



Clinton: Blaming the Non-Violent Right for Violence

Former President Bill Clinton has gone on a blame tour against Obama's critics in the last couple of days, stigmatizing critics of big government for crimes of violence committed by others.

Clinton wrote for the Sunday [April 18 New York Times](#) that "there is a big difference between criticizing a policy or a politician and demonizing the government that guarantees our freedoms and the public servants who enforce our laws.... As we exercise the right to advocate our views, and as we animate our supporters, we must all assume responsibility for our words and actions *before* they enter a vast echo chamber and reach those both serious and delirious, connected and unhinged." (Emphasis in original.)



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In other words, people who don't advocate violence should be blamed for violence committed by others if they animate supporters to nonviolent action against the unconstitutional excesses of a lawless big government. Clinton [told](#) ABC's *This Week* Sunday that "they create a climate in which people who are vulnerable to violence — because they are disoriented, like Timothy McVeigh was — are more likely to act."

Perhaps the real questions that Clinton ought to be asking are: Does opposition to lawlessness by government officials provoke lawless violence, or do the lawless acts of government officials provoke the violence? Were the Oklahoma City bombers provoked by the the lawless violence of the Clinton administration at Waco and Ruby Ridge? Why is it that lawless violence always seems to spread when the government itself is getting bigger on unconstitutional programs and failing to follow the legal limits of the U.S. Constitution?

"We shouldn't demonize the government or its public employees or its elected officials," Clinton [wrote](#) for the *New York Times*. "We can disagree with them. We can harshly criticize them. But when we turn them into an object of demonization, you know, you — you increase the number of threats." Clinton makes his view clear in this statement that the real, unspoken threat from "demonizing government" (whatever that means) is increased distrust of government. And a distrusted government is much more difficult to make bigger. That's his chief worry. His article is also both a subtle call for censorship of anyone criticizing government and key indicator of the intolerance of many (though not all) who support big government for political dissent.

Clinton also [wrote](#) of the Oklahoma City bombers: "They took to the ultimate extreme an idea advocated in the months and years before the bombing by an increasingly vocal minority: the belief that the greatest threat to American freedom is our government, and that public servants do not protect our



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on April 19, 2010

freedoms, but abuse them.”

That government officials are abusing Americans’ freedoms is obvious to anyone who has been paying attention, from unconstitutional NSA snooping to Abu Graib and Guantanamo to new federal individual health care mandates. And what Clinton calls a “vocal minority” has long been the majority of Americans. According to a [Pew Research Center poll](#) released April 18, Americans have “epic discontent with Congress and elected officials.” About four-fifths of Americans distrust their government. “Just 22% say they can trust the government in Washington almost always or most of the time, among the lowest measures in half a century,” the Pew poll [reported](#). “Over this period, a larger minority of the public also has come to view the federal government as a major threat to their personal freedom – 30% feel this way, up from 18% in a 2003 ABC News/Washington Post survey.”

Clinton also [wrote](#) that “Americans have more freedom and broader rights than citizens of almost any other nation in the world, including the capacity to criticize their government and their elected officials.” Note that Clinton acknowledges America is not the freest nation in the world; it just has “almost” as much freedom as any other nation. Sadly, that was the one part of his article where he was correct. It wasn’t always so. But if patriots can ignore Clinton’s subtle intimidation tactics and work toward a federal government restrained by the U.S. Constitution, America may once again be the freest nation on earth.

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