

Merry Privacy Devoid Xmas -- The Surveillance State on Steroids

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The Deep State's Christmas Present to America: Surveillance That Never Ends

"Section 702 gives the government access to the very content of your conversations (phone calls, text messages, video chats), your photographs, your emails. As Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., [warned](#), "This is not just who you send it to, but what's in it."

This reach on citizens without the need of warrants is clearly over the top; however, as has been known from generation to generation, freedom is never bestowed, it is won from bitter and hard fought struggle, history is my witness. So is a slave fit for his/her chains or is America really free? A rhetorical question, as America is clearly a nation of spineless SLAVES, today's Big Brother REALITY is my witness!

Just in time for Christmas [planned], the Deep State wants to give America the gift that keeps on giving: never-ending mass surveillance.

I'm not referring to the kind of surveillance carried out by that all-knowing and all-seeing Jolly Old St. Nick and his informant the Elf on the Shelf (although, to be fair, they have helped to acclimate us to a world in which we're always being watched and judged by higher authorities).

No, this particular bit of Yuletide gift-giving comes courtesy of the Deep State (a.k.a. the Surveillance State, Police State, Shadow Government and black-ops spy agencies)

If this power-hungry cabal gets its way, the government's power to spy on its citizens will soon be all-encompassing and permanent.

As it now stands, Section 702 of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act—the legal basis for two of the National Security Agency's largest mass surveillance programs, "PRISM" and "Upstream"—is set to expire at the end of 2017.

"PRISM" lets the NSA access emails, video chats, instant messages, and other content sent via Facebook, Google, Apple and others. "Upstream" lets the NSA worm its way into the internet backbone—the cables and switches owned by private corporations like AT&T that make the internet into a global network—and scan traffic for the communications of tens of thousands of individuals labeled "targets."

Just as the USA Patriot Act was perverted from its original intent to fight terrorism abroad and was used instead to covertly crack down on the American people (allowing government agencies to secretly track Americans' financial activities, monitor their communications, and carry out wide-ranging surveillance on them), Section 702 has been used as an end-run around the Constitution to allow the government to collect the actual content of Americans' emails, phone calls, text messages and other electronic communication without a warrant.

Under Section 702, the government collects and analyzes over 250 million internet communications every year. There are estimates that at least half of these contain information about U.S. residents,

many of whom have done nothing wrong. This information is then shared with law enforcement and “routinely used for purposes unrelated to national security.”

Mind you, this is about far more than the metadata collection that Edward Snowden warned us about, which was bad enough. Section 702 gives the government access to the very content of your conversations (phone calls, text messages, video chats), your photographs, your emails. As Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., warned, “This is not just who you send it to, but what’s in it.”

Unfortunately, Big Brother doesn’t relinquish power easily.

The Police State doesn’t like restrictions.

And the Surveillance State certainly doesn’t look favorably on anything that might weaken its control. Even after Congress limited the NSA’s ability to collect bulk phone records, the agency continued to do so, vacuuming up more than 151 million records of Americans’ phone calls last year alone.

A government that doesn’t heed its constituents, doesn’t abide by the law, and kowtows to its police and military forces? That’s a dictatorship anywhere else.

Here in America, you can call it “technotyranny,” a term coined by investigative journalist James Bamford to refer to an age of technological tyranny made possible by government secrets, government lies, government spies and their corporate ties.

Beware of what you say, what you read, what you write, where you go, and with whom you communicate, because it will all be recorded, stored and used against you eventually, at a time and place of the government’s choosing. Privacy, as we have known it, is dead.

For all intents and purposes, we now have a fourth branch of government.

This fourth branch came into being without any electoral mandate or constitutional referendum, and yet it possesses superpowers, above and beyond those of any other government agency save the military. It is all-knowing, all-seeing and all-powerful. It operates beyond the reach of the president, Congress and the courts, and it marches in lockstep with the corporate elite who really call the shots in Washington, DC.

The government’s “technotyranny” surveillance apparatus has become so entrenched and entangled with its police state apparatus that it’s hard to know anymore where law enforcement ends and surveillance begins.

The short answer: they have become one and the same entity.

The police state has passed the baton to the surveillance state.

Having already transformed local police into extensions of the military, the Department of Homeland Security, the Justice Department and the FBI are preparing to turn the nation’s soldier cops into techno-warriors, complete with iris scanners, body scanners, thermal imaging Doppler radar devices, facial recognition programs, license plate readers, cell phone Stingray devices and so much more.

This is the new face of policing in America.

Enter big data policing which gives the nation's 17,000 police agencies access to a growing "investigative" database that maps criminal associates and gangs, as well as their social and familial connections.

As Slate reports, "These social network systems, which target 'chronic offenders,' also include information about innocent associates, family members, and friends, creating extensive human maps of connections and patterns of contacts." Those individuals then get assigned a threat score to determine their risk of being a perpetrator or victim of a future crime.

In Chicago, for example, "individuals with the highest scores on the Chicago Police Department 'heat list' get extra attention in the form of home visits or increased community surveillance."

In Baltimore, police are using Cessna planes equipped with surveillance systems to film entire segments of the city, then combining that footage with police reports in order to "map the comings and goings of everyone—criminals and innocents alike."

In this way, big data policing not only expands Big Brother's reach down to the local level, but it also provides local police—most of whom know little about the Constitution and even less about the Fourth Amendment—with a new technological weapon to deploy against an unsuspecting public.

The end result is pre-crime, packaged in the guise of national security but no less sinister.

All of those individuals who claim to be unconcerned about government surveillance because they have nothing to hide, take note: pre-crime policing—given a futuristic treatment in Steven Spielberg's *Minority Report*—aims to treat you like a criminal before you've ever even committed a crime.

This hasn't fazed President Trump who, much like his predecessors, has thus far marched in lockstep with the dictates of the police state.

For months, the Trump Administration has been actively lobbying Congress to reauthorize Section 702 in its entirety. Now, according to *The Intercept*, Trump is actively considering a proposal to establish his own global, private spy network that would circumvent official U.S. intelligence agencies and answer directly to the White House.

If approved, this would be yet another secret government agency carrying out secret surveillance and counterintelligence, funded by a secret black ops budget that by its very nature does away with transparency, bypasses accountability and completely eludes any form of constitutionality.

According to *The Washington Post*, there are more than a dozen "black budget" national intelligence agencies already receiving more than \$52.6 billion in secret government funding. Among the top five black ops agencies currently are the CIA, the NSA, the National Reconnaissance Office, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Program, and the General Defense Intelligence Program.

A significant chunk of that black ops money has been flowing to Silicon Valley since before there was an internet, itself a creation of the military/security industrial complex.

Earlier this year, Amazon announced that it would be storing classified information for U.S. spy agencies in its digital cloud, part of a \$600 million contract with the nation's intelligence agencies.

Two decades earlier, America's spy agencies tapped Silicon Valley to spearhead research into ways

of tracking individuals and groups online. That research, as documented by Jeff Nesbit, the former director of legislative and public affairs at the National Science Foundation, culminated in the creation of a massive public-private surveillance state that hinged on a partnership between the NSA, the CIA and Google.

“The research arms of the CIA and NSA hoped that the best computer-science minds in academia could identify what they called ‘birds of a feather,’” writes Nesbit. He continues:

Their research aim was to track digital fingerprints inside the rapidly expanding global information network, which was then known as the World Wide Web... By working with emerging commercial-data companies, their intent was to track like-minded groups of people across the internet and identify them from the digital fingerprints they left behind, much like forensic scientists use fingerprint smudges to identify criminals. Just as “birds of a feather flock together,” they predicted that potential terrorists would communicate with each other in this new global, connected world—and they could find them by identifying patterns in this massive amount of new information. Once these groups were identified, they could then follow their digital trails everywhere.

The problem, of course, is that the government always sets its sights higher.

It wasn’t long before the government’s search for criminal “birds of a feather”—made much easier with the passage of the USA Patriot Act—lumped everyone together and treated all of the birds (i.e., the public) as criminals to be identified, tracked, monitored and subjected to warrantless, suspicionless surveillance.

Fast forward to the present moment when, on any given day, the average American is now monitored, surveilled, spied on and tracked in more than 20 different ways by both government and corporate eyes and ears.

Every second of every day, the American people are being spied on by the U.S. government’s vast network of digital Peeping Toms, electronic eavesdroppers and robotic snoops.

Whether you’re walking through a store, driving your car, checking email, or talking to friends and family on the phone, you can be sure that some government agency is listening in and tracking you. This doesn’t even begin to touch on the complicity of the corporate sector, which buys and sells us from cradle to grave, until we have no more data left to mine. These corporate trackers monitor your purchases, web browsing, Facebook posts and other activities taking place in the cyber sphere and share the data with the government.

Just about every branch of the government—from the Postal Service to the Treasury Department and every agency in between—now has its own surveillance sector, authorized to collect data and spy on the American people. Then there are the fusion and counterterrorism centers that gather all of the data from the smaller government spies—the police, public health officials, transportation, etc.—and make it accessible for all those in power.

These government snoops are constantly combing through and harvesting vast quantities of our communications, then storing it in massive databases for years. Once this information—collected illegally and without any probable cause—is ingested into NSA servers, other government agencies can often search through the databases to make criminal cases against Americans that have nothing to do with terrorism or anything national security-related. One Justice Department lawyer called the database the “FBI’s ‘Google.’”

In other words, the NSA, an unaccountable institution filled with unelected bureaucrats, operates a massive database that contains the intimate and personal communications of countless Americans and makes it available to other unelected bureaucrats.

Talk about a system rife for abuse.

Ask the government why it's carrying out this warrantless surveillance on American citizens, and you'll get the same Orwellian answer the government has been trotting out since 9/11 to justify its assaults on our civil liberties: to keep America safe.

Yet warrantless mass surveillance by the government and its corporate cohorts hasn't made America any safer. And it certainly isn't helping to preserve our freedoms. Frankly, America will never be safe as long as the U.S. government is allowed to shred the Constitution.

Now the government wants us to believe that we have nothing to fear from its mass spying program because they're only looking to get the "bad" guys who are overseas.

Don't believe it.

The government's definition of a "bad" guy is extraordinarily broad, and it results in the warrantless surveillance of innocent, law-abiding Americans on a staggering scale. They are conducting this mass surveillance without a warrant, thus violating the core principles of the Fourth Amendment which protects the privacy of all Americans.

Warrantless mass surveillance of American citizens is wrong, un-American, and unconstitutional.

Clearly, the outlook for reforming the government's unconstitutional surveillance programs does not look good.

As I make clear in my book *Battlefield America: The War on the American People*, whenever the rights of the American people are pitted against the interests of the military/corporate/security complex, "we the people" lose. Unless Congress develops a conscience—or suddenly remembers that they owe their allegiance to the citizenry and not the corporate state—we're about to lose big.

It's time to let Section 702 expire or reform the law to ensure that millions and millions of Americans are not being victimized by a government that no longer respects its constitutional limits.

Mark my words: if Congress votes to make the NSA's vast spying powers permanent, it will be yet another brick in the wall imprisoning us within an electronic concentration camp from which there is no escape.

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[It should be obvious but must be here stated for the unaware. This pathological need to spy on everyone without restraint is a product of FEAR, yes, morbid fear! The deep state is terrified that the abused masses would one day turn on their exploiters and abusers; in actual fact the deep state's fear far exceeds that of the general population and that is saying something. So the solution to this outrageous government intrusion/oppression/repression becomes obvious. Take back and restore YOUR nation if you possess a fraction of the ability and courage of YOUR forebears. If not, then you deserve every nasty thing coming your way.]

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Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-3051.html>