

ArmyTimes

Microchips implanted in humans: High-tech helpers, or Big Brother surveillance tools?

By Todd Lewan - The Associated Press

CityWatcher.com, a provider of surveillance equipment, attracted little notice itself — until a year ago, when two of its employees had glass-encapsulated microchips with miniature antennas embedded in their forearms.

The “chipping” of two workers with RFIDs — radio frequency identification tags as long as two grains of rice, as thick as a toothpick — was merely a way of restricting access to vaults that held sensitive data and images for police departments, a layer of security beyond key cards and clearance codes, the company said.

“To protect high-end secure data, you use more sophisticated techniques,” said Sean Darks, chief executive of the Cincinnati-based company. He compared chip implants to retina scans or fingerprinting. “There’s a reader outside the door. You walk up to the reader, put your arm under it, and it opens the door.”

Innocuous? Maybe.

But the news that Americans had, for the first time, been injected with electronic identifiers to perform their jobs fired up a debate over the proliferation of ever-more-precise tracking technologies and their ability to erode privacy in the digital age.

To some, the microchip was a wondrous invention — a high-tech helper that could increase security at nuclear plants and military bases, help authorities identify wandering Alzheimer’s patients, allow consumers to buy their groceries, literally, with the wave of a chipped hand.

To others, the notion of tagging people was Orwellian, a departure from centuries of history and tradition in which people had the right to go and do as they pleased without being tracked, unless they were harming someone else.

Chipping, these critics said, might start with Alzheimer’s patients or Army Rangers, but would eventually be suggested for convicts, then parolees, then sex offenders, then illegal aliens — until one day, a majority of Americans, falling into one category or another, would find themselves electronically tagged.

Thirty years ago, the first electronic tags were fixed to the ears of cattle, to permit ranchers to track a herd’s reproductive and eating habits. In the 1990s, millions of chips were implanted in livestock, fish, pets, even racehorses.

Microchips are now fixed to car windshields as toll-paying devices, on “contactless” payment cards (Chase’s “Blink,” or MasterCard’s “PayPass”). They’re embedded in Michelin tires, library books, passports and, unbeknownst to many consumers, on a host of individual items at Wal-Mart and Best Buy.

But CityWatcher.com employees weren’t appliances or pets: They were people, made scannable.

“It was scary that a government contractor that specialized in putting surveillance cameras on city streets was the first to incorporate this technology in the workplace,” says Liz McIntyre, co-author of “Spychips: How Major Corporations and Government Plan to Track Your Every Move with RFID.”

Darks, the CityWatcher.com executive, said his employees volunteered to be chipped. “You would think that we were going around putting chips in people by force,” he told a reporter, “and that’s not the case at all.”

Yet, within days of the company’s announcement, civil libertarians and Christian conservatives joined to excoriate the microchip’s implantation in people.

“Ultimately,” says Katherine Albrecht, a privacy advocate who specializes in consumer education and RFID technology, “the fear is that the government or your employer might someday say, ‘Take a chip or starve.’”

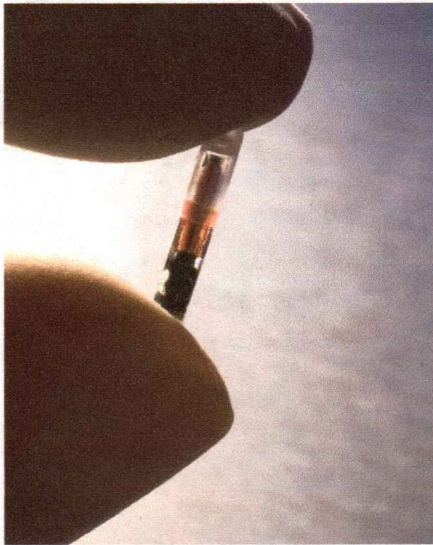
Some critics saw the implants as the fulfillment of a biblical prophecy that describes an age of evil in which humans are forced to take the “Mark of the Beast” on their bodies, to buy or sell anything. Others saw it as a big step toward the creation of a Big-Brother society.

“We’re really on the verge of creating a surveillance society in America, where every movement, every action — some would even claim, our very thoughts — will be tracked, monitored, recorded and correlated,” says Barry Steinhardt, director of the Technology and Liberty Program at the American Civil Liberties Union in Washington, D.C.

Microchip Implants Spur "Mark of the Beast" Bans in 2 States

By Jim Edwards | Feb 11, 2010

What hath **PositiveID** wrought: The company formerly known as **VeriChip** seems to be the inspiration for bills in Georgia and Virginia that would ban the mandatory implant of microchips in humans by employers or insurance companies. And the company's name is becoming increasingly associated with the "mark of the beast" mentioned in the Book of Revelation.



Backstory: PositiveID (PSID) makes implantable microchips, one of which — **Health Link** — contains a scannable code that can link to your online medical records. Christians, conservatives and privacy advocates believe the company, perhaps in conjunction with the government, will somehow find a way to require that all Americans carry an implanted chip. Some believe that such a chip would be the "mark of the beast" as prophesied in Revelation 13:16-18.

That's what one Virginia state delegate believes. The Washington Post:

Mark L. Cole (R-Fredericksburg), the bill's sponsor, said that privacy issues are the chief concern behind his attempt to criminalize the involuntary implantation of microchips. But he also said he shared concerns that the devices could someday be used as the "mark of the beast" described in the Book of Revelation.

Whether you believe any of this or not — the conspiracy theorists seem to forget that almost nobody actually wants their medical records linked to an implanted chip — the problem for

the guardian

The NDAA's historic assault on American liberty

By signing into law the NDAA, the president has awarded the military extraordinary powers to detain US citizens without trial



Jonathan Turley

guardian.co.uk, Monday 2 January 2012 11.50 EST

Article history



Do believe the hype, says Professor Turley: the NDAA, signed into law by President Obama on 31 December, authorises the US military to detain citizens indefinitely without trial. Photograph: Jacquelyn Martin/AP

President Barack Obama rang in the New Year by signing the NDAA law with its provision allowing him to indefinitely detain citizens. It was a symbolic moment, to say the least. With Americans distracted with drinking and celebrating, Obama signed one of the greatest rollbacks of civil liberties in the history of our country ... and citizens partied in unwitting bliss into the New Year.

Ironically, in addition to breaking his promise not to sign the law, Obama broke his promise on signing statements and attached a statement that he really does not want to detain citizens indefinitely (see the text of the statement here).

Obama insisted that he signed the bill simply to keep funding for the troops. It was a continuation of the dishonest treatment of the issue by the White House since the law first came to light. As discussed earlier, the White House told citizens that the president would not sign the NDAA because of the provision. That spin ended after sponsor Senator Carl Levin (Democrat, Michigan) went to the floor and disclosed that it was the White House and insisted that there be no exception for citizens in the indefinite detention provision.

The latest claim is even more insulting. You do not "support our troops" by denying the principles for which they are fighting. They are not fighting to consolidate authoritarian powers in the president. The "American way of life" is defined by our constitution and specifically the bill of rights. Moreover, the insistence that you do not

intend to use authoritarian powers does not alter the fact that you just signed an authoritarian measure. It is not the use but the right to use such powers that defines authoritarian systems.

The almost complete failure of the mainstream media to cover this issue is shocking. Many reporters have bought into the spin of the Obama administration as they did the spin over torture by the Bush administration. Even today, reporters refuse to call waterboarding torture despite the long line of cases and experts defining waterboarding as torture for decades.

On the NDAA, reporters continue to mouth the claim that this law only codifies what is already the law. That is not true. The administration has fought any challenges to indefinite detention to prevent a true court review. Moreover, most experts agree that such indefinite detention of citizens violates the constitution.

There are also those who continue the longstanding effort to excuse Obama's horrific record on civil liberties by blaming either others or the times. One successful myth is that there is an exception for citizens. The White House is saying that changes to the law made it unnecessary to veto the legislation. That spin is ridiculous. The changes were the inclusion of some meaningless rhetoric after key amendments protecting citizens were defeated. The provision merely states that nothing in the provisions could be construed to alter Americans' legal rights. Since the Senate clearly views citizens as not just subject to indefinite detention but even to execution without a trial, the change offers nothing but rhetoric to hide the harsh reality.

The Obama administration and Democratic members are in full spin mode – using language designed to obscure the authority given to the military. The exemption for American citizens from the *mandatory* detention requirement (section 1032) is the screening language for the next section, 1031, which offers no exemption for American citizens from the authorisation to use the military to indefinitely detain people without charge or trial.

Obama could have refused to sign the bill and the Congress would have rushed to fund the troops. Instead, as confirmed by Senator Levin, the White House conducted a misinformation campaign to secure this power while portraying the president as some type of reluctant absolute ruler, or, as Obama maintains, a reluctant president with dictatorial powers.

Most Democratic members joined their Republican colleagues in voting for this un-American measure. Some Montana citizens are moving to force the removal of these members who, they insist, betrayed their oaths of office and their constituents. Most citizens, however, are continuing to treat the matter as a distraction from the holiday cheer.

For civil libertarians, the NDAA is our Mayan moment: 2012 is when the nation embraced authoritarian powers with little more than a pause between rounds of drinks.

• This article was originally published on Jonathan Turley's blog and is crossposted by kind permission of the author

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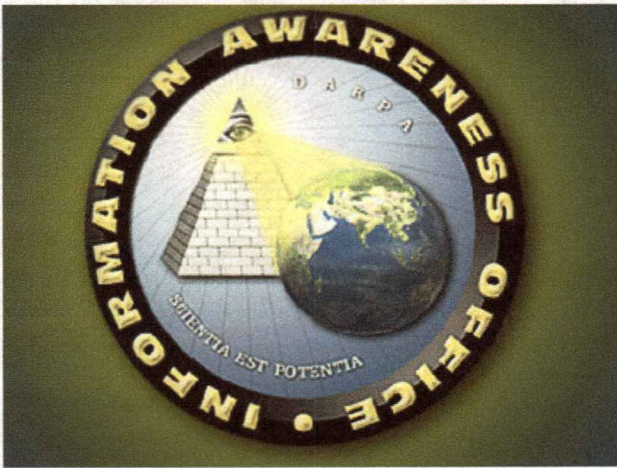
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Brainwashing America, Pentagon-style!

Published: 18 October, 2011, 23:57

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The Pentagon's DARPA agency is trying to figure out how propaganda works on the people.

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The Pentagon is about to crank the propaganda machine up to 11. According to a new report, the Department of Defense is attempting to find out what makes a person easily influenced in hopes of swaying them towards supporting their own causes.

In a report published this week by Wired.com's Danger Room, they reveal that Pentagon researchers working in its DARPA division has begun work on a program called Narrative Networks. Under this initiative, scientists in the high-tech Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency are scanning brain patterns and other body functions to see how stories shape the minds of audiences, and who is most vulnerable to be swayed by persuasion. From there, the DoD can counter brainwashed terrorists with an agenda of their own.

Or, perhaps, brainwash anyone they chose.

"The government is already trying to control the message, so why not have the science to do it in a systematic way?" a researcher close to the project told the Danger Room.

A neuroscience researcher involved in the project adds that scientists are specifically looking into how story-telling shapes the minds of listeners so that they can identify who is most vulnerable to the recruiting tactics of terrorists. In its first stages, the Narrative Networks projects aims to "explore the function narratives serve in the process of political radicalization and how they can influence a person or group's choice of means (such as indiscriminant violence) to achieve political ends." And to figure this out, they will be investigating the role that social media has on peoples' thinking process.

Do you "like" your friend's Facebook post? DARPA wants to know why. Soon after, they hope, you'll be giving them the

rt.com/usa/news/darpa-fast-pentagon-narrative-151/

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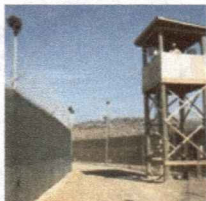
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Proposed Bill Will Turn Old Military Bases into FEMA Camps

THURSDAY, 29 JANUARY 2009 11:47 BY SHATTERED PARADIGM



FEMA Camp

For years, the mainstream has denied that the government was putting together a network of FEMA detention camps. But this new law would require that closed military bases be converted into Homeland Security "emergency centers".

On January 22nd, Representative Alcee Hastings [D-FL] introduced a new bill in the U.S. House of Representatives called the National Emergency Centers Act (also known as HR 645).

If Congress passes this bill, the Department of Homeland Security will be REQUIRED to establish national emergency centers (FEMA camps) on closed military bases.

For years, mainstream apologists have tried to deny that the government was putting together a network of FEMA detention camps across the United States. But now the wording of this new law would require that closed military bases be converted into Homeland Security "emergency centers". Just check out this language from the bill: "Wherever possible, the Secretary of Homeland Security, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, shall designate a closed military installation as a site for a national emergency center."

You can see the entire text of this new bill here:

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h111-645>

Let's take a look at some of the specific language in this bill.....

"In accordance with the requirements of this Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security shall establish not fewer than 6 national emergency centers on military installations."

This law would require that AT LEAST 6 FEMA camps be established on military installations around the United States. But it does not set a maximum. So the number of FEMA camps established under this law could be 6 or it could be 60.

"(4) to meet other appropriate needs, as determined by the Secretary of Homeland Security."

This language gives the Secretary of Homeland Security the authority to use these FEMA camps for any purpose that he or she wishes. That is a truly sobering thought.

".....capable of meeting for an extended period of time the housing, health, transportation, education, public works, humanitarian and other transition needs of a large number of individuals affected by an emergency or major disaster"

Note that the law would require that these FEMA camps be able to house (or imprison?) large populations for an extended period of time. There camps are not just being set up as command and control centers - they are being designed to hold "a large number of individuals".

".....capable of hosting the infrastructure necessary to rapidly adjust to temporary housing"

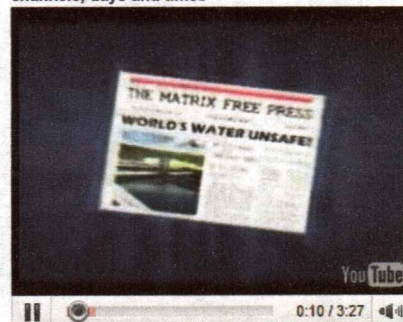
Once again we see that these FEMA camps specifically have the purpose of "housing" people.

(c) Location of National Emergency Centers- There shall be established not fewer than one national emergency center in each of the following areas:

- (1) The area consisting of Federal Emergency Management Agency Regions I, II, and III.
- (2) The area consisting of Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IV.
- (3) The area consisting of Federal Emergency Management Agency Regions V and VII.
- (4) The area consisting of Federal Emergency Management Agency Region VI.

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This Week's Guest

Kaayla Daniel and Matthew Alexander

Joke of the Day

Barack Obama held his first press conference as President. It was very different from press conferences held by George Bush.

**There were verbs.
There were syllables.
There were complete sentences...**

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'2012: What's in Store...'

Published: 26 December, 2011, 13:54

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Reuters / Kacper Pempel

TAGS: [Conflict](#), [Politics](#)

The Private Global Power Elite embedded in major governments is dead set on imposing World Government on us sooner rather than later. Let's look at 12 mega-processes – veritable “Triggers” – that we infer they are using to achieve their goals

All roads lead to World Government. This should come as no surprise. London's Financial Times openly articulated this vision in an article by their chief foreign affairs commentator, Gideon Rachman, published on 8 December 2009, whose title said all: “And Now for a World Government.” These goals are echoed by the Trilateral Commission, CFR and Bilderberg insiders, even by the Vatican.

Macro-managing planet Earth is no easy matter. It requires strategic and tactical planning by a vast think-tank network allied with major elite universities whereby armies of academics, operators, lobbyists, media players and government officers interface

all abundantly financed by the global corporate and banking superstructure.

They do this holistically, knowing that they operate on different stages moving at very different speeds:

- Financial Triggers move at lightning speed thanks to electronic information technology that can make or break markets, currencies and entire countries in just hours or days;
- Economic Triggers move slower: manufacturing cars, aircraft, food, clothes, building plants and houses takes months;
- Political Triggers tied to the "democratic system" put politicians in power for several years;
- Cultural Triggers require entire generations to implement; this is where PsyWar has reached unprecedented "heights".

Risk-managing this whole process takes into account the many pitfalls and surprises in store. So each plan in every field counts, with "Plan B's" – even Plans "C" and "D" – which can be implemented if needed.

Twelve Triggers for World Government

Today, the Global Power Elite are wrapping up globalization and ushering in World Government. Paraphrasing the tightrop walker in German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's "Thus Spake Zarathustra," this implies "....a dangerous crossing, a dangerous wayfaring, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous trembling and halting..."

These 12 Triggers are interlinked and interlocked in a highly complex, holistic matrix, very flexible in its tactics but rigidly unbending in its strategic objectives. When read as a whole, the picture that unfolds shows that whole being far more than sum of its parts.

1) Financial Meltdown. Since 2008, the Global Financial System continues on life-support. Ben Bernanke, Timothy Geithne and the US economic hit team – Robert Rubin, Larry Summers and Goldman Sachs, CitiGroup, JPMorganChase mega-bankers working with the Bank of England and the European Central Bank – have not and will not take any measures to help the populace and ailing economies. They just funnel trillions to the banking elite, imposing the media myth that certain banks are "too big to fail" (Orwellian Newspeak for "too damn powerful to fail"). Why? Because it's not governments overseeing, supervising and controlling Goldman Sachs, CitiCorp, HSBC, Deutsche Bank, JPMorganChase, but exactly the other way around...

2) Economic Crises. Today, "Destructive Extreme Capitalism" is collapsing national and regional economies, reformatting them into international slave-labour Gulag-like entities that Joseph Stalin would envy. Our woes lie not with the world's real economy (mostly intact), but with the fake world of finance, banks, and speculation;

3) Social Upheavals. Meltdowns in Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Iceland and – soon to come – Italy, Spain and others, trigger violent social uprisings, even in the US and UK;

4) Pandemics. Get ready for more "flu surprises" leading to mandatory vaccinations: a discreet opportunity to slip RFID chips into our bodies and test "intelligent viruses" targeting specific DNA strains. Racially and ethnically selective viruses as part of mass depopulation campaigns?

5) Global Warming. As the global economy sinks into zero growth mode, economic drivers shift from growth expansion to consumption contraction. Will coming "carbon credits" open the path to full societal control?

6) Terrorist "False Flag" Mega-Attacks. The Elite have this wildcard up their sleeve to jump-start new "crises" as short-cuts towards world government. Will new "attacks" dwarfing 9/11 justify further global wars, invasions and genocide? A nuclear weapon over a major city to be blamed on the Elite's "enemies"?

7) Generalized War in the Middle East. As we speak, naval forces, bombers, entire armies are poised to attack and invade Syria, Iran...

8) Ecological/Environmental "Accidents". The 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident sparked the beginning of the end of the for USSR by showing the world and the Soviets themselves that their State could no longer manage their own nuclear facilities. April 2010 saw the BP "Deepwater Horizon" oil rig eco-catastrophe in the Gulf of Mexico; since March 2011, Japan and the world have been grappling with a much larger nuclear accident in the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear complex. Was foul play involved?

9) Assassination of a major political or religious figure to be blamed on an Elite enemy. Mossad, CIA, MI6 are really good playing this type of dirty trick;

10) Attacks on "Rogue States" – Iraq, Libya... Who's next? Iran? Syria? Venezuela? North Korea?

11) Staged "Religious" Event. The growing need of the masses for meaning in their lives makes them easy victims of a Hollywood-staged, 3D virtual reality hologram show, orchestrating a "second coming". An electronically engineered "messiah figure" acting in sync with Elite global objectives? Who would dare go against God himself?

12) Staged "Alien Contact." This too may be in the works. For decades, large sectors of world population have been programmed to believe in aliens. Here too, hologram technology could stage a "space vehicle landing" – on the White House lawn, of course – highlighting the "need" for Mankind to have "unified representation" in the face of extraterrestrials. Further justification for world government?

What do such interlocking "crises" have in common? Global warming, pandemics, "international terrorism", financial collapse, economic depression, even alien contacts? They all serve to show that they cannot be addressed by any single nation state thus "justifying" the need for World Government.

2012: We must stay especially alert, understanding things the way they really are and not the way the global TV Masters want us to believe they are.

Adrian Salbuchi for RT

Adrian Salbuchi is a political analyst, author, speaker and radio/TV commentator in Argentina. www.asalbuchi.com.ar

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Cash is trash: Big American Brother gives hints on how to spot citizen terrorists

Published: 25 December, 2011, 08:09

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Edited: 25 December, 2011, 22:27

United States, Miami: Alain Filiz shows off some of his credit cards as he pays for items at Lorenzo's Italian Market on May 20, 2009 in Miami, Florida. (AFP Photo / Joe Raedle)

[\(12.9Mb\)](#)

TAGS: [Politics](#), [Terrorism](#), [Law](#), [Internet](#), [USA](#), [Katerina Azarova](#)

Do you own flashlights? Or pay with cash instead of a credit card? And do grocery shopping for the week? I do. You probably do – and guess what, according to the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI, that could make both of us terrorists

Recently, a Department of Homeland Security video has been making its way around the Internet; it tells people in no mixed terms that "paying cash is suspicious and weird." In an assertive, yet calm voice, the narrator tells viewers that, "if a patron appears nervous or anxious, or insists on paying cash, contact security personnel. This IS suspicious behavior."

So basically, if you've had a stressful day and don't have a credit card, you're done for.

This suggestion, and many others, has been sent out to hotels across the United States as part of the DHS' ongoing "See something, Say something" program. It even includes an 84-page manual, grandly titled, "Protective Measures Guide for the US Lodging Industry" – which points out that asking for privacy, among other things, is a red flag.

And that's really what this boils down to: a war on privacy. A potential terrorist, argue the US security agencies, is much easier to track if he uses a credit card. Credit card use provides Big Brother instant access to the buyer's contact information, purchase history – and, if need be, the ability to cut off his financial supply in an instant.

But the implementation of this idea is a rather grim prospect: instead of using an existing system to aid their efforts, agencies like the DHS and the FBI are effectively taking away the freedom of choice guaranteed in a supposedly free country.

Don't want to live on credit? Potential terrorist. Nervous? Potential terrorist. Don't want to be disturbed? Potential terrorist.

And it gets worse. In an FBI pamphlet distributed to military surplus stores, people who "make bulk purchases of items including weatherproofed ammunition or match containers, meals ready to eat or night vision devices including flashlights" should be reported. Because all those things are "potential indicators of terrorist activities."



BJA Bureau of Justice Assistance

FBI Federal Bureau of Investigation



Communities Against Terrorism

Potential Indicators of Terrorist Activities Related to Military Surplus Stores

What Should I Consider Suspicious?

People or Groups Who:

- Provide identification that is inconsistent or suspect or demands identity "privacy"
- Insist on paying with cash or uses credit card(s) in different name(s)
- Significantly alters appearance from visit to visit (shaving beard, changing hair color, style of dress, etc)
- Have missing hand/fingers, chemical burns, strange odors or bright colored stains on clothing
- Make racist or extreme religious statements coupled with comments that are violent or appear to condone violence
- Make suspicious comments regarding anti-US, radical theology vague or cryptic warnings that suggest or appear to endorse the use of violence in support of a cause
- Demonstrate interest in uses that do not seem consistent with the intended use of the item being purchased
- Possess little knowledge of intended purchase items
- Make bulk purchases of items to include:
 - Weatherproofed ammunition or match containers
 - Meals Ready to Eat
 - Night Vision Devices; night flashlights; gas masks
 - High capacity magazines
 - Bi-pods or tri-pods for rifles

It is important to remember that just because someone's speech, actions, beliefs, appearance, or way of life is different; it does not mean that he or she is suspicious.

To provide information contact:

Denver
Joint Terrorism Task Force
(303) 629-7171

Colorado Information
Analysis Center
(877)509-2422

What Should I Do?

Be part of the solution.

- ✓ Require valid ID from all new customers.
- ✓ Keep records of purchases.
- ✓ Talk to customers, ask questions, and listen to and observe their responses.
- ✓ Watch for people and actions that are out of place.
- ✓ Make note of suspicious statements, people, and/or vehicles.
- ✓ **If something seems wrong, notify law enforcement authorities.**

Do not jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.

Preventing terrorism is a community effort. By learning what to look for, you can make a positive contribution in the fight against terrorism. The partnership between the community and law enforcement is essential to the success of anti-terrorism efforts.

Some of the activities, taken individually, could be innocent and must be examined by law enforcement professionals in a larger context to determine whether there is a basis to investigate. The activities outlined on this handout are by no means all-inclusive but have been compiled from a review of terrorist events over several years.



This project was supported by Grant Number 2007-MJ-315-K002, awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. These and other listed above, if by itself, a civil offender or tortfeasor, may also constitute the exercise of rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. In addition, there may be a wholly innocent explanation for conduct or behavior that appears suspicious. For this reason, no single indicator should be the sole basis for law enforcement action. The totality of behavioral indicators and other relevant circumstances should be evaluated when considering any law enforcement response or action.

FBI Handout Lists Purchase of Preparedness Items as "Potential Indicators of Terrorist Activities" (image from www.oathkeepers.org)

Of course, people who, say, want to go camping, can make do without any of the aforementioned items. They can just take their credit cards, march right into the woods and make do that way. Or better yet, take the card, leave the woods and check into a hotel – smiling all the way, never locking the door and burning the "do not disturb" sign immediately upon arrival.

The helpful Bureau booklet also mentions "purchasing bipods or tripods for rifles" as dangerous. Not the rifles themselves – what's a lethal weapon between friends, right? No, in a country where almost anyone anywhere can buy firearms, people can worry when you buy a tripod for it.

And the absurdity doesn't end there. The agencies are going out of their way to instill fear into whoever they can, convincing them to report anything they deem suspicious. Of course, that includes sending a text message discreetly if you're in public. An unsuspecting, law-abiding citizen would obviously have to read his private messages or broadcast his phone calls out loud to be considered above-board. If he's whispering into his handset, however, the DHS is relying on its "citizen spies" to pick up and denounce the poor guy.

Right-wing political tendencies can also land you in trouble. Vice President Joe Biden recently likened Tea Party supporter terrorists. But go too far left – and you're right back where you started, with the whole might of the American security system breathing down your neck. If you align yourself with the 99% of the Occupy movement, you're not above suspicion either. Stories of undercover officers infiltrating various 'Occupy' camps across the country have been rife, CIA involvement has been hinted at – and the US' biggest ally, the United Kingdom, has officially equated the protesters to terrorists.

Add to this:

- Being a veteran. Not that America has that many veterans, of course, having been recent history's most peace-loving, non-invading, unbiased country.
- Owning a gun. Of course, not only is it legal to own a gun, most people in the country know full well how to use one.
- Owning precious metals. Because the dollar is worth so much nowadays, the government thinks there's something kooky about people wanting to invest in something other than US Treasury paper.

And then, of course, there are SOPA and PIPA. They might sound like a couple of cute cartoon names, but the two bills – Stop Online Piracy and Protect IP Acts – have caused huge concern in the States. Internet giants such as Google, Yahoo, Twitter likened the act to Chinese-style censorship.

There's also the infamous NDAA – or National Defense Authorization Act, which basically allows indefinite detention of terrorist suspects, including American citizens.

And if you look at what makes a potential suspect, you can pretty much expect to be waterboarded every time you answer the phone. Or buy too much food. Or a flashlight.

The irony of all this, of course, is that while the various agencies spin their citizen-spy web, they're overlooking the obvious. What they're doing is in conflict with the Second Amendment of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

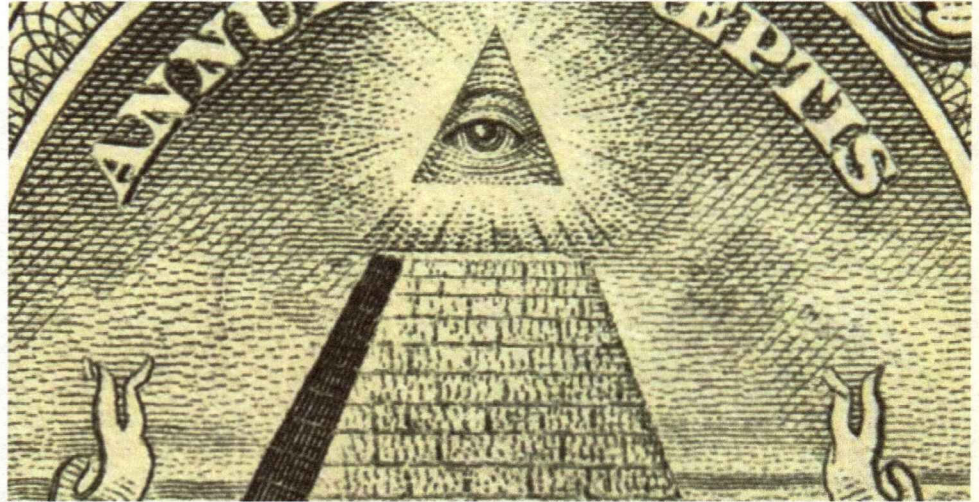
4 high-tech ways the federal government is spying on private citizens

By Tecca | Today in Tech — 6 hrs ago

One of the running jokes in the 1980s was how the former Soviet Union spied on its private citizens. As comedian Yakov Smirnoff used to joke: "In Soviet Russia, TV watches you!" But here in America, we were all safe from the prying eyes of the government.

Fast forward to 2012, when the U.S. government actually has the tools and capabilities to spy on all its citizens. These eyes go well beyond red light cameras. Right now,

the government is tracking the movements of private citizens by GPS, reading private citizens' emails, and possibly even reading what you're saying on Facebook. It does so all in the name of law enforcement and Homeland Security, of course — but whether or not that makes you feel safer is up to you.



Like it or not, the government is becoming increasingly watchful of everyone... even you

1. The NSA is building a massive data center in Utah to read every email you'll ever send.

Many of us are aware that little of what we say on social networks is really private. But you'd think your emails would be safe from prying eyes — especially those of your government. Not so, once the government completes work on a top-secret Utah data center reportedly built to spy on civilian communications.



Does a new Utah facility really monitor your emails?

The \$2 billion facility, slated to be complete by September 2013, is allegedly designed to be able to filter through yottabytes (10^{24} bytes) of data. Put into perspective, that's greater than the estimated total of all human knowledge since the dawn of mankind. If leaked information about the complex is correct, nothing will be safe from the facility's reach, from cell phone communications to emails to what you just bought with your credit card. And encryption won't protect you — one of the facility's priorities is breaking even the most complex of codes.

The good news (if there is any) is that the sheer volume of internet traffic and emails sent in a single day is far too much to be read by human eyes. Instead, the government will likely need to rely on complicated algorithms to assess each transmission and decide if they represent a security threat. So you're probably out of the government's earshot here... as long as you watch what you say.

2. The FBI maintains detailed files on numerous public, semi-public, and private figures.

Have you ever thought of taking a job with the government? If you value your privacy, think twice — the government runs incredibly extensive background searches on its high-profile applicants.

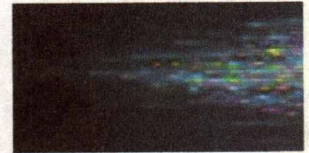
What kind of information does the government want from its applicants? Well, when former Apple CEO Steve Jobs was under consideration for a job with George H.W. Bush's administration in 1991, the FBI compiled a massive file on him.

Included in that file: the fact that Jobs had a 2.65 GPA, his history of marijuana and LSD usage, and his tendencies to "distort reality" and to "twist the truth" in order to achieve his goals.

Of course, Jobs is far from the only figure with an FBI file. Other public personalities [profiled by the FBI](#) include [John Lennon](#), Marilyn Monroe, Jimi Hendrix, and even Anna Nicole Smith. If you're curious about what goods the FBI has on you, you can always [submit a request](#) to view your own personal file. It is worth noting, of course, that the government doesn't profile everyone — just certain people of interest.

3. Homeland Security is reading your tweets and Facebook status messages.

Unless you play around with your Twitter and [Facebook privacy settings](#), just about anything you say is public. So it might not come as a surprise that the Department of Homeland Security is [seeking contractors](#) to build software and hardware capable of reading through what it calls "publicly available social media." Essentially, the government wants to read through your tweets and status messages to see if there's any information that might help in detecting threats.



Is your data out there for the taking?

There are some ground rules to the project. The government won't pose as a Twitter follower and won't accept or send any Facebook friend requests. Still, even with those restrictions, there's a lot of information floating out there for the feds to read, even if most of it is nonsense about [Justin Bieber](#).

4. Your ISP may soon be required to keep files on what sites you visit.

The idea sounds pretty far out there — a law that would require your internet service provider to keep constant tabs on you, along with detailed records of what websites you visited and when. But that's exactly what the Hawaii state legislature proposed this January with [H.B. 2288](#) and [companion bill S.B. 2530](#). The bill, sponsored by State Rep. John Mizuno (D), "requires internet service providers... keep consumer records for no less than two years." The bill then goes on to specify that these records must include "each subscriber's information and internet destination history information."

Thankfully, the bills' sponsors withdrew the offending legislation from debate. But the reason wasn't just public outcry. Also a factor was the fact that the U.S. House of Representatives is considering a similar bill titled [Protecting Children From Internet Pornographers Act](#). That bill, sponsored and written by Texas Republican Representative Lamar Smith, would mandate that commercial ISPs create logs of customers' names, bank information, and IP addresses. That information could later be used by attorneys seeking to prosecute in a criminal trial or even in civil cases and divorce trials.

Not much is private anymore

Between private companies [violating your privacy](#) and now the government, is there any way to avoid prying eyes? Not really, unless you make significant changes in the way you use the web. So before you send that next tweet or post that next Facebook status message, think about whether or not you'd be okay with a complete stranger looking at it — because that's very well what may happen.

[Image credits: [Hammer51012](#), [brewbooks](#)]

This article was written by [Fox Van Allen](#) and originally appeared on [Tecca](#)

More from [Tecca](#):

- [Internet Security Guide: Resources to keep you safe online](#)
- [Beginner's guide to Facebook privacy settings](#)
- [Twitter Guide: Everything you need to know to tweet like a pro](#)

The Washington Post

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U.S., British intelligence mining data from nine U.S. Internet companies in broad secret program

By Barton Gellman and Laura Poitras,

Published: June 6 | Updated: Friday,

June 7, 10:51 AM

The National Security Agency and the FBI are tapping directly into the central servers of nine leading U.S. Internet companies, extracting audio and video chats, photographs, e-mails, documents, and connection logs that enable analysts to track foreign targets, according to a top-secret document obtained by The Washington Post.

The program, code-named PRISM, has not been made public until now. It may be the first of its kind. The NSA prides itself on stealing secrets and breaking codes, and it is accustomed to corporate partnerships that help it divert data traffic or sidestep barriers. But there has never been a Google or Facebook before, and it is unlikely that there are richer troves of valuable intelligence than the ones in Silicon Valley.

Equally unusual is the way the NSA extracts what it wants, according to the document: "Collection directly from the servers of these U.S. Service Providers: Microsoft, Yahoo, Google, Facebook, PaTalk, AOL, Skype, YouTube, Apple."

London's Guardian newspaper reported Friday that GCHQ, Britain's equivalent of the NSA, also has been secretly gathering intelligence from the same internet companies through an operation set up by the NSA.

According to documents obtained by The Guardian, PRISM would appear to allow GCHQ to circumvent the formal legal process required in Britain to seek personal material such as emails, photos and videos from an internet company based outside of the country.

PRISM was launched from the ashes of President George W. Bush's secret program of warrantless domestic surveillance in 2007, after news media disclosures, lawsuits and the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court forced the president to look for new authority.

Congress obliged with the Protect America Act in 2007 and the FISA Amendments Act of 2008, which immunized private companies that cooperated voluntarily with U.S. intelligence collection. PRISM recruited its



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Classified docs reveal NSA's vast real-time warrantless Web surveillance

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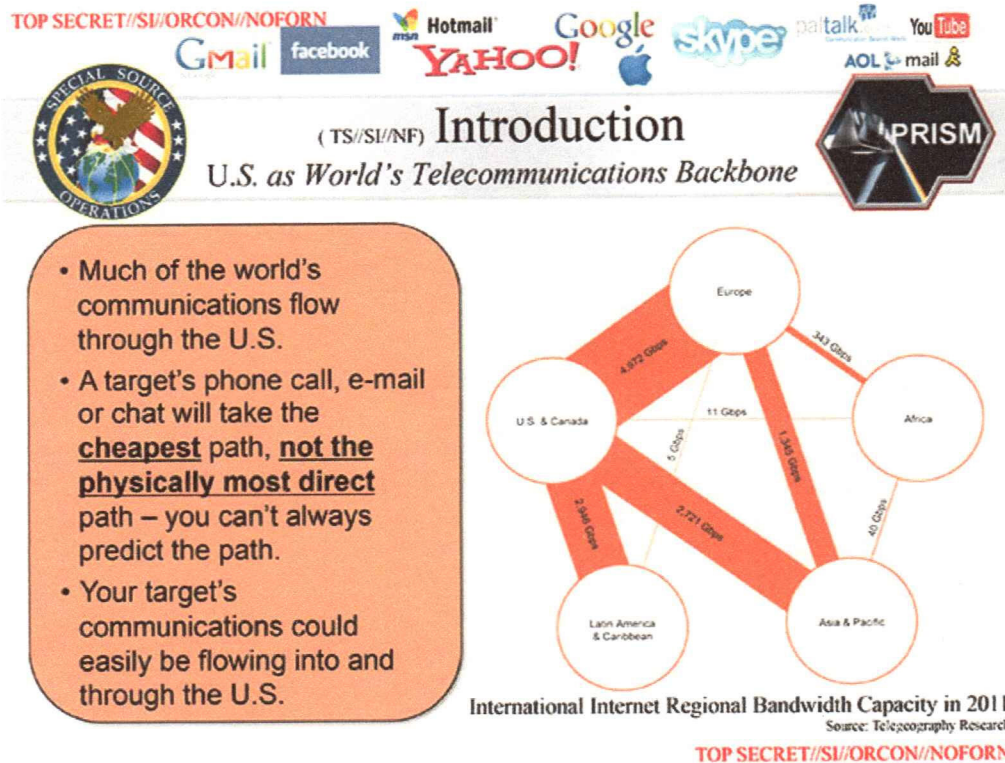
For seven years, the US National Security Agency (NSA) has been using a congressionally approved warrantless Web surveillance system with a near-limitless ability to spy on Americans' phone calls,

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The existence of the classified 'PRISM' surveillance program was revealed in simultaneous reports by the Washington Post and the Guardian. The Wall Street Journal also reported that the NSA is monitoring Web searches, credit card transactions and customer records from companies such as AT&T, Sprint and Verizon.

A leaked 41-page PowerPoint presentation, verified by both papers and published almost concurrently Thursday evening, outlines details of the previously undisclosed PRISM program. The slides were slated for declassification in 2036.



According to the documents, the program currently boasts access to some of the largest Internet companies in the world, with Microsoft thought to be the first corporation to sign onto the scheme in 2007. Microsoft was followed by Yahoo in 2008, Google, Facebook and PalTalk in 2009, YouTube in 2010, Skype and AOL in 2011, and Apple in 2012. Cloud storage company Dropbox is listed as "coming soon."

With the participation of those companies, PRISM – and therefore Washington intelligence workers – have access to the bulk of Americans' email, video and voice chat, videos, photos, voice-over-IP (Skype) chats, file transfers and social networking details.

Apple, Google, Yahoo, Microsoft and Facebook all made public

Confirmed: NSA collection of millions of phone records 'renewal of ongoing practice' 47

Top-secret court order reveals NSA's daily data collection on millions of Americans 98

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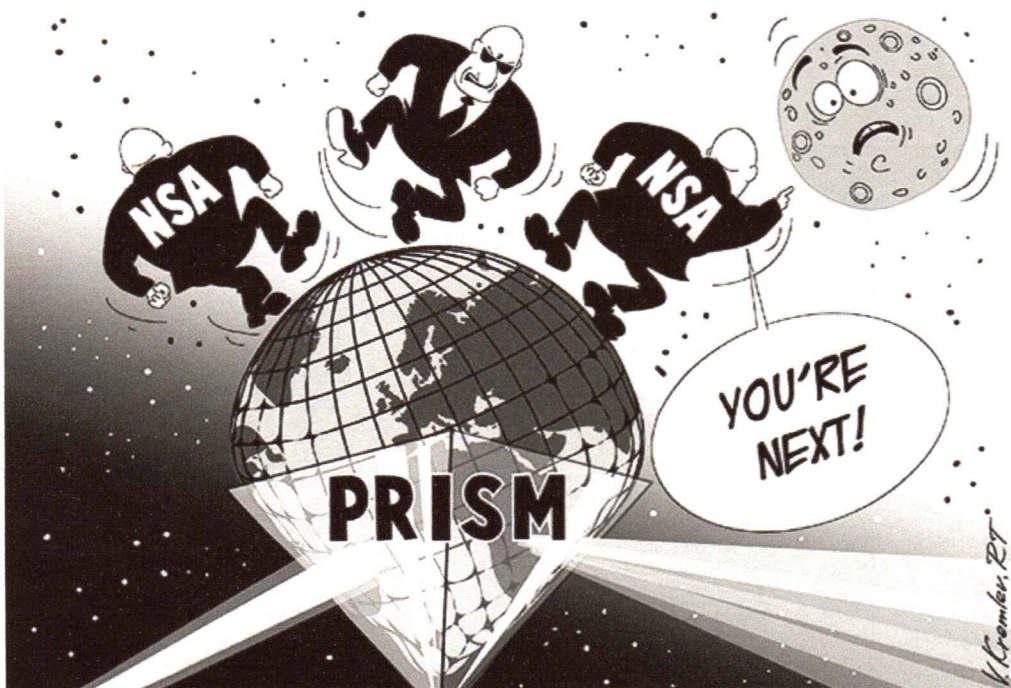
statements on Thursday that they had either never heard of or had not complied with PRISM by giving the program access to their servers.

"From time to time, people allege that we have created a government 'backdoor' into our systems, but Google does not have a 'backdoor,'" a Google spokesperson told CNBC.

"We have never heard of PRISM. We do not provide any government agency with direct access to our servers," Apple said.

"We do not provide any government organization with direct access to Facebook servers," Facebook chief security officer Joe Sullivan said in a statement.

In the leaked documents, the NSA lauds PRISM as *"one of the most valuable, unique and productive accesses for NSA."*



Vladimir Kremlev

Only targeting 'non-US persons outside the US?'

Speaking on condition of anonymity, a senior Obama administration official told Reuters on Thursday that the surveillance program only targeted non-citizens outside US territory.

"This program was recently reauthorized by Congress after extensive hearings and debate," the official said. "It involves extensive procedures, specifically approved by the court, to ensure that only non-US persons outside the US are targeted, and that minimize the acquisition, retention and dissemination of incidentally acquired information about US persons."

"Information collected under this program is among the most important and valuable intelligence information we collect, and is used to protect our nation from a wide variety of threats," he maintained.

In a **late-night statement**, Director of National Intelligence James Clapper called the disclosure of the PRISM program *"reprehensible,"* and said that its disclosure poses a risk to national security.

"The unauthorized disclosure of a top secret US court document threatens potentially long-lasting and irreversible harm to our ability to identify and respond to the many threats facing our nation," Clapper said. He also claimed that reports on PRISM contained numerous unspecified inaccuracies.

White House spokesperson Josh Earnest said on Thursday that the spy program is a *"critical tool in protecting the nation from terror threats."*

The House of Representatives reacted to the news by fervently defending the program. Representative Mike Rogers (R-MI), chair of the House Intelligence Committee, said the surveillance effort had prevented a *"significant"* attack within the United States, without going into specifics.

"It's called protecting America," Senate Intelligence Committee head Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) said.

"This is a program that's been in effect for seven years, as I recall," Democratic Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) said. *"It's a program that has worked to prevent not all terrorism but certainly the vast, vast majority. Now is the program perfect? Of course not."*

While politicians are indeed often subjected to criticism for not having *"anticipated the anticipatable,"* Washington frequently uses national security as a pretext for similar moves, insisting *"that it is critical and the world can't continue on unless it does it,"* Reason 24/7 managing editor JD Tuccille told RT.

"Even if you are not doing anything illegal, you may be doing something that can arouse government officials' interest and can be misused by them against you," Tuccille said. *"We all have something to hide. Our friends, our political associations, our finances."*

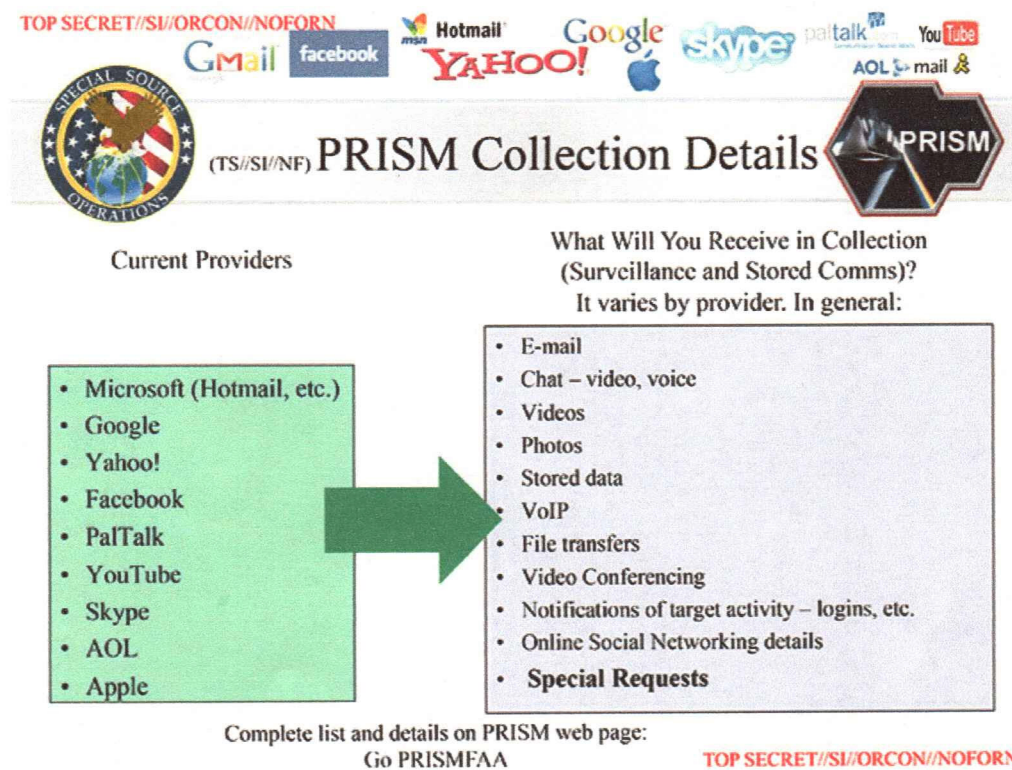
Claims that the NSA is not spying on Americans are *"absurd because anybody could potentially commit a terrorist act,"* journalist Russ Baker told RT. *"The reality is they're looking at all of us. They're trying to establish networks of communication but it's kind of ridiculous because*

you're looking for a needle in a haystack. You're looking at virtually the entire world trying to find just a handful of plots and, as we know, many of these plots turn out to be more complicated, with FBI informants involved right from the beginning."

While the Obama administration is known for responding to some scandals by dismissing them, this time the White House is using a different tactic, Joshua Holland of AlterNet said: *"They're basically saying 'we are protecting you.' I think they are counting on the fact that for many many Americans these things are not outrageous. They tend to accept less personal privacy in the name of the War on Terror."*

America has conducted aggressive surveillance operations within the country ever since the PATRIOT Act was passed in 2001, Dia Chakravarty of the Freedom Association told RT.

"There seems to be a huge gap between what we, the American citizens, think that the government is allowed to do and the government agencies' interpretation of what they are allowed to do," Chakravarty said. "And that gap is extremely undemocratic."



The PRISM presentation, which is classified as internal and intended for senior analysts within the NSA's Signals Intelligence Directorate, describes the program as the most prolific contribution to President Obama's daily briefing, which cited PRISM data in 1,477 articles in 2012.