The New York Times finds the President on the wrong side of history in an editorial published on the eve of the first anniversary of the attacks on the twin towers: "I do not need to explain why I say things. That's the interesting thing about being the President...[I] don't feel like I owe anybody an explanation."


The New York Times finds the President on the wrong side of history in an editorial published on the eve of the first anniversary of the attacks on the twin towers: "...to curtail individual rights, as the Bush Administration has done, is to draw exactly the wrong lessons from history. Every time the country has felt threatened and tightened the screws on civil liberties, it later wished it had not done so. In each case—whether the barring of government criticism under the Sedition Act of 1918 and the Espionage Act of 1918, the internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II or the McCarthyite witch hunts of the cold war—profound regrets set in later.

"...the American people need to make clear that they have learned from history and will not allow their rights to be rolled back. The world has changed since September 11, but the values this country was founded on have not."

New Power to Snoop
The misnamed Patriot Act, passed in the wave of panic after September 11, surrendered an unprecedented concentration of power to the Executive Branch. Repeatedly, the Bush Administration has demonstrated its contempt for open courts and oversight of its performance by Congress. Now, the Bill of Rights is being shredded. Protections of free speech, privacy, assembly, and fair trial are being sacrificed—under the guise of national security.

Free-wheeling FBI Wiretaps
Under the Patriot Act, FBI agents searching primarily for evidence of crime can secretly conduct a physical search or wiretap without demonstrating probable cause of criminal activity in a court of law.

Chilling of Political Dissent
The Patriot Act defines a federal crime of “domestic terrorism” so broadly that it may be used by federal law enforcement agencies to chill political dissent and authorize the surveillance of activists and organizations opposed to government policies. Your freedom to challenge, to mobilize, and to monitor your government is being squeezed.

Widening Government Secrecy
The Department of Homeland Security is given broad authority to withhold information now available to the press and public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), further increasing government secrecy.

Ending Your Privacy
The Homeland Security Act gives the green light to Bush’s Total Information Awareness Program, which could use computer networks to scoop up vast amounts of data on citizens.

Even more draconian schemes to enlist citizens to spy on their neighbors to “uncover suspicious activity” have been on the President’s anti-terrorist drawing board.

The Bush Administration has shamelessly used the War on Terrorism as an excuse to operate a secret government that restricts every American’s civil liberties while deepening its costly entanglements with avaricious corporations, which are given expanding power, privileges, and immunities. History teaches us that such practices will lead to serious mistakes and boomeranging policies harmful to our country.