




Woody Allen's "Dictatorship," Starring Barack Obama

Perhaps it's his experience as writer,  director, and star of several hit movies that has led Woody Allen to prefer one-man operations. That might explain why he told the Spanish newspaper La Vanguardia (as translated by Fox News) that "it would be good...if [President Obama] could be a dictator for a few years because he could do a lot of good things quickly."

Let's suppose Allen got his wish. In a few years, what would we likely be able to say about the policies instituted by Dictator Obama? How about this: "He [kept] suspended the gold standard, embarked on huge public works programs ..., protected industry from foreign competition, expanded credit, instituted jobs programs, bullied the private sector on prices and production decisions, vastly expanded the military [but only for [the "right" wars](#)], enforced capital controls, instituted family planning, penalized smoking, brought about national health care and unemployment insurance, imposed education standards, and eventually ran huge deficits."

Those were the actual policies, as [described](#) by economist Lew Rockwell, of *another* infamous dictator — one who would have used that unlimited power to enforce his irrational and hateful anti-Semitism and have a fellow named Allen Stewart Konigsberg (Allen's real name) shipped off to a concentration camp long before he could become a world-renowned filmmaker. Therein lies the rub: Giving unlimited power to a man because you like *some* of his policies — name one of the policies listed above that Obama would not implement (some of them he already has implemented) that Allen and his fellow liberals would not applaud. But that also gives him free rein to carry out policies you *don't* like. Suppose Obama, after giving all appearances of being a Leftist, once becoming dictator completely reversed course and started slashing government. What recourse would Allen have? He would be forced to stand by and watch as his beloved welfare state was reduced to a mere shell of its former self, perhaps back to the size it was in 1920 or even 1820.

Of course, liberals aren't the only ones who yearn for a dictatorship when the man they trust is in the White House. Allen said of Obama, "The Republican Party should get out of his way and stop trying to hurt him." How different is that from many neoconservatives' complaints that Democrats were obstructing President George W. Bush's agenda, especially as regards foreign policy? Consider [this example](#) from Michael Gaynor at RenewAmerica.com: "But for Democrat obstructionism, President Bush would have done much more, including fixing Social Security, giving younger Americans a Social Security choice, and giving America access to all the Anwar oil (which would markedly improve America's diplomatic leverage with Iran and Venezuela [sic] and perhaps obviate any need for military action against Iran)."

Yes, if only those Democrats had gotten "out of the way" and let President Bush "be a dictator for a few years," he could have done "a lot of good things quickly."

Bush himself was even blunter, [saying](#) on more than one occasion, "If this were a dictatorship, it would be a heck of a lot easier," once adding, "just so long as I'm the dictator." There were few howls from the Right about those comments even though they came directly from the President's mouth. (Contrast that



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with the indignation from Republicans when President Clinton's adviser Paul Begala said of executive orders, "Stroke of the pen, law of the land. Kinda cool.")

The U.S. Presidency is already tending toward a dictatorship despite the façade of elections. The President claims the power to initiate wars without a congressional declaration; to declare individuals, including American citizens, "enemy combatants" and lock them up in perpetuity or even [assassinate them](#); to listen in on Americans' telephone calls, read their printed and electronic correspondence, and search their homes without a warrant; [to commit U.S. taxpayers to bailing out foreign countries](#); to decide which laws he will enforce after signing them; and so on, *ad infinitum*. That the man who wishes to wield this power must stand for election every four years is of little consequence; once he is in office, there are practically no limits to his power.

"Power tends to corrupt; and absolute power corrupts absolutely" is as true today as it was when Lord Acton penned it in 1887. Even a small amount of power in the hands of one man is dangerous. How much more so unlimited power, whether the person wielding it is a Democrat, Republican, Green, or Libertarian!

The Founders, having achieved their independence from an empire run by a king with vast power, understood this all too well, which is why they tried to limit the federal government's power with a set of written rules. Thomas Jefferson wrote: "In questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution." Most of the links in those chains have long since been broken, and the beast in Washington is straining to snap the last few. The Left and the Right alike should be wary of wishful thinking about benevolent dictators in the White House, for such thinking, if fulfilled, would unleash Leviathan to devour the last remnants of liberty in this once free country.

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Photo: Woody Allen and actress Naomi Watts at the 63rd international film festival, in Cannes, southern France, May 15, 2010: AP Images



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