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John Cusack: Barack Obama is 'as bad or worse' than George W Bush

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John Cusack, the actor, writer and – increasingly – political pundit, has said [Barack Obama](#) is “as bad or worse” than George W Bush when it comes to issues such as the NSA, freedom of the press, civil liberties and drone strikes.

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“Obama has extended and hardened the cement on a lot of Bush’s post-9/11 Terror Inc policies, so he’s very similar to Bush in every way that way,” [he told the Daily Beast](#).

“He hasn’t started as many wars, but he’s extended the ones we had, and I don’t even think Dick Cheney or Richard Nixon would say the president has the right to unilaterally decide whom he can kill around the world.”

Cusack, who has described Obama’s domestic social policy as [“much better”](#), has been a vocal opponent of the president’s foreign policy for much of his term in office. In 2012, he published an interview with Jonathan Turley, professor of law at the George Washington University law school, which he prefaced with his thoughts on US military intervention in Afghanistan and drone strikes in Pakistan.

“One is forced to ask the question: is the president just another Ivy League asshole shredding civil liberties and due process and sending people to die in some shithole for purely political reasons?” he wrote.

The actor has long been a champion of press freedom and [sits on the board of the non-profit Freedom of the Press Foundation](#). One of his fellow board members is the NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden. Closer to home, he has attacked the film industry for its attitude towards female stars, describing Hollywood as “a whorehouse”.

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“I have actress friends who are being put out to pasture at 29,” [he told the Guardian last year](#). “They just want to open up another can of hot 22. It’s becoming almost like kiddie porn. It’s fucking weird.”

Cusack next appears in *Love & Mercy*, a biopic of the Beach Boys’ Brian Wilson, directed by Bill Pohlad. Paul Dano plays Wilson in the midst of recording the group’s seminal album, *Pet Sounds*, and Cusack plays him in later life, when he was isolated following drug rehab and under the powerful influence of his abusive therapist Eugene Landy.

• [Read a review of Love & Mercy](#)

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