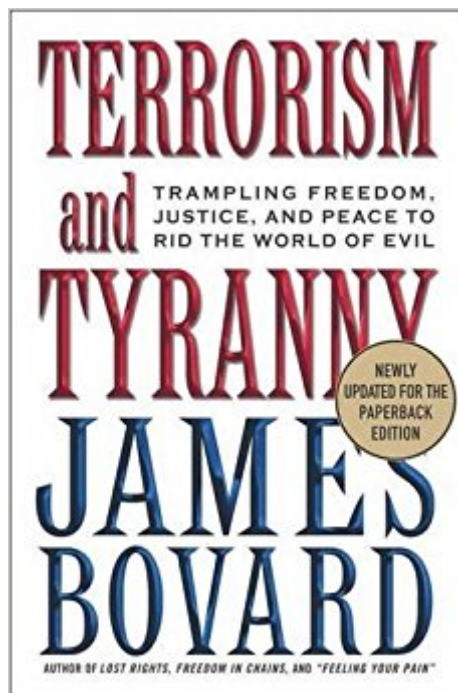




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Terrorism And Tyranny: Trampling Freedom, Justice, And Peace To Rid The World Of Evil



Synopsis

"The war on terrorism is the first political growth industry of the new Millennium." So begins Jim Bovard's newest and, in some ways, most provocative book as he casts yet another jaundiced eye on Washington and the motives behind protecting "the homeland" and prosecuting a wildly unpopular war with Iraq. For James Bovard, as always, it all comes down to a trampling of personal liberty and an end to privacy as we know it. From airport security follies that protect no one to increased surveillance of individuals and skyrocketing numbers of detainees, the war on terrorism is taking a toll on individual liberty and no one tells the whole grisly story better than Bovard.

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Customer Reviews

Journalist Bovard, who has written for the Wall Street Journal and the American Spectator, among others, looks at the post-September 11 policies and actions of the government and finds them sorely lacking. (He also has a lot to say about how the government let the terrorist attacks happen in the first place.) Instead of fighting the terrorist menace, he argues, the Bush administration's cosmetic gestures reward incompetence and establish dangerous legal precedents. While dealing with civil rights issues (the Patriot Act "treats every citizen like a suspected terrorist"), the book casts a wider net, including the intertwining of the wars on drugs and terrorism and the continued bungling of flight security (additional guards at airports "did little more than take up space and consume oxygen"). Meticulously documented from contemporary news accounts, this rant against Bush's "aura of righteousness" may well leave readers as angry as its author. Copyright 2003 Reed

"Terrorism and Tyranny is a scathing account of the war on terrorism...Bovard is a bipartisan scourge...His lively fury at government incompetence keeps the pages turning quickly...Most riveting." -- Edmund Carlevale, The Boston Globe"[Bovard] has synthesized and organized a vast amount of information, yet he presents it in an accessible, reader-friendly way.... A timely, troubling book, exhaustively and impeccably researched and documented.... an important, indeed essential, guide to the complex issues with which we must now grapple." -- Martin Sieff, The Washington Times

"No one is spared in Bovard's merciless review of our spectacularly unsuccessful war on terrorism."--Justin Raimondo, The American Conservative

"Invaluable....the best one-stop source I've seen for what various officials actually said at various times, suffused with intelligent analysis." --Alan Bock, Orange County Register

"...a concise and accurate chronicle of what happened and what could happen to our freedom as a result of excessive federal government power."-Jim Grichar, LewRockwell.com

"If you want to know what is really going on in President Bush's War on Terror, read Terrorism and Tyranny."--Charley Reese online

"Meticulously documented from contemporary news accounts, this rant against Bush's 'aura of righteousness' may well leave readers as angry as its author."--Publishers Weekly

"Bovard's take is ... a far more detailed and wide-ranging assault on the Patriot Act and the Bush administration, dense with example after example of governmental oppression, folly, and ineptitude in the wake of 9/11. Bovard is a superb reporter.... He has apparently read just about everything published, in both the traditional and alternative media, about the egregious conduct of government officials, investigators, airport screeners, and bureaucrats everywhere in the last two years . His parade of horrors is sourced with exceptional attention to detail [in 67 pages of fine-print footnotes]... Bovard offers far more than an infuriating record of government misconduct. His is a libertarian critique of any government's-including ours-inherent tendency to aggrandize and abuse its power." -- Michael Stern, The American Lawyer

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is a libertarian critique of any government's -- including ours -- inherent tendency to aggrandize and abuse its power." (Michael Stern The American Lawyer)

James Bovard is an excellent (contrarian) investigative journalist, and he writes yet another scathing book about governmental excesses here. His earlier *Lost Rights: The Destruction of American Liberty* and *Freedom in Chains: The Rise of the State and the Demise of the Citizen* were hugely influential in getting me to see how power corrupts, and just how far and frivolous this corruption has gone in modern America. And I like this book on the so-called "War on Terror" very much, however the one caveat is it needs to be read with an understanding of the broader context, what didn't make the nightly news and what it is all building towards. In other words, as another reviewer here said, Bovard documents a lot of trees but is in danger of missing the forest. I think Bovard clearly sees the forest but he really isn't free to show us any more directly. What he does show us is what was clearly visible in mainstream news, connecting the dots but without embellishing it with questionable and potentially liable opinion. It is easy to forget in a post-9/11 world, but Reagan began the war on terror when he first took office in January of 1981, redefining the term and thus the scope of how the government can fight it. But what shows up again and again is just how inept the government has been in this (legitimate, constitutionally mandated) role of protecting the American public. Bovard shows time and again how the military, FBI, CIA, NSA and DOJ let vital information slip or just sit unheeded, didn't prepare for pre-warned attacks and consistently rewarded incompetence and failure (not wanting to undermine the public's faith in the powers that be). Examples; the terrorist bombings of the embassy and military barracks in Beirut in 1983, the botched 1986 US airstrike on Libya, and the US Navy's 1988 downing of an Iranian civilian airline, killing all 290 passengers - an event which was quickly forgotten by Americans, but never will be by Iran. I know the US has always been playing catchup in its intelligence operations (often being infiltrated and manipulated by adversaries both within and without the agencies), but I have a hard time believing they can be so completely incompetent so consistently. My suspicion is they have just let much of it happen (besides sometimes directly instigating and encouraging it), so as to achieve other long range goals. So, as I read Bovard's encyclopedic account of abuses and failures I like to keep in mind what others have reported - such as Ruppert's equally encyclopedic *Crossing the Rubicon: The Decline of the American Empire at the End of the Age of Oil*. A good example of how both perspectives are needed is the case of Sen Paul Wellstone (D-Minn) who complained the so-called Patriot Act was being rushed through after 9/11. Bovard mentions him, but what he neglects to mention is that for this small attempt to obstruct the

administration Wellstone was murdered just a little over a year later (in a highly suspicious plane crash that killed the senator, his wife, daughter and three staff members). This kind of followup is what Ruppert's account excels at. So if you keep in mind alternative accounts of what happened in places as diverse as Mena Arkansas during the Iran/Contra scandal, Ruby Ridge Idaho, Waco Texas, Oklahoma City, and the World Trade Center (twice!) then you get a fuller picture of the terror and tyranny facing America today. Of course a large part of the problem is how we define terrorism. "The US definitions of terrorism focus far more on the perpetrator than the act. The same act is either public service or terrorism, depending on whether the killer is wearing a uniform." (p. 227) So by the US government's definition a government is incapable of acts of terror (even though they kill way more of their citizens than any terrorist organization or individuals ever do), and so always on the side of "good". This has led to the US government bankrolling "some of the world's most oppressive regimes." (p. 252). Bovard clearly saw where all this was heading as he presciently remarked, "The precedents the Justice Department establishes in abusing aliens will inevitably influence how the federal government treats American citizens... The power seized after 9/11 will be the starting line for a sprint toward greater discretionary and punitive power over anyone residing in this country." (pg.132) He can say this with confidence because it's how the FBI habitually operated before being reigned in in 1976, and how the DOJ began treating Americans soon after 9/11 and the passage of the Patriot Act. And it has only gotten worse since. I'd love to see a revised edition 10 years after its original publication. I'd hope he'd include some of the more current research on US government's use of false flags. I'm also interested to hear some detailed follow-up on the impact of such things as the draconian anti-money laundering aspects of the Patriot Act on individuals, and businesses, and the practice of warrantless and secret searches. As well as how tyranny continued to expand during the rest of the Cheney/Bush Jr. presidency, and now in the almost identical Obama administration. I'm sure Bovard has a whole bulging file of such consequences of this endless war. And the more I study all this the less I can call them unintended consequences...

There can be no other book that concisely describes how America has been changed from a free society in to a Police State by the Executive Branch of government sponsoring terrorism domestically and abroad. Listing a series of events and their effects on society this book shows how planned events move our country into a tyrannical government with the growth of numerous UN-constitutional enforcement and spying agencies. America now exceeds the capability of the "former" Soviet Union and East Germany in its capacity to spy on individuals and incarcerate the dissidents for any reason.

On the dust jacket of his new book, author James Bovard quotes Attorney General John Ashcroft's chilling words regarding the costs associated with the raging war against terrorism. Ashcroft claims, "Those who scare peace-loving people with phantoms of lost liberty...will only aid terrorists as they erode our national unity and diminish our resolve. They give ammunition to America's enemies and pause to America's friends". Such is the poisonous atmosphere created by the current administration and its utter disregard for the civil liberties and precious personal freedoms of average Americans. This then, is an extremely well written book that exhaustively details the manifest ways in which the Bush administration has misused and abused its power and privilege in what is obviously the most blatant grab for exclusive executive power in the last two hundred years. Characterizing the war on terror as the single most aggressive growth industry of the new millennium, Bovard boldly documents the specifics of the Bush' administration's war against its own people through the implementation of a wide range of anti-democratic measures to ensure its hold on power and to use the rationale of the war on terror to pursue a plethora of totally unrelated neo-conservative goals. For Bovard, the current range of executive branch actions against terror has more to do with ensuring its own survival in an abrasive political environment than it does with combating the actual terrorist threat. Every action taken is done with public assurances it is being done with scrupulous and diligent concern for protecting individual rights and personal privacy, when in fact the administration then eschews any and all efforts to oversee or surveil its constitutionally questionable actions and policies. It misrepresents the actions of its agencies such as the FBI or the Department of Homeland Security at the same time it seeks to extend its ability to monitor and control the civil liberties of its innocent citizens. Much of the book centers on the specific ways in which the tyranny of the established order attempts to justify its own actions by portraying them as being taken in the public interest. Yet rather than commit sufficient funds for enhancing internal security or bolstering first responder capabilities for cities, states, and municipalities at risk of terrorist strikes, they engage in the single largest tax-refund program for wealthy Americans since the initiation of the federal tax code in the 20th century. They exaggerate victories and minimize failures, and use "bait and switch" tactics to sell a war in Iraq by claiming Iraq posed a clear and present terrorist danger to the United States. The Bush administration constantly conjures up references to freedom and liberty, yet supports many governments that are both anti-democratic and authoritarian to their own citizens. Most provocatively, Bovard shares a wealth of documents and sources showing how a group of neo-conservative intellectuals have hijacked the means of governance for their own ideological and self-interested purposes. Several of the insiders are

prominent Zionists like Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle, who seem to view the current questionable and sometimes brutal military and political tactics of the Sharon government in Israel against the Palestinian refugees in the so-called territories as an ostensible model for how to manhandle and subjugate the truth into a tool to help fashion their own agendas through astute public relations and incredible 'chutzpah' in terms of political spin of the situation. Thus anyone disagreeing with neo-conservative doctrines is accused of tacitly suspect patriotism. More worrying is the seeming unilateral agenda of the administration for remaking the world into a form more congenial to American corporate interests. In Bush's view, American hegemony and American service to democratic ideals seem to be the same thing. This is an important book, and one that honestly deserves your most earnest attention. Enjoy!

James Bovard's "Lost Rights" was very influential in the formation of my political ideology, yet after 9/11 I fell into the trap he repeatedly decries in "Terrorism and Tyranny": to trust with more power the government whose bureaucratic incompetence failed to avert 9/11 with the power it had in the first place. Anyone sick of the current political debate in this country, polarized between Leftists who believe America is evil and conservatives who think it is divine and immune from criticism, ought to read this book. Bovard stakes out the middle, libertarian, ground.

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