



Rockland Coalition
for Peace & Justice

Red Alert for Our Freedoms

The **USAPATRIOT Act**, which is an acronym for **U**niting and **S**trengthening **A**merica by **P**roviding **A**ppropriate **T**ools **R**equired to **I**ntercept and **O**bstruct **T**errorism, was passed hastily by Congress on Oct. 25, 2001 right after the 9-11 tragedy. It allows the government to:

- Search your home or office without your knowledge
- Monitor your internet use, read your e-mail, and obtain your library records
- Wiretap your telephone without a court order
- Detain you without access to a lawyer and without charging you with a crime
- Monitor your political and religious activities

N.Y. City Council Passes Anti-Patriot Act Measure

By Michelle Garcia, *The Washington Post*, February 5, 2004

New York City, site of the country's most horrific terrorist attack, Wednesday became the latest in a long list of cities and towns that have formally opposed the expanded investigatory powers granted to law enforcement agencies under the USA Patriot Act.

The New York City Council approved a resolution condemning the law, enacted by Congress six weeks after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, with a voice vote in its chambers a few blocks from the gaping hole at Ground Zero.

"**The Patriot Act is really unpatriotic, it undermines our civil rights and civil liberties,**" said council member Bill Perkins (D-Manhattan), the bill's sponsor. "**We never give up our rights that's what makes us Americans.**"

"So much is being done in the name of New York, we are saying don't use our name to infringe on people's rights," said Glenn C. Devitt, an organizer with the Bill of Rights Defense Committee.

Congress Has Second Thoughts On Patriot Act

by Katrin Dauenhauer, *The Inter Press Service*, July 24, 2003

Taking a clear stand against anti-privacy provisions in the Patriot Act, the U.S. House of Representatives in an overwhelmingly bipartisan effort last night agreed to an amendment that would bar federal law enforcement from carrying out **secret "sneak and peak" searches** without notifying the target of the warrant.

The Otter Amendment, added to the Commerce, Justice and State Departments funding bill and named after Rep. C. L. "Butch" Otter, and Idaho Republican, passed by an extraordinary margin of **309 to 118, with 113 Republicans voting in favor.**

Part of Patriot Act Ruled Unconstitutional

By Linda Deutsch, *AP News*, January 26, 2004

A federal judge has declared unconstitutional a portion of the USA Patriot Act that bars giving expert advice or assistance to groups designated foreign terrorist organizations. The ruling marks the first court decision to declare a part of the post-Sept. 11 anti-terrorism statute unconstitutional, said David Cole, a Georgetown University law professor who argued the case on behalf of the Humanitarian Law Project. In a ruling handed down late Friday and made available Monday, **U.S. District Judge Audrey Collins said the ban on providing "expert advice or assistance" is impermissibly vague, in violation of the First and Fifth Amendments.**

**Three states and 250 cities, towns, and counties (including New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago and Philadelphia) have passed resolutions to protect the civil liberties of their 43,455,388 residents.
Should Rockland County pass a similar resolution?**

Help ALA Keep Big Brother Out of Your Library!

ALA's Resolution on the USA Patriot Act, January 29, 2003

"The American Library Association (ALA) opposes any use of governmental power to suppress the free and open exchange of knowledge and information or to intimidate individuals exercising free inquiry...ALA considers that sections of the USA PATRIOT Act are a present **danger to the constitutional rights and privacy rights of library users.**"

Northern Revolt

by Dean Schabner, *ABC News.com*, May 23, 2003

Alaska has joined a growing national rebellion against the USA Patriot Act, voting to oppose the massive federal anti-terrorism law passed by Congress soon after Sept. 11, 2001.

"We hope that a resolution like this, with the **bipartisan support** that it has, will urge Congress to re-examine the provisions of the USA Patriot Act that challenge the individual freedoms that make this country great," said Rep. John Coghill, a Republican from North Pole who co-sponsored the resolution. **"If we sacrifice our freedom, we let terrorism win."**

The Alaskan measure passed in the state House, with 27 Republicans and 13 Democrats, by a vote of 32-1. It passed 19-0 in the Senate Wednesday. There are 12 Republicans and 8 Democrats in the State Senate.

Odd bedfellows fall in line

by Sara B. Miller and Seth Stern, *The Christian Science Monitor*, October 29, 2003

It's perhaps not surprising that the first resolutions were passed in the spring of 2002 by peace movement veterans in liberal college towns such as Ann Arbor, Mich., or Northampton, Mass. But this year, **the Patriot Act has started attracting more attention from people on the right. Gun owners and antiabortion demonstrators**, for example, have expressed fears they may be targeted by a future Democratic administration as domestic terrorists.

In some parts of the country, left-leaning activists reached out to sympathetic local conservatives after failing to muster support on their own. That was the case in Boise, Idaho, where **Green Party** activist Gwen Sanchirico **formed a coalition called the Boise Patriots along with National Rifle Association members, antiabortion activists, and environmentalists.** "We agreed that we would leave our political baggage at the door, and we would only come together to defend the Bill of Rights and our Constitution," Ms. Sanchirico says. Boise passed their resolution on Sept. 30.

In Washington, there are signs that **lawmakers on both sides of the aisle are having doubts about the Patriot Act**, too. An amendment introduced by Representative Otter this past summer against "sneak and peak" searches overwhelmingly passed the House.

Now a bipartisan group of lawmakers including Sens. Russell Feingold (D) of Wisconsin, Larry Craig (R) of Idaho, and Lisa Murkowski (R) of Alaska has introduced several pieces of legislation designed to scale back the Patriot Act. **The legislation is endorsed by an ideologically diverse coalition of Washington interest groups ranging from the conservative Americans for Tax Reform to the liberal People for the American Way.**

Patriot Act Opponents Say Law Endangers Rights

by Peter Brownfeld, *Fox News*, September 11, 2003

If the "pre-emptive-strike philosophy" embodied in the Patriot Act as well as the Department of Homeland Security's Computer Assisted Passenger Screening System continues, the result could be **devastating to civil liberties**, said **Bob Barr, a former Republican U.S. representative** from Georgia and **a leading critic of the Patriot Act.**

"If in fact that approach is allowed to stand through the Patriot Act and other things, we will effectively have eviscerated the 14th Amendment because we will allow the government to gather evidence of people without suspecting a crime," **Barr**, now chairman of the **American Conservative Union Foundation's 21st Century Center for Privacy and Freedom**, told Foxnews.com.

What can you do?

Sign a petition and Mail a Postcard to request your County Legislator to pass a resolution to Defend the Bill of Rights!

Petition form and postcard can be downloaded from www.rocklandaction.org

