

There is a hidden war on your privacy. If you're like most Americans, you probably don't realize how closely you are being watched and how easily your life could be destroyed by this secret war.

And who is the enemy? Although private investigators, big companies, and other snoops are threats to your privacy, by far the biggest threat comes from the very people we entrust to *protect* our privacy and freedom: the high-level bureaucrats and politicians who control government.

Government at all levels now has scores of computer files on each of us, giving authorities the potential to track – and eventually control – our lives from birth until death. Information is being collected by the IRS, FBI, local police, public schools, and hospitals. It's all available to the government to use as they see fit.

We are also increasingly encouraged and manipulated to spy on each other. Virtually every regulatory and police agency – from Health and Human Services to the IRS – now has a toll-free “tip line” you can call to turn in your neighbor, your doctor, your boss, or your spouse. Hospitals and doctors are required to report parents to police for normal injuries to children that even 10 years ago wouldn't have merited a second look. School DARE and WAVE programs (discussed below) encourage children to turn in their parents and each other to police.

The net result is that legal rights and protections for our privacy and freedom of action that took hundreds of years to create, are being quietly wiped out in a single generation. Here are a few examples of the hidden war on your privacy:

- **Your banker forced to spy on you.** Under new government “Know Your Customer” rules, bank employees are encouraged to turn in customers who conduct “unusual” transactions to police and the Treasury Department. A few “suspicious activity reports,” and police can seize your bank account or arrest you for “money laundering.” It doesn't matter if you are guilty or innocent. Once the government takes your money, it's gone. So watch out if you sell your car, get a big bonus, or deposit an inheritance check.
- **Government is spying on your e-mail, phone calls and faxes.** Dozens of federal agencies – and hundreds of state and local agencies – are now running massive electronic-surveillance programs; and the target is YOU. Programs run by the NSA, DEA, IRS, and the FBI can intercept virtually

every e-mail and fax you send, and monitor your Internet surfing and financial transactions. Mention “guns,” “drugs,” “taxes,” “terrorism,” “revolution,” or 50 other “keywords” in an e-mail, fax, or overseas call, and the NSA or FinCen (the IRS' Financial Center) could “red flag” you as a drug dealer, tax evader, or terrorist.

- **Cameras, cameras, everywhere.** When one of my friends walked through downtown Manhattan recently, he counted 2,400 surveillance cameras, many monitored by police. Coupled with new “facial recognition” technology, police may soon be able to track your every movement.
- **Cell and cars phones that report your location to police.** On October 26, 1999, President Clinton signed a law that requires all new cell phones be tied into the Global Positioning System – enabling police to track your movements. Similar tracking devices are already in many new luxury cars (such as GM's “On-Star” system). Car locators with radio transmitters may also be in the next generation of car and truck On-Board Diagnostic Systems (OBIII).
- **Medical no-privacy laws.** One of Bill Clinton's parting “gifts” to America was an executive order abolishing your medical privacy. Under Clinton's order, “an expansive public-private partnership is granted access to all electronic medical records, *without patient consent.*” (*AAPS News*, April 2000). This even includes the private notes of psychiatrists. The Bush Administration has upheld the Clinton regulations which went into effect April 14, 2001. Millions of government bureaucrats, IRS agents, local police, and insurance companies will have access to every detail of your medical history. At the push of a button, they'll be able to find out if you or any member of your family has ever used alcohol or illegal drugs, had a sexually-transmitted disease, or were treated for mental illness.

This new law will seriously erode trust between doctors and patients and give government agents and large insurance companies enormous power over your life. Already new mothers who used drugs or alcohol during pregnancy are having their children taken from them at birth. You could even be denied employment or credit based on your government-recorded DNA code, just like in the movie “Gattaca.”

- **Big Brother is turning your kids into spies.** Under DARE (Drug Resistance Education Programs) – now in over 70% of all elementary schools – children are encouraged to turn their parents in to the police (“for their own good”) if they use illegal drugs, drink alcohol, own guns, or have unusual religious or political views (such as fundamentalist Christianity). What authorities don't tell children is that if they report their parents, their homes can be confiscated, and they will be put in foster homes or state institutions.

Under a new program, called WAVE, it gets even worse. WAVE children are taught to turn each other in to police for “being too aggressive,” sexual harassment, or having violent thoughts. WAVE pilot programs are now in seven states, and will be nationwide in five years.

- **Mandatory federal background check for gun owners.** These background checks have been used to illegally create a national database of gun owners. How is this database used? Recently when nationally-syndicated columnist Walter Williams was stopped for a routine traffic violation, he was ordered to sit in his car for half an hour until police backup and a police dog arrived. The reason: He was listed as a registered gun owner. In New York and California, the creation of gun-owner databases was quickly followed by new laws banning a wide range of guns – thus making millions of honest and peaceful citizens “instant felons” subject to being arrested and having their guns confiscated.
- **An all-out federal assault on foreign bank secrecy.** In June, 2000, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) – led by the U.S. – demanded that 35 offshore tax havens end bank secrecy, end “harmful tax competition” (i.e., low taxes), and enforce the tax laws of foreign countries. Bank officers in offshore countries with investments in U.S. securities must now disclose the nationality and identity of the owners of the securities, or face confiscation of 30% of their entire investment each year! President Clinton even threatened military invasion on tax-haven countries that don't “co-operate.”

### Why should you care if the government watches you . . .

. . . if you aren't a criminal and pay all of your taxes? The answer is: There are now so many laws (over 10 million) that we are all potential police



targets. Thus an Institute for Policy Studies survey found that 100% of people surveyed had violated some law for which others were currently serving time in prison. If authorities want to get you, they can, and if you're a religious Christian, a home-schooler, are self-employed, like sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll, or simply are an independent thinker, you are at particular risk.

**What can they do to you?** For starters, under civil-forfeiture laws, everything you own can be seized *without trial* if you or *someone with whom you associate* is merely suspected of having committed a crime. Tens of thousands of honest, decent citizens who have done absolutely nothing wrong, have had their bank accounts seized, their businesses destroyed, and their children taken away from them because of some innocent action that a government computer tagged as a RED FLAG.

Red Flags include: driving an expensive car ... a large, sudden increase in your bank account or credit-card activity ... paying for an airline ticket in cash ... frequently traveling overseas ... having a relative who uses drugs ... owning guns ... and even having in your possession pictures of your naked baby on a bear-skin rug.

With so many laws in force, it's impossible even to know what the law *is*, much less to obey them all. The cancerous growth of legislation and regulation, and the all-out government assault on privacy is a twin-headed serpent that threatens us all. And the more that government spies on you, the more likely you are to become a victim.

Hopefully – as more and more people become aware of the war on our privacy – the tide will turn and we will institute new and lasting guards for our freedom. Particularly hopeful is the emergence of the new media, including libertarian and conservative talk radio, and web sites like WorldNetDaily.com and Newsmax.com, which are creating a nationwide coalition of advocates of freedom and privacy.

Nevertheless, for now it's up to **YOU** to **protect your own privacy**. For specific information on what you can do to protect yourself, see my companion ISIL issue paper *Seven Great Ways to Protect Your Privacy*. Also check out these powerful privacy resources:

**Electronic Frontier Foundation.** Membership \$20 - \$500 per year. Concerned mainly with electronic-privacy issues – net-surfing, e-mail, computers, etc. <http://www.eff.org>

**FEAR – Forfeiture Endangers American Rights**, P.O. Box 33985, Washington, DC 20033, 1-88-FEAR-001, <http://www.fear.org>. America's premier anti-forfeiture organization

**The Financial Privacy Report**, PO Box 1277, Burnsville, MN 55337, 952/895-8757, Fax 952/882-4962. A cutting-edge, privacy report with regular articles by Jarret Wollstein. Published monthly. \$96 per year for ISIL members.

**Newsmax.com** the #2 news web site in the world, with a strong conservative-libertarian viewpoint.

**The Sovereign Society**, 5 Catherine St., Waterford, Ireland. In the US, phone (888) 358-8125 or Fax (410) 230-1208. Publishes the excellent newsletter, *The Sovereign Individual* reporting on offshore investing, financial privacy, and civil-liberties issues. \$295 per year. [Sovereignsociety@compuserve.com](mailto:Sovereignsociety@compuserve.com)

### *Statement of Principles*

The International Society for Individual Liberty is an association of individuals and organizations dedicated to building a free and peaceful world, respect for individual rights and liberties, and an open and competitive economic system based on voluntary exchange and free trade. Members and affiliated organizations pursue these goals through independent action, using their freely chosen strategies. The association exists to promote the exchange of information and ideas, to study diverse strategies, and to foster fellowship.

ISIL and its members in over 80 countries pursue the goal of individual liberty through educational and networking activities. ISIL produces educational materials such as this pamphlet which is one of a series of which 4 million have been sold in the US. ISIL sponsors the translation and publishing of libertarian books and literature overseas and promotes networking through its international newsletter, the *Freedom Network News*. Since 1982 ISIL has organized annual world conferences which have served as a catalyst for the development of the world libertarian movement.

Join ISIL today and help us create a world of freedom, peace and abundance. A Basic membership of \$35 per year includes a subscription to the *Freedom Network News*, a full set of the 30+ title ISIL Educational Pamphlet Series (and new titles as they are published), discounts on book, audio and video offers, and a membership card.

Donations to ISIL are tax-deductible in the USA.

Extra copies of this pamphlet are available at 5¢ each (add \$3.20 shipping on orders of under 500 pieces). For a full ISIL information package, including a sample newsletter and literature, send \$3.00 to cover postage & handling.

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# The Hidden War On Your Privacy

*How government secretly spies on you, your children, and your finances...and uses that information to control you.*



*by Jarret B. Wollstein*

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