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Freedom Rider  
Halliburton Detention Centers  
by Margaret Kimberley

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Now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of their country and become unapologetically paranoid. Paranoia should now be the normal state of mind for thinking people. Sneers and dismissive remarks about "conspiracy theorists" must be ignored. We don't want to end up like the proverbial frog who boils to death because the heat was turned up slowly.

The Bush administration is becoming ever more brazen in its effort to snoop on the American people. The Attorney General is making the case that warrants aren't needed if the government wants to spy on us. Unlimited government power is predictably effective. Anyone not wire tapped, investigated or banned from airplanes will be too intimidated to speak up or even to "Google."

Printer friendly version of [King Dubya is Watching](#) cartoon.

The Bushmen are too smart to only go after political opponents. Instead they are honing their tactics on everyone who does an internet search, a majority of people in the nation. Under the guise of investigating the extent of child pornography on the internet, the ironically named Justice Department demanded that the largest search engines in the country turn over the results of millions of internet searches in the country. Yahoo, MSN and AOL all gave up without a fight and handed big brother the results of your inquiries on any and every issue or topic. Only Google challenged the subpoena in court.

If internet snooping doesn't give one pause, then Halliburton can always be counted on to frighten anyone with half a brain. Vice President Dick Cheney's personal cash cow is the lucky beneficiary of yet another government contract. The Halliburton story of banana republic corruption is well known to anyone not living under a rock. Because their crimes have gone unpunished, news of Halliburton chicanery barely raises eyebrows anymore. Halliburton's latest contract strikes close to home, literally, and doesn't allow them to

build barracks in Iraq or clean up after hurricane Katrina.

What ought to shock and terrify every American is that KBR, a Halliburton subsidiary, was awarded a \$385 million contract to build "temporary detention facilities" in case of an "immigration emergency":

"The contract may also provide migrant detention support to other U.S. Government organizations in the event of an immigration emergency, as well as the development of a plan to react to a national emergency, such as a natural disaster. In the event of a natural disaster, the contractor could be tasked with providing housing for ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) personnel performing law enforcement functions in support of relief efforts."

Anyone paying a little bit of attention will ask, "What immigration emergency?" If there is an immigration emergency looming on the horizon it is a big secret. Of course immigrants will be the first ensnared in the net that big brother Bush has in mind, but the net won't stop with them.

What sort of national emergency requires detention centers? America has plenty of prisons. More of our population is behind bars than in any country on earth. There are detention centers for immigration in existence already. As for helping in case of a natural disaster, hurricane Katrina proved that saving American lives is not on the Bush agenda.

When the word detention comes up, hairs should rise on the back of every neck. Thanks to the Patriot Act and the creation of "enemy combatants" these detention centers can be used to lock up anyone for any reason for any length of time that Uncle Sam wishes.

In the best case scenario, this contract may be just the latest hand out to the welfare queen of corporate America. It is a sad day indeed when we must hope that good old fashioned greed, and nothing more, is at work with this latest theft from the United States treasury. Even if greed is the larger part of the equation, the threat of taking our rights and subjecting us to fear cannot be far from the minds of Dick Cheney and his ilk.

Bush has successfully used fear to stay in power and quiet the ineffectual opposition. When questions arose about the legality of warrantless wiretaps, suddenly Bush revealed a three year old plot to crash a plane into a Los Angeles skyscraper. This announcement was even news to the mayor of Los Angeles, leading the cynical among us, the smart people, to ask if such a threat ever existed in the first place.

What sort of national emergency will trigger the beginning of detentions? Probably not Mexicans heading for the border. If Democrats show uncharacteristic boldness and begin impeachment proceedings against Bush, we will begin to see Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib on U.S. soil.

The endless war on terror would no doubt be a pretext for detentions of immigrants or Americans. Just ask Jose Padilla, the American citizen accused of planning "dirty bomb" attacks. Actually you can't ask Padilla anything. He hasn't seen the outside of a jail in years. An entirely new category of criminals, enemy combatants, was created to justify endless incarceration. If our government is planning to create more Padillas, Halliburton definitely needs a new contract.

You can look it up, if you dare. Searching for the words "Halliburton" and "detention" may bring more than you bargained for.

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