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Secret White House Manual: How to Stop Anti-Bush T-Shirts

August 17, 2007 12:16 PM

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Justin Rood Reports:



The Bush administration has agreed to pay \$80,000 to a husband and wife who were ejected from a presidential rally because of their anti-Bush T-shirts.

The settlement ends a suit brought by a Texas couple and the American Civil Liberties Union, claiming the couple's First Amendment rights were violated when they were arrested and removed from a taxpayer-funded event featuring President Bush because their shirts read "Love America, Hate Bush" and "Regime Change Starts at Home."

Jeffery and Nicole Rank refused directions from event staff and law enforcement to cover up their shirts at a July 4, 2004, West Virginia rally featuring President Bush. The pair were arrested, detained and charged with trespassing. The charges were later dismissed.

[Brian Ross Investigates: Campaign Rallies Against Wrong T-Shirts](#)

The settlement, in which the government admitted no wrongdoing, came after the disclosure of an allegedly "sensitive" Presidential Advance Manual, which laid out the White House's meticulous efforts to protect the president and his public image from dissent.

"As a last resort, security should remove the demonstrators from the event," the manual instructs. The government turned over a heavily redacted version of the manual to the ACLU in the course of the lawsuit.



The first step to keeping demonstrators out of events, the manual tells the president's event staff, is to encourage the Secret Service to "ask the local police department to designate a protest area...preferably not in view of the event site or the motorcade route."

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Inside the event space, the manual advises, White House advance personnel should preposition "rally squads" that can swarm any protesters at the event and "use their signs and banners as shields between the demonstrators and the main press platform."

The rally squads can be formed using "college/young republican organizations, local athletic teams, and

fraternities/sororities," the manual notes.

The squads can "lead supportive chants to drown out the protesters (USA!, USA!, USA!)," it suggests.

In a 2004 investigation, ABC News found such tactics were apparently used by the Democratic Kerry presidential campaign as well. In that investigation, ABC News producers wore T-shirts featuring the opposing candidate to campaign-sponsored rallies. Bush aides instructed producers to leave the presidential re-election rally; at a Kerry rally, they were surrounded and followed by a team of dancing Democratic campaign workers with large signs.

The manual is stamped "SENSITIVE – DO NOT COPY." Its cover warns readers that "it is a violation of Federal law to duplicate or reproduce this manual without permission. It is not to be photocopied or released to anyone outside of the Executive Office of the President, White House Military Office or United States Secret Service." It is currently posted on the ACLU's Web site, and available [here](#).

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Arresting someone for exercising their freedom of speech is surely a serious matter. But, the unanswered question is: Exactly WHERE is that \$80,000 Bush administration fine money coming from? Taxpayers??

Perhaps Cheney could easily cough it up, seeing that he has spend most but four years of his adult life in public service, but has "somehow" managed to gain a net worth over \$100 million. Hmmm. Government work must pay well.

Oops! National security violation revealing that. Secret Service outside my door....

Posted by: David | Aug 17, 2007 1:04:51 PM

1. All politicians are greasy, and this is a reflection thereof
2. The level of greasy-ness increases exponentially once the greaser is the president...this becomes government-sanctioned grease.
3. If you think your constitutional rights are still intact and/or that this is "for the best, or the terrorists win", you are on crack or possibly have no self-sustaining brain functions. The point of dissent is so we can act as a people if our government ceases to function in its intended manner, and make plans to resolve the situation, using our toolbox of voting, political pressure, or, last choice, outright revolt. If we can't protest (except in some friggin' corner in the backlot three blocks away from the arena), we can't rally supporters and pressure elected officials, and we the people are no longer in charge.

Posted by: jeremydbrooks | Aug 17, 2007 1:42:30 PM

I'm sure all presidents have programs like this. If there are folks who disrupt, remove them. These t-shirts, however, are "freedom" of speech". The couple should never have been removed. Certainly not for a silent demonstration which would not have disrupted anyone. I hope they enjoy the \$80,000. It is rightfully thiers. Let this decision in thier favor be a warning to all who would silence the voice of the American people. A "tip of the hat" too for the ACLU on this one.

Posted by: Mitch | Aug 17, 2007 1:51:11 PM

It is a pretty sad state when our elected leaders do not have a skin thick enough to be allowed to witness protesters at an event paid for by taxpayers. Surely they do not believe that every person who attends their political outings are supportive of all of the candidate/office holders positions. That is naive beyond belief. If our leaders could actually see and hear the views of their constituents, maybe they would do a better job representing the people. As it is, most live their own very protected and isolated world with little clue of what the real world is like.

Posted by: sunny | Aug 17, 2007 3:06:44 PM

Here's a thought: Freedom of speech is a GUARANTEED constitutional right. (1st amendment, NOT an afterthought!)

We fight wars to defend our constitutional rights and way of life, and people die. (Our enemies)

Yet, here, on American Soil, our Commander-in-Chief can VIOLATE our right to free speech, and not only live to tell about it, but just pay them off to forget about it.

Tell me, where is the justice in that?

Do our rights come w/ a price attached to them?

To me, being an American is PRICELESS, and so are my rights.

I've put my life on the line to defend these rights and it ABSOLUTELY DISGUSTS ME to see George W. Bush (or anyone for that matter) violate these rights.

SHAME ON YOU GEORGE!! No American should EVER be treated like this by ANYBODY! Much less, our fairly elected,(eyes rolling) Commander-in-Chief. I'm truly ashamed to call you a fellow American.

You break all the rules and re-write them to suit you. I can't wait to see how God judges you.

Posted by: VeteranDave | Aug 17, 2007 3:24:40 PM

To say that Kerry's group was doing the same thing is comparing apple and oranges. What made this action different, was that Kerry's was at a campaign event. The people that sued GW were at a taxpayer paid event.

That's a BIG BIG Difference.

Posted by: Roy | Aug 17, 2007 3:27:39 PM

Yeah, it would have been much better if they did what the Dems do - hire union thugs to attack dissenters, even if they're children.

Posted by: Master Shake | Aug 17, 2007 4:38:50 PM

America (the corprocracy it TRULY is); Land of the fee & home of the slave.

Posted by: Lana | Aug 17, 2007 4:52:01 PM

That is a ridiculous statement. There is NO difference between the two. Although I agree Bush was wrong it is ignorant to state that Kerry had the right to violate the SAME first amendment just because it was a campaign event. Are campaign events mentioned in the constitution? I didn't think so. I find it disturbing that the people who complain the most about violation of first amendment rights are the very same people who would not hesitate to violate MY first amendment rights if my opinion differs from theirs. Liberals are the WORST VIOLATORS. If you disagree with them then you are a racist, or a bigot, or a zionist pig, or warmonger. Before you criticize Bush, perhaps you should take a long look at the suppression of free speech that goes on at many left-wing events. All I hear in this blog are hypocrites.

Posted by: James | Aug 17, 2007 4:54:30 PM

OK. Let's review.

David says that Cheney should pay for this since he actually made money. How about getting John Edwards to pitch in as well? that is only 220 haircuts or a small portion of what he got paid to "study" poverty. And David, that isn't the Secret Service at your door. You aren't as "dangerous" as you think. It is probably just Domino's with your lunch.

Posted by: Uncle Mike | Aug 17, 2007 5:18:04 PM

This has been a regular part of the Bush Administrations antics since the election was stolen in Florida. If you oppose Bush, you are not patriotic and the evquivilant of a Terrorist supporter. To be fair...It has always worked. Karl Rove is an evil genius who should be recruited by the Dems.

Posted by: status quo | Aug 17, 2007 5:18:20 PM

I'll give you 10-1 odds that this stor
story won't be on World News Tonightl.

Posted by: SPENCER | Aug 17, 2007 5:49:46 PM

This event is another aspect of how dearly this administration covorts wildly all over the constitution, while at the same time using the defense of it as justification for any and all action to further the precious adgenda.

This is mind control ladies and gentlemen. Hicks don't mix with politics. Take the power back.

Posted by: Noam Marcuse | Aug 17, 2007 5:53:09 PM

Since these were unlawful arrests, how about charging all involved - from the arresting officers right up the line - with unlawful imprisonment and/or making false reports, and make THEM spend some time in jail.

Ah... that would be too simple, I suppose, but it would sure be justified and it would chill this sort of behavior.

Posted by: JLS | Aug 17, 2007 6:18:53 PM

Status Quo - "since the election was stolen in Florida"???? Google it, and educate yourself. The NYT, the WaPo, and ALL other independent newspapers, liberal or not, could FIND NO EVIDENCE of ANYthing being stolen. No matter how long you spew that tired old line of "he STOLE the election" it won't be as bad as having to listen to the Goreacle spew hot air about the planet's "fever". Get a life.

Posted by: Lisa | Aug 17, 2007 6:40:42 PM

To James:

Well if there is suppression of free speech at left-wing events then what are they??? Can't present anything can you?? Why is it that right wing nuts always come up with the "well they do it do!!!!" argument??? These nut jobs have the mental capacity of 4 year olds. James must be part of the 30% that still inexplicably support Bush.

Posted by: Iraq War Liberal | Aug 17, 2007 7:52:38 PM

What's wrong is wrong. Why are you Bush supporters defending this? Do you all hate the Constitution and want to abolish the Bill of Rights?

Posted by: Paul | Aug 17, 2007 8:41:54 PM

Bush. The single most reviled president in American history. What a crybaby. What an American failure.

Posted by: Frank | Aug 17, 2007 8:49:49 PM

can i wear a shirt that says "I'm muslim"? or a shirt that that says "i'm a jew" at a presidential rally?

Posted by: john | Aug 17, 2007 8:52:27 PM

This was a silent protest and should have been allowed as it caused no disruption.

These events are not for you to spout your opposition, they are to promote something and if you interfere with that you should be removed.

The college tactic of shouting down those you disagree with is an old time tested lefty trick but now when the right uses it somehow it becomes evil incarnate.

Did anyone sue those Columbia U students ?

That is the protest method of the left and it shows the weakness of the position in most cases.

The "stolen election" and "Bush lied" show you to be a knee-jerk reactionary without the will or skill to think for yourself.

Posted by: AD&A | Aug 17, 2007 9:12:53 PM

Gee

oh but it's ok Brain for Lou Dobbs to say what a bad bad Bush administration there is someone needs to arrest Lou Dobbs from CNN and most anti-American and complains when I see him that the homeland security has failed and the administration at the whitehouse, fire Lou Dobbs he is anti American as I have seen him speak on tv and the biggest weasel on the CNN.

Posted by: Gloria | Aug 17, 2007 10:40:27 PM

Lou Dobbs sound like a real democratic if you as me, fire him now CNN he is Anti-American

Posted by: Gloria | Aug 17, 2007 10:41:59 PM

This is not a partisan issue. When President Bill Clinton was at a public appearance in Chicago a husband and wife were arrested because they shouted "You suck" in his direction.

Posted by: jmurphy | Aug 17, 2007 10:49:47 PM

Hey if he wants to get rid of the shirts why don't he just quit and go back to Texas nobody will miss him .

Posted by: darkfall | Aug 17, 2007 10:54:17 PM

AS FOR THE T-SHIRT ISSUE THE SHOULD HAVE WORN ONE THAT SAID "I USED TO BE AN AMERICAN!!!" AS FOR THE TAXPAYER'S PAYING THE \$80,000 WHO DO YOU THINK WILL FOOT THE BILL FOR THIER JENNA'S WEDDING AT THE WHITHOUSE IF THEY HAVE ONE THERE? HMMMMMMMMMMMMMM???

Posted by: brian | Aug 17, 2007 11:54:24 PM

I'M GONNA "IMPEACH" BUSH AND CHENEY SO FAST, IT'LL SOUND LIKE A ROCKET BREAKING THE SOUND BARRIER !!!!! ENOUGH IS ENOUGH FROM THESE 2 BIT IDIOTS WHO ARE NOTHING BUT LIARS AND CON ARTISTS !! WERE TIRED ALSO OF TONY SNOW, PULLING A SNOW JOB ON AMERICA,HOPE LIGHTINING STRIKES HIM !!!!!

Posted by: JETRANGER | Aug 18, 2007 12:18:33 AM

"Hate Bush"?

Sounds like "hate speech" to me. Last time I heard, some moron decided that's not covered by the First Amendment.

Hmm.

Make up your minds.

Posted by: MZ | Aug 18, 2007 12:31:52 AM

The entire United States is a "free speech zone". Not some place well away from the sight of the Shrub. It is, as stated earlier, in the first amendment to the Constitution. It is wrong for either side to use that tactic. However, when it comes to dirty tricks, they became a new force with Tricky Dick and were improved upon by Karl Rove. They are wrong and should be a class A felony.

And, to JLS, I live in Florida, and, yes the election was stolen. People were not allowed to vote, just as in Ohio in 2004. Voter registration lists were scrubbed, removing thousands of voters who were legally allowed to vote. And even with that, when the voted were recounted, in most of the scenarios used in the recount, Gore won. I would like to suggest you turn off Rush (the drug addict) and watch something other than Faux News for a while.

Posted by: KSpurgeon | Aug 18, 2007 12:47:13 AM

The whole purpose of the filtering is to aid in protecting the president. It would be easier for some one seeking to kill the president to hide in a group of protesters since they are more apt to be disruptive.

The same thing was done when Clinton was president, and Bush 1 as well. I never got near any Reagan rallies, or Carter either.

Its easier to protect the president's life when you keep discenters back. Supporters aren't going to try to kill him, and neither are most protesters, but the odds of a protester reporting some one preping for an assination attempt are slim. In fact, I'd bet most of the posters here, and ALL of the folks at dailyKOS would not report or try to stop an assasination attempt on Bush. Even at the thought of Cheney in the oval office.

Posted by: Jerry | Aug 18, 2007 9:51:11 AM

"can i wear a shirt that says "I'm muslim"? or a shirt that that says "i'm a jew" at a presidential rally?"

as long as it says you support Bush you can.

after all the constitutions just a "goddamn piece of paper" thats a quote from King George.

Posted by: Tom | Aug 18, 2007 11:31:26 AM

"If you disagree with them then you are a racist, or a bigot, or a zionist pig, or warmonger. Before you criticize Bush, perhaps you should take a long look at the suppression of free speech that goes on at many left-wing events. All I hear in this blog are hypocrites."

Posted by: James

The right just hates it when they get called out on the errors of their ways, they automagically resort to playing the victim.

Look James, the GOP had it made a few years ago, a massive majority, a compliant media, a diciplined message, etc. Now look at where you are. Playing the victim after screwing yourselves over, isn't going to win you compassion anymore. The republican party looks to be in its last throes these days with all their wailing.

Posted by: elfantasma_delosrepublicanos | Aug 18, 2007 12:34:54 PM

Bush has NEVER appeared in front of anything but carefully hand-picked crowds of supporters. The only place where he's ACTUALLY received without massive protests and cherry-picked crowds is Albania...one-twentieth the size of Texas.

Posted by: wilder5121 | Aug 18, 2007 1:38:07 PM

It never ever ever will cease to amaze me how ANYBODY ANYWHERE can still claim to believe that Bush being elected pResident and that Bush hasn't lied us into a miserable mess! Does anyone actually require more proof that the Republican Neocon Bush-backers only see what they weant to see and/or hear what they want to hear as opposed to what is real and true?!!!

Posted by: Darrie | Aug 18, 2007 3:06:08 PM

Bush's election to the Presidency WASN'T fraudulent and Bushco DIDN'T LIE us into an ugly illegal war?!!! LOL-I'm amazed that Bush-backer sheeple can still spout that drivell with a straight face! LOL---If it wasn't so repulsive that those STUPID people are still trying to be taking seriously, I'd laugh non-stop...but as it is, it's not really a laughing matter since we are stuck with the awful freedom crushing government Bush installed and the bloody, useless war he is killing our people and other nations people with. UGGGGH! How sickening!!

Posted by: Darrie | Aug 18, 2007 3:13:01 PM

The problem with all you REPUBLIICANS is you think anyone who disagrees with you is anti american !!!!!

Posted by: Rick | Aug 18, 2007 5:22:57 PM

"All politicians are greasy, and this is a reflection thereof"

Once again, proof is uncovered relating to corruption or anti-American activities on the part of Republicans or the Bush regime, and as usual, someone out there says "see, everyone does it". I don't think that I need to point out is that only Republicans have been shown to arrest or persecute people for the "crime" of being Americans. Why don't we just go with the facts instead of letting personal prejudices and biases extrapolate crimes by Democrats and other politicians? Let us get rid of the ones we know are guilty before we start blaming ones that some wish were guilty.

Posted by: Tammy stickers | Aug 18, 2007 11:01:05 PM

Remember all the times that Bush told us that 'they' hated us for our freedoms? Seems they no longer have any reason to us...thanks Bush/Cheney, job well done!

Posted by: Shawn Fassett | Aug 19, 2007 12:16:58 AM

My Mom went to one of these rallies for Bill Clinton back in the 90's and the letter of invitation went so far as to tell people that anyone wearing anything that could be considered incendiary would not be allowed in to the event. Sadly, there is nothing new about our elected leaders inability to deal with a little public criticism.

People, we get what we pay for. So long as we continue to elect people based on how they make us feel, we will continue to elect people who make us feel embarrassed.

Posted by: Patbgawne | Aug 19, 2007 1:24:05 AM

I like Bush and Channey they need to get rid of Lou Dobbs and Jack Cafferty on CNN for the being the bigwigs and anti-americans for hating on immigrants calling them all criminals so nonsense and misleading the public on the BUsh admin I'm sure Lou Dobbs is behind the T=shirt's sound like a Lou Dobbs thing.

Posted by: Gloria | Aug 19, 2007 4:57:41 AM

The horrendous thing about the decision behavior implicit in the instruction book is that is that the people implementing it

-- under the direction of the White House -- have set a horrible roll model for citizens of the United States and particularly kids in colleges, high schools and more. It sends a message that if someone has identified a problem that needs to be solved -- one can not go to the President of the University. I know this, because that is what the President of the University of Michigan has done to students here. Shame on you, for setting such a bad example. Is the model of democracy we wanted to set for the rest of the world? There is a time and place for everything. But suppose these people had an urgent matter to be addressed. Trespassing? It doesn't matter who started it. 'At least Ronald Reagan's Press Secretary made it clear --- his public appearances were photo opportunities only.

Posted by: tecunalom | Aug 19, 2007 5:58:54 AM

Here's a radical idea on how to mitigate dissent, be honest with the American people and address our concerns. If our resources were used honestly after 9/11 to address the true terrorists there would be no need to manufacture support for Pres Bush. I'd be willing to bet if Americans thought we were truly dealing with real issues there would be no need for the Bush Admin to constantly explain the war. I think crowd control would be needed to contain the energy of support for our policies.

Posted by: pfrmny | Aug 19, 2007 11:56:16 AM

The question is moot that these people have NOT PROTECTED OR DEFENDED OUR CONSTITUTION.

Instead the question is this:

WHAT are the people going to do about it?

Posted by: Yellowbird | Aug 19, 2007 2:11:14 PM

Interestingly I was at this rally. Worked for a company that received tickets from Shelly Capito, house member from Charleston. I absolutely hate Bush and everything about him but wanted to take the kids to see a president and all. I'll tell you what, I looked that SOB in the eye and saw nothing of substance. And I saw the people who supported him take these young people to the ground because they had the guts to share their lack of support for him.

I was proud that they were visiting my state, and saw more good in them than Bush could ever have.

Posted by: Jon R | Aug 19, 2007 4:31:02 PM

Turns out the Dixie Chicks were right after all.

Posted by: Heather | Aug 19, 2007 10:26:48 PM

Gloria sounds like quite the intellectual, doesn't she? That's Bush's base - rich people (not Gloria) and stupid people that vote against their own best interests. Gloria needs to vote for better public schools because it is fairly evident that she didn't get to go to a good one.

Posted by: bob | Aug 19, 2007 11:16:49 PM

damn, doesn't this behavior sound downright totalitarian to anyone
why are the politicians (especially the kool-aid drinkin'
republicans) so scared off?
someone not sufficiently brainwashed is a direct challenge to Rove/Cheney's authority
i hope we all survive this next year or so
good luck

Posted by: dick bohanon | Aug 20, 2007 2:43:57 AM

In 1934 Prescott Bush and a group of industrial leaders tried to lead a coup against FDR. Their goal was to set up a fascist government in the US. The coup failed.
Fast forward to 2001 and fascism arrived in the form of a Texas half-wit and his evil sidekick.
In other news, many of the Dems have put on their brown shirts as well. If they won't impeach these evil stooges, they are part of the problem. God help this poor country.

Posted by: Wiseguy | Aug 20, 2007 10:12:08 AM

"If you oppose Bush, you are not patriotic and the equivocal of a Terrorist supporter."

The ironic thing is that it is those that support Bush and Republican cabal that should be proving that they are patriotic, since their actions speak otherwise.

It is ironic that the Conservative third of the country defines patriotism as "loyalty to party" instead of "loyalty to country".

Posted by: Tammy Stickers | Aug 20, 2007 11:46:14 AM

"Yeah, it would have been much better if they did what the Dems do - hire union thugs to attack dissenters, even if they're children."

Of course, you know that this never happened, but you might as well make the smear anyways.

Posted by: Tammy Stickers | Aug 20, 2007 11:47:15 AM

Good case, good decision. On the other hand.....it did little to protect citizens rights.

Once in power, presidents tend to behave like dictators, now don't they?

Posted by: Rick McDaniel | Aug 20, 2007 12:02:19 PM

What a bunch of communist losers these Busheviks are. Don't they know that supressing free speech has more to do with Karl Marx than with the Founding Fathers?

Posted by: A. Magnus | Aug 20, 2007 2:18:37 PM

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