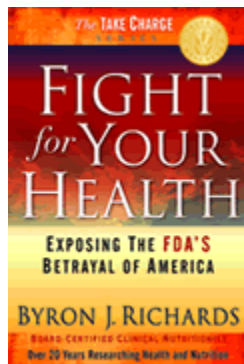
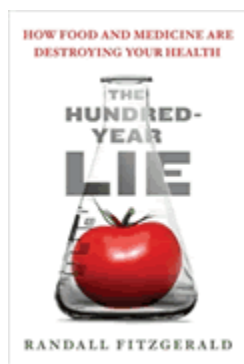
On August 1, 2007, Republican Senators McConnell and Bond introduced U.S. Senate Bill S1927, "To amend the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 to provide additional procedures for authorizing

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When these so-called "Congressional Leaders" now say that they will fix this bill by bringing to vote another bill they are not telling you

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certain acquisitions of foreign intelligence information and for other purposes,” on the floor of the U.S. Senate. It is alleged that there was not one U.S. Senator that objected to this bill being introduced under Senate rules.

U.S. Senate Bill S1927, was railroaded into passage by the President of the United States who declared that it should be passed, that it was a matter of national security, and that “new undisclosed threats” may surely cause us to be attacked while Congress was on a month-long vacation, if this bill were not passed by Congress.

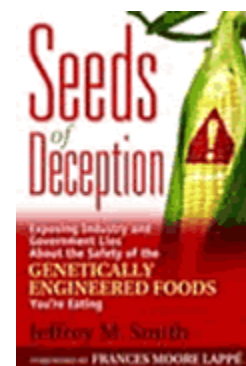
Democratic Majority Leader of the U. S. Senate, Harry Reid and U.S. Speaker of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi allowed this bill to be brought to the floor for a vote knowing that they did not have the votes to defeat this bill.

The passage of this bill and the loss of our civil liberties under the U.S.

Constitution is forever lost to the American people.

When these so-called “Congressional Leaders” now say that they will fix this bill by bringing to vote another bill they are not telling you the truth. The President will only sign bills that further undermine our Civil Liberties and will veto any bills that don’t meet

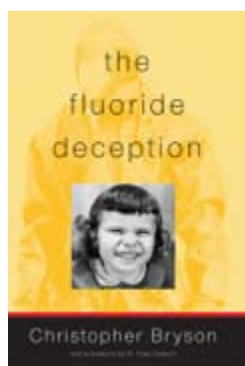
the truth. The President will only sign bills that further undermine our Civil Liberties and will veto any bills that don’t meet his demands.



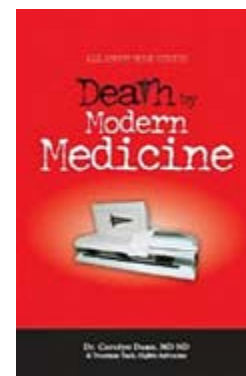


his demands. And when Senator Reid and Speaker Pelosi state that there is a sunset provision in this bill this is not completely true either. They allowed this bill to pass knowing that the bill contained the following “exception” language:

(c) Sunset- Except as provided in subsection (d), sections 2, 3, 4, and 5 of this Act, and the amendments made by this Act, shall cease to have effect 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.



(d) Authorizations in Effect- Authorizations for the acquisition of foreign intelligence information pursuant to the amendments made by this Act, and directives issued pursuant to such authorizations, shall remain in effect until their expiration. Such acquisitions shall be governed by the applicable provisions of such amendments and shall not be deemed to constitute electronic surveillance as that term is defined in section 101 (f) of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 ([50 U.S.C. 1801\(f\)](http://www.uscourts.gov/uscourt/50%20U.S.C.%201801(f).htm)).



If you take a look at the exceptions listed above you will note that the provisions in the bill that are the most harmful to the rights of American citizens will continue forever. And when Subsection (d) states "...shall remain in effect until their expiration..." one should understand that directives can be issued that will last in perpetuity.



The bill is a short one and easy to read. Everyone that looks at this bill will know that those who voted for this bill had read it and understood completely the provisions in this bill. And remember that Senator Feinstein from California voted for this bill and Senator Barbara Boxer allegedly couldn't be found to cast her vote. (Congressman Mike Thompson from California understood the true nature of this bill and voted against it.) How did your elected representatives vote? Elections are on the horizon and it is time we held our elected representatives accountable for their actions in not upholding our civil liberties and undermining the U.S. Constitution. Furthermore under Section 105B (a):

“...Sec. 105B. (a)  
Notwithstanding any other law, the Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General, may for periods of

up to one year authorize the acquisition of foreign intelligence information concerning persons reasonably believed to be outside the United States if the Director of National Intelligence and the Attorney General determine...”

This bill allows only two people to make decisions regarding the acquisition of foreign intelligence information and communications between U.S. Citizens and those outside the United States. And one of them is Attorney General Gonzales who has failed to “remember” his actions or allegedly lied to Congress on several occasions. It is alleged that no Court, even the FISA Court, will be reviewing these decisions in advance to determine “probable cause” in advance of these acquisitions and will merely “rubber stamp” these actions once brought before them. And it does not limit the number of outside agents (and “others”) that are now empowered to provide information or spy on American citizens both inside and outside of the United States.

This bill also makes freedom of the press, guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution null and void. Why? Reporters, for example, have a wide variety of sources inside and outside

of the United States and they provide news reports while living outside the United States. There is nothing to prevent the Bush Administration, or any future administration from spying on reporters and their sources. This bill has a “chilling affect” on the news we will be receiving from reporters and foreign sources. And it will further isolate U.S. Citizens from the knowledge of what is happening outside the United States. It will make news coverage more difficult and promote a news media only able to report on what any current “administration” deems acceptable as news. And it will cut down on a reporter’s ability to research and report on issues that may not be acceptable to any current administration.

In addition, it places a “chill” on communications between families living inside and outside the United States...and on any correspondence by U.S. citizens to and from U.S. citizens living or traveling outside the United States. The “chill” will be the fear that communication will immediately place both sides of a communication under surveillance by the Bush Administration without probable cause of any type of illegal or terrorist activity. And American citizens will have no possible way to find out about any type of

communications surveillance or redress their grievances about such surveillance. Since American citizens who are spied upon will not know about the spying due to the “information being classified” they cannot take legal action.

It is clear that the Bush/Cheney Administration characterizes those that oppose the positions taken by their administration or who ask uncomfortable questions, as unpatriotic. Vice-President Cheney and members of the Bush Administration have made that extremely clear with their rhetoric since the so-called election of Bush in 2001. If our generals disagree with the President or anyone inside his administration disagrees in public, their resignations or firings are almost immediate.

And it is clear, that Congress is working toward passing another version of this bill this fall and are holding hearings this week on a new version. The next version to be passed will erode our Constitution and our Bill of Rights even more unless we, the American people, rise up and say no. It is quite possible that the majority of people feel that they have nothing to hide and therefore why object to this invasion of privacy. Since when did Americans become

the enemy to be spied upon? And does spying on American citizens and undermining our rights protect us? No! It only promotes more fear to speak out and object against government policies which the American people feel are not right.

An acquiescent media and many reporters, who were Bush Administration “mouthpieces,” have pushed a one-sided version of events to the detriment of all American citizens. These mouthpieces led us down the path to attacking Iraq and they continue to drive discussions about the United States taking action against other countries, like Iran, without a bit of proof being provided to the American people. (CNN’s Michael Ware constantly reports as fact many stories from Iraq and gives opinions about other countries... however, he provides no independent proof of his statements and he is never pressed as to the accuracy and who are his sources.) Many reporters like to push Bush Administration propaganda about the Iraq war without any proof. When asked about their proof they can only quote “high government officials.” They have no other research or documents to back up their claims. The signing of U.S. Senate Bill S1927 will make more reporters Bush/Cheney “mouthpieces” and make it much

harder for American citizens to know the truth or protest the actions of our government.

The media continues, as one example, to hide most information or show pictures that would give American citizens a clear view of what is happening in many countries around the world. They rarely mention the real story of what is happening to our jobs...and don't let any candidates for office tell you that their re-education plans for us are going to help you find a good paying job ever again. Re-educate us for what...jobs that don't exist? (American workers are good workers and are educated...American companies just don't want to pay us a living wage and a pension.

There is no corporate loyalty to the American workers who made these corporations rich...now it is only the greed of higher profits that drives corporate interests along with cheap illegal labor designed to keep wages low for all American citizens. If corporations won't have access to cheap illegal workers then outsourcing to find the lower wage workers in other countries will increase. And as we import more from countries like China – food and product safety become very real issues that Congress is not addressing.) Luckily we still have a

few patriotic and courageous people who will speak out on these issues, Like Lou Dobbs on CNN, and Keith Obermann on MSNBC.

As your elected representatives show up in your neighborhoods asking for your vote and your money remember that lobbying and ethics reform has not been high on their agendas since the last election. And when candidates tell you, like Senator Clinton, that corporations like Chevron, Exxon, or the pharmaceutical companies represent the people...that is not exactly true. Corporations do not represent the interests of their employees; they represent their corporate profit and unregulated business interests in their lobbying efforts. Corporations are becoming rich on government welfare programs...the oil companies are just one example.

When you go to vote also remember that most members of the U.S. Congress failed to stop U.S. Senate Bill S1927, which amended the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978, which provides additional procedures for authorizing certain acquisitions of foreign intelligence information and for other purposes.” This past week CNN and MSNBC (August 15, 2007), announced that our military spy satellites would now

be allowed to secretly spy on the citizens of the United States and the information gathered would be used by many agencies within the U.S. When did U.S. Citizens become the enemy? And when voting remember how they voted on not protecting American jobs in favor of amnesty for illegal immigrants.

Also remember that most of your candidates for President did not step outside of their offices with regard to U.S. Senate Bill S1927 and ask all American citizens to take immediate action against this bill. They didn't hold press conferences and in most cases their offices were only open to the public during regular hours and were not open after hours and on weekends so that their constituents could contact them about this bill that was passed during weekend hours. Only one Congressman, that I know of, Mike Thompson, of California, kept his office open for calls...he should be commended. What about your elected officials?

A few members of Congress were given classified briefings and classified information between August 1, and August 4, 2007, with regard to alleged terrorist threats. However, they couldn't object in public to what they were spoon-fed by Bush/Cheney. Receiving classified

information effectively neutered them from representing your interests. What a neat trick...give a certain few, most Bush Administration supporters, a little classified information so that they could convince others to vote for this bill.

The few who “know the secrets” are unable to speak out. And what about the majority that are not briefed and given this classified information? They can’t represent your interests as they are deliberately kept in the dark regarding these issues unless they read the information in a newspaper. Many politicians stand on the floor of Congress reading newspaper information about what our government is doing behind closed doors. It is odd that our elected officials have to rely on the press to find out what they should know already as our representatives.



And when they state that they can’t debate most classified information on the floor of the House or Senate...that isn’t quite true either. A U.S. Supreme Court decision upheld the right, in 1972, of Senator Gravel to release

classified information on the floor of the U.S. Senate under the “Speech and Debate Clause” of the U.S. Constitution. The public has a right to hear these debates. Therefore, when your elected officials say that they can’t object to certain programs or policies because the information is classified, quote this Supreme Court Decision. The U.S. Constitution allows them to speak truth to power and debate these issues under the “Speech & Debate Clause” of the U.S. Constitution; and this right was upheld in 1972, by the U.S. Supreme Court.

***Never Miss  
Another BIG  
Story***

It is time to step forward and demand that our elected officials stop undermining our U.S. Constitution and our Civil Liberties. And if they don’t, we the people, can show up and vote “no” at election time. The American people have a powerful voice and can apply pressure today on all of our elected officials... and we can let them know we outnumber the corporate lobbyists at the ballot box.

**Footnotes:**

- 1, [GovTrack.us](http://GovTrack.us) [U.S. Senate Bill S1927 Signed into Law](#) on August 5, 2007
- 2, [Full Text of U.S. Senate Bill S1927](#)

**3, [U.S. Supreme Court GRAVEL v. UNITED STATES, 408 U.S. 606](#)**  
(1972) 408 U.S. 606 GRAVEL v. UNITED STATES CERTIORARI TO THE UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT No. 71-1017. Argued April 19-20, 1972 Decided June 29, 1972 \*

**4, [You can always have a paper trail when you vote...vote absentee.](#)**

**5, [U.S. Spy Satellites will be used to Spy on U.S. Citizens](#) – August 15, 2007**

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*In 1995, Rosalind, now retired, became a certified California United State Department of Agriculture (USDA) Farm Service Agency Agriculture Crop Loss Adjustor working in more than ten counties throughout California. Rosalind has a BA degree from Sonoma State University in Environmental Studies & Planning (ENSP), with emphasis on using solar power, photosynthesis, agriculture, and crop production.*

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