



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on August 22, 2012

Former Marine Held in Psychiatric Hospital Over Facebook Posts Questioning Govt.

“The police state is here.”

Thus spoke John Whitehead, president of the Rutherford Institute, in reference to the arrest and involuntary commitment of former U.S. Marine Brandon J. Raub (pictured) of Chesterfield County, Virginia. On August 16, Raub was visited at his home by Federal Bureau of Investigation agents and Chesterfield County police because of alleged complaints about Raub’s Facebook posts, many of which questioned the received wisdom from Washington, D.C., and a few of which suggested violence. According to the [Rutherford Institute](#), which is defending Raub, police and FBI agents “did not provide Raub with a search warrant,” but he nevertheless “was cooperative and agreed to speak with them.”



“Without providing any explanation, levying any charges against Raub or reading him his rights, law enforcement officials then handcuffed Raub and transported him first to the police headquarters, then to John Randolph Medical Center, where he was held against his will,” wrote the Institute.

Chesterfield County Police Chief Col. Theirry Depuis told the Associated Press that Raub was detained “upon the recommendation of mental health crisis intervention workers,” who apparently considered dangerous the Marine sergeant who served honorably in Iraq and Afghanistan and who, according to Richmond television station [WTVR](#), has a “clean” criminal history and “no mental health history.” Under Virginia’s emergency custody statute, an individual can be subjected to civil detention and psychiatric evaluation if he is considered a threat to himself or others.

At a hearing before a special justice on August 20, Raub was asked about his Facebook posts.

“He had an opportunity to share and respond to the questions being asked him about his Facebook posts,” his mother, Cathleen Thomas, told WTVR. “He responded and explained himself, and the judge also allowed me to give some facts and basically a character representation of my son, which I did. And then he proceeded to read the (mental health) evaluation that was given on Brandon. The evaluation, I was told by my son, was 15 minutes long, and basically the evaluator said that he was not ready to go back into society and he needed additional psychiatric treatment.”

And with that, the special justice ordered Raub’s continued detention at a Veterans Administration hospital for up to 30 more days.

“For government officials to not only arrest Brandon Raub for doing nothing more than exercising his First Amendment rights but to actually force him to undergo psychological evaluations and detain him against his will goes against every constitutional principle this country was founded upon. This should



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be a wake-up call to Americans that the police state is here,” Whitehead said. “Brandon Raub is no different from the majority of Americans who use their private Facebook pages to post a variety of content, ranging from song lyrics and political hyperbole to trash talking their neighbors, friends and government leaders.”

Indeed, as WTVR noted, “Raub’s postings seem no different than those questioning the government’s version of the 9/11 [attacks] or the role of the Federal Reserve. He believes the government is corrupt and ready to fall, which is why he has a home business dealing in silver coins.”

A November 2011 post entitled [“The Truth”](#) that Thomas supplied to WTVR bears out these assertions. “America has lost itself,” Raub begins. He lays out a positive vision of the United States:

This is the land where you can start from the bottom and get to the top. This is the land where regardless of you [sic] race and ethnicity you can succeed and build a better life for you and your family. This is the land where every race coexists peacefully. This is the land where justice wins. This is the land where liberty dwells. This is the land where freedom reigns. This is the land where we help the poor, and people help each other. This is [the] land where people beat racism.

Then he lists those things he believes have sent America down the wrong path: the Federal Reserve, the income tax, the wars and empire-building, the “systematic[] dismantl[ing]” of the Bill of Rights; 9/11 (an “inside job” by the government, in his opinion) and all that followed from it; politicians beholden to special interests and “brainwashed through the Council on Foreign Relations.”

“There is hope,” Raub concludes. “WE MUST TAKE OUR REPUBLIC BACK.”

In the entire missive, there is not one suggestion of violent revolution. In fact, he very specifically denounces the use of force. (His brother, Brent Raub, told WTVR that Brandon “doesn’t even own a gun.”)

Authorities have released a couple of examples of Raub’s posts that suggest violence. At least one of them — “Sharpen my axe; I’m here to sever heads” — comes from a rap song. Others were “trash talk” among friends playing an online game, Raub told the special justice.

“The posts I read that supposedly were of concern were libertarian-type posts I see all the time,” Whitehead told the AP.

So why was the FBI investigating run-of-the-mill online speech, and why has Raub been committed to a psychiatric hospital for a month because of it?

“We received quite a few complaints about what were perceived as threatening posts,” FBI spokeswoman Dee Rybiski told the AP. “Given the circumstances with the things that have gone on in the country with some of these mass shootings, it would be horrible for law enforcement not to pay attention to complaints.”

Whitehead wasn’t buying it. He told the AP that “some of the posts in question were made on a closed Facebook page that Raub had recently created so he questioned whether anyone from the public would have complained about them.” In his opinion, adds the news service, the government may well be “monitoring citizens’ private Facebook pages and detaining people with whom they disagree.”

Even worse, those who get on the government’s bad side can end up being sent to mental hospitals until they come around to the “correct” opinions. As [Christopher Manion](#) observed on the LewRockwell.com blog: “Be sure to re-read *1984*, especially O’Brien’s ‘medicating’ of Winston in the Ministry of Love, and *Cancer Ward*, Solzhenitsyn’s account of the psychiatric torture that political prisoners endured under



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the Soviet system.”

Fortunately, Raub’s plight has generated a great deal of outrage among informed Americans. Cellphone [video](#) of his cuffing and stuffing — not an “arrest,” authorities insist, though there’s no other way to describe it — quickly went viral. As of this writing, the [Support Brandon Raub](#) Facebook group has over 8,000 members. Internet commentary about Raub’s situation has been overwhelmingly in his favor. Even some who disagree with Raub’s sentiments, including one “lifelong progressive” with “Marxist tendencies” at [DailyKos.com](#), are disturbed by his treatment.

“Our views are very strong because we are patriots,” Thomas told WTVR. “Our stance in this family is to question everything ... when we lose the right to be able to stand up and say how we feel, no matter what it’s about, I think that we need to be very concerned. Because what it speaks to me is that they’re trying to shut people up. They’re trying to squelch the message.”

With family, friends, and much of the public on Raub’s side, his message of liberty will not easily be squelched.

Photo: Brandon J. Raub



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