

The War On Privacy

It is bad enough that the US has almost constantly been either waging or causing foreign wars throughout our history, fighting them with boots on the ground, fingers on the buttons, or proxies (other people's boots on the ground), but there are also metaphoric wars on a whole list of things.

The fact that they are not literally wars does not mean they are not serious, and not destructive and dangerous. We have Republicans waging a war on women, targeting their rights to control their own bodies.

There's the war on drugs, which the drugs are winning, the narcs profiting, and the people are losing.

Then we have the war on terror, which is both absurd and counterproductive. It serves to increase terror by keeping the fear levels high by exaggerating the danger of harm from actual terrorists. It also tends to recruit more terrorists every time one of them, or an innocent bystander, is killed or captured. Of course, this is how it perpetuates itself, to continue supporting the anti-terror industry. Keep Americans afraid, and keep pissing off the extremists.

Growing out of that war, but becoming one of its own, is the war on privacy. It amounts to massive violations of the 4th Amendment, exploiting all forms of electronic communications.

Knowing that this is occurring, some people wonder why privacy is important; why the authors of the Bill of Rights thought it was important enough to devote a whole Amendment to it. After all, they reason, if I'm not doing anything wrong, why should I care? That line of thinking could be applied to other freedoms as well. If you don't use your freedoms of speech, press, religion, and you're never accused of anything for which you would need a fair trial, why care about any of your rights?

Yet even people who may be apathetic about any or all of these liberties, when they are asked what is good about America, will say: *It's a free country*. Somehow the idea of being free, and feeling free, is important to almost everyone, even if they don't understand what freedom consists of and how we keep it.

For all of us who DO understand why freedom is important, we need to know exactly how it is being threatened and infringed. That is why we should be grateful to those heroes like Edward Snowden and Bradley Manning who took risks and made great sacrifices to reveal the truth, and to journalists using the free press to inform us all.

Two articles in the Washington Post explain a lot about what is being done.

[NSA slides explain the PRISM data-collection program](#)

'The top-secret PRISM program allows the U.S. intelligence community to gain access from nine Internet companies to a wide range of digital information, including e-mails and stored data, on foreign targets operating outside the United States. The program is court-approved but does not require individual warrants...Acquiring data from a new target: The supervisor must endorse the analyst's 'reasonable belief,' defined as 51 percent confidence, that the specified target is a foreign national who is overseas at the time of collection.'

So the safeguard for Americans is merely to require a slightly more than half-sure opinion of two NSA spies that ONE side of a conversation is from a foreigner. And we're expected to believe that even this loose criterion is always followed, trusting those whose job includes deceiving the American people.

Read the whole Post article: the graphic slides are helpful in understanding it. If you would like to download it and read it later: **[PDF VERSION](#)**

The other article reveals the weird thinking of professional spies: **[DHS warns employees not to read leaked NSA information](#)**

'By Josh Hicks, Published: July 15

The Department of Homeland Security has warned its employees that the government may penalize them for opening a Washington Post article containing a classified slide that shows how the National Security Agency eavesdrops on international communications.'

Penalized for reading a NEWSPAPER? If you haven't figured out that ALL our freedoms are interconnected, threatened, and must be protected, think about that.

--cosmicrat July 20, 2013