

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
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THE
PERNICIOUS HYPOCRISY
OF FRANK RICH
OF THE
NEW YORK TIMES

ADDENDUM 1

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FROM

[“Jose Padilla and The Death of Liberty”](#)

By Mike Whitney

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“The very core of liberty secured by our Anglo-Saxon system of separated powers has been freedom from indefinite imprisonment at the will of the Executive.”

—Judge Antonin Scalia

09/10/05 "INFORMATION CLEARING HOUSE"—I had to sit down when I heard the Padilla case had been settled. I literally felt sick to my stomach, like I was gasping for air. The case of Jose Padilla is quite simply the most important case in the history of the American judicial system. Hanging in the balance are all the fundamental principles of American jurisprudence including habeas corpus, due process and “the presumption of innocence.” All of those basic concepts were summarily revoked by the three-judge panel of the 4th Circuit Court. The Court ruled in favor of the Bush administration which claimed that it had the right to indefinitely imprison an American citizen without charging him with a crime. The resulting verdict confers absolute authority on the President to incarcerate American citizens without charge and without any legal means for the accused to challenge the terms of his detention. It is the end of “inalienable rights,” the end of The Bill of Rights, and the end of any meaningful notion of personal liberty.

I remember reading three or four years ago, in Zbigniew Brzezinski's, *The Grand Chessboard*, of a strategy to dominate the world that would result in the loss of freedom for American citizens. Brzezinski recognized the inherent threat that liberty posed to the development of empire. He stated:

"It is also a fact that America is too democratic at home to be autocratic abroad. This limits the use of America's power, especially its capacity for military intimidation. Never before has a populist democracy attained international supremacy. But the pursuit of power is not a goal that commands popular passion, except in conditions of a sudden threat or challenge to the public's sense of domestic well-being. The economic self-denial (that is, defense spending) and the human sacrifice (casualties, even among professional soldiers) required in the effort are uncongenial to democratic instincts. Democracy is inimical to imperial mobilization."(p.35)

Brzezinski's prescient forecast has proved to be astonishingly accurate. The determination of the neocons, the Federalist Society, the far-right radio giants, the Olin, Scaife, Coors and Bradley foundations, and the entire stable of right-wing, quasi-fascist groups that operate openly within American society, have pounded the final wooden stake into the heart of the personal freedom. The basic legal protections that safeguard the citizen from the arbitrary and hostile action of the state have been rescinded. We all stand naked before the absolute power of the President.



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