

Police State USA: 15 Signs that We Live During a Time of Rampant Government Paranoia

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How does it feel to live under a government that is getting even more paranoid with each passing day? Yes, we live in a world that is becoming increasingly unstable, but that is no excuse for how ultra-paranoid the federal government has become. Today, every single one of us is viewed as a “potential threat” by the government. As a result, the government feels the need to intercept our emails, record our phone calls and track our expenditures. But they aren’t just spying on individuals. The government keeps tabs on thousands of organizations all over the planet, it spies on our enemies and our allies, and it even spies on itself. The American people are told that the emerging Big Brother police state is for our safety, but the truth is that it isn’t there to protect us. It is there to protect them. Our government has become kind of like a crazy rich uncle that is constantly spying on everyone else in the family because he believes that they are “out to get him”. The following are 15 signs that we live during a time of rampant government paranoia...

#1 Former CBS News reporter Sharyl Attkisson says that the federal government was so concerned about her reporting on Benghazi, Fast and Furious and other Obama scandals [that they hacked her computer](#), monitored every keystroke and even planted classified material in an apparent attempt to potentially frame her.

#2 The United States has become the nation of the “permanent emergency”. In fact, there has been at least one “state of emergency” in effect in this country [since 1979](#).

#3 In America today, almost everyone is considered to be a criminal. At this point, [nearly one out of every three Americans](#) has a file in the FBI’s master criminal database.

#4 Most people don’t realize this, but the FBI also [systematically records talk radio programs](#). The FBI says that it is looking for “potential evidence”.

#5 In Wisconsin, 24 armed police officers in an armored military vehicle were recently sent to collect a civil judgment from a 75-year-old retiree. It is being reported that officials feared that he might be [“argumentative”](#).

#6 According to guidelines that were recently made public, purchasing Amtrak train tickets with cash is considered to be [“suspicious activity”](#) and needs to be reported to the authorities.

#7 The IRS can now seize your bank accounts [on suspicion alone](#). If you are successful fighting the IRS in court, you might get your money back years later.

#8 Thousands of Americans have their mail spied on [by the U.S. Postal Service](#). If you are on “the list”, all of your mail and packages are shown to a supervisor before they are delivered to you.

#9 Most people don’t realize that the U.S. border is now considered to be a “Constitution-free zone” where officials can freely [grab your computer and copy your hard drive](#).

#10 The feds have apparently become extremely concerned about what all of us are saying on the Internet. In fact, they have even been caught [manipulating discussions on Reddit](#) and [editing Wikipedia](#).

#11 The U.S. government has become so paranoid that it even spies [on our European allies](#). Needless to say, our allies over in Europe are quite upset about this but we continue to do it.

#12 To the government, each citizen is a “potential threat”, and this justifies the militarization of our entire society. The following is an excerpt from an excellent commentary [by John Whitehead](#)...

Just take a stroll through your city’s downtown. Spend an afternoon in your local mall. Get in your car and drive to your parents’ house. Catch the next flight to that business conference. While you’re doing so, pay careful attention to how you and your fellow citizens are treated by government officials—the ones whose salaries you are paying.

You might walk past a police officer outfitted in tactical gear, holding an assault rifle, or drive past a police cruiser scanning license plates. There might be a surveillance camera on the street corner tracking your movements. At the airport, you may be put through your paces by government agents who will want to either pat you down or run scans of your body. And each time you make a call or send a text message, your communications will most likely be logged and filed. When you return home, you might find that government agents have been questioning your neighbors about you, as part of a “census” questionnaire. After you retire to sleep, you might find yourself awakened by a SWAT team crashing through your door (you’ll later discover they were at the wrong address), and if you make the mistake of reaching for your eyeglasses, you might find yourself shot by a cop who felt threatened.

Is this the behavior of a government that respects you? One that looks upon you as having inviolate rights? One that regards you as its employer, its master, its purpose for being?

I don’t think so. While this hyper-militarization of the government is being sold to the public as a means of preventing terrorism and maintaining national security, it is little more than a wolf in sheep’s clothing. In fact, as I document in my book [A Government of Wolves: The Emerging American Police State](#), what we are dealing with is a police state disguised as a benevolent democracy, a run-away government hyped up on its own power and afraid of its citizenry, whose policies are dictated more by paranoia than need.

#13 As our police departments have become militarized, SWAT team deployments have gone through the roof. As I wrote about [recently](#), there were only about 3,000 SWAT raids in the United States back in 1980. But today, there are [more than 80,000 SWAT raids per year](#) in this country.

#14 The federal government is so paranoid that it is actually spying on itself. The “Insider Threat Program” encourages federal employees to closely watch one another and to report [any hint of suspicious activity](#)...

The federal effort, called the Insider Threat Program, was [launched](#) in October 2011, and it certainly hasn’t diminished since Edward Snowden disclosed details of the National Security Agency’s [domestic spying](#). As McClatchy reporters Marisa Taylor and Jonathan S. Landay have [described](#), federal employees and contractors are encouraged to keep an eye on allegedly suspicious indicators in their co-workers’ lives, from financial troubles to divorce. A [brochure](#) produced by the Defense Security Service, titled “INSIDER THREATS: Combating the ENEMY within your organization,” sums up the spirit of the program: “It is better to have reported overzealously than never to have reported at all.”

#15 Last, but certainly not least, there is the matter of the NSA constantly spying on all of us. The NSA is monitoring and recording [billions of our phone calls and emails](#), and most Americans don’t seem to care. But they should care. I like how an article in [the New York Post](#) described what is happening to our society...

Through a combination of fear, cowardice, political opportunism and bureaucratic metastasis, the erstwhile land of the free has been transformed into a nation of closely watched subjects — a country of 300 million potential criminals, whose daily activities need constant monitoring.

Once the most secret of organizations, the NSA has become even more famous than the CIA, the public face of Big Brother himself. At its headquarters on Savage Road in Fort Meade, Md., its omnivorous Black Widow supercomputer hoovers up data both foreign and domestic, while its new \$2 billion data center near Bluffdale, Utah — the highly classified Intelligence Community Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative Data Center — houses, well, just about everything. As James Bamford wrote in Wired magazine two years ago, as the center was being completed:

“Flowing through its servers and routers and stored in near-bottomless databases will be all forms of communication, including the complete contents of private e-mails, cellphone calls, and Google searches, as well as all sorts of personal data trails — parking receipts, travel itineraries, bookstore purchases, and other digital ‘pocket litter.’ ”

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