

Spying on America: NSA says, “trust me ...”

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“I don’t have anything to hide and so I don’t mind the government monitoring my conversations with others,” he smugly proclaimed.

Lie! This disingenuous attitude presuming to *know* daddy Government stems from dangerous jingoism or stupidity. The constitutional founders who conceived search warrants, due process, and safeguards from a government on probation didn’t have anything to hide either. But they knew about power and the inherent corruption potential of those acquiring it. Those who proclaim such trust in government are cousins of the old Soviet KGB snitches and of the same mold as your grade school tattletalers. Beware of these people as U.S. government spying, under the *guise* of our protection, reaches maturity.

Let’s clear away the Administration’s propagandic decoy that begs, *“the government must be able to monitor the enemy in order to protect our citizens,”* or *“this is war and we must do all that we can do to protect the people.”* Variations of the same grandiosity go on and on. It’s like selling bottled spring water promoting zero calories and caffeine!

1. Nobody argues the point of robust protection of our citizens.
2. Nobody’s against spying on the enemy.

The question, resulting in an impossible guaranteed protection of constitutional rights, is how do you let the *rodeo bull* pass through the china store without wrecking a great deal of the valuables, in this case a person’s property and that of which is *privacy*, implicitly provisioned in at least two U.S. Constitutional Amendments. President Bush’s courage and impetuous, prompted by some more intensely motivated, to exercise an arguable Executive power intercepting phone calls and emails, was the *Patriot Act*. If we’re allowed a peek into the final “Act,” the recent constitutional rape on ordinary rights afforded ordinary citizens is an award-winning preview.

Government employees, the “people” factor ...

We need to remember that whoever spies on us *is still* a government employee. All of that idiosyncratic baggage that comes with under worked, overpaid, inefficient, politically motivated, giant bureaucracies still exists, no matter how high-tech the infringement upon your private life and speech becomes. Things like quotas to turn in at least something at the end of the day, and one the more immediate corruptions of the Patriot Act by the mere fact

a federal employee is involved, is reasonable expectation. The temptation to create something out of nothing, i.e., busy work, pigeon-holed for use against you at an opportune time is a real concern. These people desire promotions like anybody else. It's not just computers data-mining on whoever's phone call or email brushes up against a specific algorithm. It's people analyzing and molding your words with their own agendas and fallible perspectives!

Although periodic reports to Congress, supposedly an accountability measure to keep the Patriot Act in check, would seem to control this sort of frivolous spying, it won't. Based upon past failures of massive government plans to squelch free speech, such as *Adam's Sedition Act*, Lincoln's order to shut down pro-South newspapers, *Wilson's Sedition Act*, and Americans imprisoned for merely studying Communism during the Cold War (*The Cold War and Red Scare in Washington State*, Michael Reese, University of Washington), makes dubious the Patriot Act's impact the War on Terror in a tangible way. Terrorists will simply resort to slower methods of communications, effective nonetheless.

Our burden is trusting a surreptitious *rodeo bull* comprised of the NSA, CIA, FBI, and in fact *all* collective law enforcement agencies thanks to the Patriot Act.

Of the 80 plus federal agencies and their 1.8 million employees, 15 agencies gather intelligence. While the employee number of those most secretive agencies is kept secret, a conservative estimate of well over 100,000 federal employees privy to a labyrinth of facts and interpretative conclusions on foreign and domestic persons is reasonable. Their *subjective interpretations and conclusions* erode our rights under the U.S. Constitution; a thing many erroneously believe is still a protected virgin of early America.

President Bush and supporters may be sincere but are sincerely wrong in looking at domestic spying as the options-end-of-the-road for protecting U.S. citizenry. May I refer the president and others to the voluminous documents of corruption within all levels of government, sometimes going decades unchecked and unaccounted?

Many argue that the U.S. Constitution doesn't give us the *right to privacy*, yet to actually realize that federally hired persons know what you say over your cell phone, emails, and can list your library preference *is* explicitly a form of prohibiting that "*free speech and expression*" stated in the First Amendment. Unreasonable searches and seizures of one's "*papers and effects*" articulated in the Fourth Amendment will be justified by a matured Patriot Act and hunting NSA. Deprivation of life, liberty, or property, outlined in the Fifth Amendment will be a bonus to the rodeo bull after judicially trampling your "speech and personal effects." Americans don't appreciate basic rights until they forfeit them to the complexity, by design, of political and legal manipulations.

We've been told of committees and procedures in place to protect our civil liberties in a post 911 world, yet the president's own people have leaked classified information to the press multiple times. What makes you think that your information and civil liberties will remain uncompromised?

In order for Americans to properly judge the ramifications of exchanging freedom for security, and a perceived one at that, realize that it's not just nameless agencies gathering mundane personal data, but accept the naked truth that *people* are scrutinizing your life, your words, and your relationships as sure as if they were looking into your window or

listening to you from the next room. Those *persons*, comprising the government, are not without their own biases, curiosities, ambitions, and corruptions. On one hand we have an insatiable federal bull wanting to know everything under a “*for our protection*” guise. On the other is the citizen struggling to trust his country’s constitution without need to consult and pay a constitutional lawyer to understand it. Who is the patriot?

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