

## Go Back to Sleep

Written by Letter to Editor

Tuesday, 19 December 2000 18:00

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In 1988, John Carpenter released a motion picture titled They Live. In his sci-fi political satire, the government was hypnotizing the American public through the media. The message was to sleep and accept what you are told as the truth.

The entire 2000 presidential election was interpreted for us by the mainstream media. The media told us what the candidates were thinking, what they “really” meant by what they said, and even gave armchair psychological evaluations of a candidate. In a sense, we were told to sleep and accept what we were told as the truth. This has been the tool of fascist governments for centuries.

Indeed, even during the post-election legal battles, the mainstream media told us to disregard our eyes, disregard our own feelings, and sleep. They would tell us how to feel. Locally, Fox News anchorperson Ellen Chang led into the story of the Florida court ordering the counting of the yet-uncounted under-votes by sarcastically saying, “As if americans weren't tired enough of this, here comes another set of recounts.” Excuse me? Those votes had not yet been counted, so they were not recounts. and as an American citizen I am never tired of accurately counting the votes to ensure that the true winner of a democratic election becomes the President of the United States!

The Dispatch showed its willingness to play along with consecutive Saturday and Sunday headlines. When the Florida Supreme Court ordered counting of the yet-uncounted votes so that American citizens would not be disenfranchised, the headline read “Florida Court Creates Legal Chaos.” But the next day when the Supreme Court ordered the stopping of the count of yet uncounted American votes, the headline read, “Supreme Court Stops Count.” Did you notice the bias, or were you sleeping?

Respected social activist Bianca Jagger commented that even the poorest of the poor in a Third World nation are not afraid to call an election a fraud if they see it with their own eyes.

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Jagger expressed disbelief that the American people and the media are not willing to stand up and flatly say that this was a coup, a takeover, not an election. In an election, you accurately count the votes of all of the citizens. It's as if Americans are asleep.

Those of us who have been open about our feelings are now being told by the media and the Republican Party to put our anger aside "for the good of the country." I don't think so. The Republicans now control the presidency, the House, the Senate, the Supreme Court, cable TV news, talk radio, the mainstream written press... This is how fascists come to power. Do you think I'm overreacting? Hitler didn't walk in one day, flip a light switch, and say, "I'm in charge, let's start killing millions of people." It happened slowly. First he built the roads. He made the trains run on time. Slowly the Germans were sucked in. We're no different. It's like the analogy of the frog in the pot of water on the stove. If you drop the frog into boiling water he'll jump out as if to say, "Hey, this is just not right!" But if you put him in cool water and ever so slowly turn up the heat, the frog will let himself be boiled alive. The way I see it, Americans are sitting in a pot of 350-degree water, sleeping and watching television.

Let's face it, deciding not to count votes is a form of counting votes. You only count votes that are in your favor. There was no need for the Republicans to count the African-American or Jewish vote. Indeed, referring to the Bush Sr. election, George W. Bush's main legal man James Baker was quoted in a 1992 issue of Esquire magazine as saying, "Fuck the Jews; they didn't vote for us anyway." Americans have allowed a candidate and his brother (with the help of a few extra cohorts) to count the votes. Remember what Joseph Stalin said: "Those who cast the votes decide nothing. Those who count the votes decide everything."

But don't trouble yourselves. Go back to sleep. Watch television. Consume.

Scott Morschhauser  
Bettendorf, IA