



# State of War: The Secret History of the C.I.A. and the Bush Administration

*James Risen*

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## **State of War: The Secret History of the C.I.A. and the Bush Administration** James Risen

With relentless media coverage, breathtaking events, and extraordinary congressional and independent investigations, it is hard to believe that we still might not know some of the most significant facts about the presidency of George W. Bush. Yet beneath the surface events of the Bush presidency lies a secret history -- a series of hidden events that makes a mockery of current debate.

This hidden history involves domestic spying, abuses of power, and outrageous operations. It includes a CIA that became caught in a political cross fire that it could not withstand, and what it did to respond. It includes a Defense Department that made its own foreign policy, even against the wishes of the commander in chief. It features a president who created a sphere of deniability in which his top aides were briefed on matters of the utmost sensitivity -- but the president was carefully kept in ignorance. *State of War* reveals this hidden history for the first time, including scandals that will redefine the Bush presidency.

James Risen has covered national security for *The New York Times* for years. Based on extraordinary sources from top to bottom in Washington and around the world, drawn from dozens of interviews with key figures in the national security community, this book exposes an explosive chain of events:

- Contrary to law, and with little oversight, the National Security Administration has been engaged in a massive domestic spying program.
- On such sensitive issues as the use of torture, the administration created a zone of deniability: the president's top advisors were briefed, but the president himself was not.
- The United States actually gave nuclear-bomb designs to Iran.
- The CIA had overwhelming evidence that Iraq had no nuclear weapons programs during the run-up to the Iraq war. They kept that information to themselves and didn't tell the president.
- While the United States has refused to lift a finger, Afghanistan has become a narco-state, supplying 87 percent of the heroin sold on the global market.

These are just a few of the stories told in *State of War*. Beyond these shocking specifics, Risen describes troubling patterns: Truth-seekers within the CIA were fired or ignored. Long-standing rules were trampled. Assassination squads were trained; war crimes were proposed. Yet for all the aggressiveness of America's spies, a blind eye was turned toward crucial links between al Qaeda and Saudi Arabia, among other sensitive topics.

Not since the revelations of CIA and FBI abuses in the 1970s have so many scandals in the intelligence community come to light. More broadly, Risen's secret history shows how power really works in George W. Bush's presidency.

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