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Quotations

*...if part of the essence of evil is a pattern of brokenness, one would expect precisely that kind of psychic brokenness – that profound disconnect in the realm of self-knowledge—in which people can persuade themselves that they are doing God's work when in fact they are serving their own darkest impulses.*

-- Andrew Bard Schmookler

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**VA nurse investigated for "sedition"**



Posted by : ilyana on Friday, February 10, 2006 - 07:01 PM PST



She wrote a letter to a local newspaper protesting the Bush Administration's War in Iraq. She said that **"Bush, Cheney, Chertoff, Brown, and Rice should be tried for criminal negligence,"**. Her employer, the VA seized her work computer and threatened to charge her with sedition.

She had not written the letter on her work computer, but still her supervisor severely reprimanded her.

According to an article (1) in the Progressive: **"Here's what her letter said.**

**"I am furious with the tragically misplaced priorities and criminal negligence of this government,"** it began. **"The Katrina tragedy in the U.S. shows that the emperor has no clothes!"** She mentioned that she was **"a VA nurse"** working with returning vets. **"The public has no sense of the additional devastating human and financial costs of post-traumatic stress disorder,"** she wrote, and she worried about the hundreds of thousands of additional cases that might result from Katrina and the Iraq War.

**"Bush, Cheney, Chertoff, Brown, and Rice should be tried for criminal negligence,"** she wrote. **"This country needs to get out of Iraq now and return to our original vision and priorities of caring for land and people and resources rather than killing for oil. . . . We need to wake up and get real here, and act forcefully to remove a government administration playing games of smoke and mirrors and vicious deceit.**

**Otherwise, many more of us will be facing living hell in these times."**

The question when is it free speech and when is it an illegal act? Dictionary are not much help in this respect. Here are three different definitions, but the "legal" refers to the 1798 Sedition Act to be obnoxious and obsolete, but has it been overturned?

The word web dictionary defines sedition as: **"An illegal action inciting resistance to lawful authority and tending to cause the disruption or overthrow of the government".**

The question when is it free speech and when is it an illegal act?

Merriam Webster on-line dictionary says:  
 One entry found for sedition.  
 Main Entry: se-di-tion  
 Pronunciation: si-'di-sh&n  
 Function: noun  
 Etymology: Middle English, from Middle French, from Latin sedition-, seditio, literally, separation, from se- apart + ition-, itio act of going, from ire to go -- more at SECEDE, ISSUE  
**: incitement of resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority**

and the LEGAL definition according to the 'Lectric Law Library Lexicon is:

**"SEDITION - Conduct which is directed against a government and which tends toward insurrection but does not amount to treason. Treasonous conduct consists of levying war against the United States or of adhering to its enemies, giving them**

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**aid and comfort.**

**The raising commotions or disturbances in the state; it is a revolt against legitimate authority.**

**The distinction between sedition and treason consists in this, that though its ultimate object is a violation of the public peace, or at least such a course of measures as evidently engenders it, yet it does not aim at direct and open violence against the laws, or the subversion of the Constitution.**

**The obnoxious and obsolete act of July 14, 1798, was called the sedition law, because its professed object was to prevent disturbances.**

In the Scotch law, sedition is either verbal or real. Verbal is inferred from the uttering of words tending to create discord between the king and his people; real sedition is generally committed by convocating together any considerable number of people, without lawful authority, under the pretence of redressing some public grievance, to the disturbing of the public peace. "

<http://www.lectlaw.com/def2/s020.htm>

### **ACLU of New Mexico Defends VA Employee Accused of 'Sedition' Over Criticism of Bush Administration (1/31/2006)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: [media@aclu.org](mailto:media@aclu.org)

ALBUQUERQUE —The American Civil Liberties Union of New Mexico today demanded an explanation from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for investigating a federal employee who published an editorial critical of the Bush administration in a local newspaper.

In her letter to the weekly Alibi, Laura Berg, a clinical nurse specialist, criticized the Bush administration's handling of Hurricane Katrina and the Iraq War, noting that, "as a VA nurse working with returning... vets, I know the public has no sense of the additional devastating human and financial costs of post-traumatic stress disorder." She urged readers to "act forcefully to remove a government administration playing games of smoke and mirrors and vicious deceit."

In September 2005, VA Information Security employees seized Berg's office computer because they claimed "government equipment was used inappropriately...during government time for drafting an editorial letter." No evidence was recovered to support that belief.

"The VA had no reason to suspect Laura Berg used government resources to produce her editorial," said ACLU of New Mexico Executive Director Peter Simonson. "She signed the letter as a private individual. From all appearances, the seizure of her work computer was an act of retaliation and a hardball attempt to scare Laura into silence."

In a November 9th memorandum to Berg, Mel Hooker, Chief of Human Resource Management Service at the VA, conceded that no evidence was found implicating the use of Berg's work computer in the writing of the editorial. However, he justified the investigation by saying "the Agency is bound by law to investigate and pursue any act which potentially represents sedition."

Simonson added: "The reference to 'sedition' is shocking. Even if Laura had used the office computer it would change nothing. None of her actions -- her criticism of the government, or her appeal for a change in the heads of government -- approach an act of unlawful insurrection. Is this government so jealous of its power, so fearful of dissent, that it needs to threaten people who openly oppose its policies with charges of 'sedition'?"

ACLU attorneys George Bach and Larry Kronen plan to submit a request under the Freedom of Information Act for all documents related to the VA's actions towards Berg. They have asked Hooker for a public apology "to remedy the unconstitutional chilling effect on the speech of VA employees that has resulted from these intimidating tactics."

But what does it mean when **the basis we are told** for going to war against Iraq was not in any way connected to that country? There is a new study of the 9/11 attacks on the WTC buildings that was presented in a seminar on February 1, 2006 which examines the evidence based on the science of physics. And the central question becomes obvious... Who did attack the US. and why?:

<http://www.choicechanges.com/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=353>

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<http://www.choicechanges.com> I received an e-mail from Barry Fockler of Barry's Blogs with a more complete definition of sedition than the ones I listed before this article.. He did not give me his source but here is:

"The legal definition has to do with being at war (see below):

sedition n. the Federal crime of advocacy of insurrection against the government or support for an enemy of the nation during time of war , by speeches, publications and organization. Sedition usually involves actually conspiring to disrupt the legal operation of the government and beyond expression of an opinion or protesting government policy. Sedition is a lesser crime than "treason," which requires actual betrayal of the government or "espionage." Espionage involves spying on the government, trading state secrets (particularly military) to another country (even a friendly nation), or sabotaging governmental facilities, equipment, or suppliers of the government like an aircraft factory. During U. S. participation in World War II (1941-1945) several leaders of the German-American Bund, a pro-Nazi organization, were tried and convicted of sedition for actively interfering with the war effort. Since freedom of speech, press and assembly are guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, sedition charges are rare, because treason and espionage charges can be made for overt acts against the nation's security. "

Barry went on to point out that:

"What makes your question a very interesting one is the fact that the Bushies see their 'war on terror' as a real war, while all thinking individuals throughout the world consider it pure Mickey Mouse Manure, designed to help the neocon reactionaries rule the world."

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