

“The President’s Private Army”: NSA-CIA Spying is Central to Carrying Out the Obama Administration’s Assassination Program

By [Washington's Blog](#)

Global Research, September 29, 2013
[Washington's Blog](#)

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#),
[Intelligence](#)

Intelligence Agencies Central In Assassination Programs Carried out Without Oversight

We’ve previously documented that the NSA isn’t just passively spying like a giant peeping tom, but is [actively using that information in mischievous ways ... such as assassinations](#).

A lot more information is about to come out on the topic. AP [reports](#):

Two American journalists known for their investigations of the United States’ government said Saturday they’ve teamed up to report on the National Security Agency’s role in what one called a “U.S. assassination .”

Jeremy Scahill, a contributor to The Nation magazine and the New York Times best-selling author of “Dirty Wars,” said he will be working with Glenn Greenwald, the Rio-based journalist who has written stories about U.S. surveillance based on documents leaked by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden.

“The connections between war and surveillance are clear. I don’t want to give too much away but Glenn and I are working on a project right now that has at its center how the National Security Agency plays a significant, central role in the U.S. assassination program,” said Scahill

“Dirty Wars” the film, directed by Richard Rowley, traces Scahill’s investigations into the Joint Special Operations Command, or JSOC. The movie, which won a prize for cinematography at the Sundance Film Festival, follows Scahill as he hopscotches around the globe, from Afghanistan to Yemen to Somalia, talking to the families of people killed in the U.S. strikes.

JSOC , as well as the CIA, have been described as [“the President’s private army”](#), which operate at the President’s beck-and-call with no real oversight.

But a fourth agency is also centrally involved in both intelligence-gathering and assassinations: the [National Counterterrorism Center](#) (NCTC). NCTC is responsible for generating the “disposition matrix” of who to murder using drones or other means.

As Greenwald [noted](#) last year:

The ACLU [has long warned](#) that the real purpose of the NCTC ... is the “massive, secretive data collection and mining of trillions of points of data about most people in the United States” In particular, the NCTC operates a gigantic data-mining operation, in which all sorts of information about innocent Americans is systematically monitored, stored, and analyzed. This includes “records from law enforcement investigations, health information, employment history, travel and student records” – “literally anything the government collects would be fair game”. In other words, the NCTC – now vested with the power to determine the proper “disposition” of terrorist suspects – is the same agency that is at the center of the ubiquitous, unaccountable surveillance state aimed at American citizens.

Worse still, as the ACLU’s legislative counsel Chris Calabrese documented back in July [in a must-read analysis](#), Obama officials very recently abolished safeguards on how this information can be used. Whereas the agency, during the Bush years, was barred from storing non-terrorist-related information about innocent Americans for more than 180 days – a limit which “meant that NCTC was dissuaded from collecting large databases filled with information on innocent Americans” – it is now free to do so. Obama officials eliminated this constraint by authorizing the NCTC “to collect and ‘continually assess’ information on innocent Americans for up to five years”.

But don’t worry, the government would never assassinate Americans living on U.S. soil ... [would it?](#)

And even if it would, it would only consider truly bad guys to be terrorists ... [wouldn’t it?](#)

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