

**R**on Paul – the only true libertarian in Congress – gives this answer to the question, “What is the relationship of privacy to freedom?”

**“Privacy is freedom. Leave us alone!”**

Unfortunately, Paul is one of the few politicians who truly understands or cares about protecting your privacy.

## **Why you need to protect your privacy**

The last few years have witnessed an all-out assault on your personal and financial privacy. Credit-reporting agencies, schools, Internet marketers, medical clearing-houses, and dozens of other private organizations all now maintain detailed records on us. However, by far the worst offender has been the U.S. government. In just the last few years, the government has:

- ☛ **Authorized the FBI, NSA and other agencies to intercept your email, phone calls, and faxes**, and keep track of your Internet surfing, without search warrants or other protections.
- ☛ **Quietly implemented “Know Your Customer” bank regulations** which force your bank to spy on you and turn you in to police and the IRS for “suspicious transactions.”
- ☛ **Introduced scanners at US international airports which display your naked image** to attendants (justified as a “non-intrusive” way of searching for guns and drugs).
- ☛ **Launched an all-out war on offshore tax havens** ordering them to end bank secrecy and turn over records on US citizens or face a cut-off of all dealings with US banks and financial institutions. President Clinton even threatened military attack!
- ☛ **Forced employers to get government permission for all new hires**, giving government a *de facto* veto over whether or not you can be hired!
- ☛ **Forced hospitals and doctors to turn over all private medical records**, under penalty of fines, imprisonment, seizure of assets, and taking away doctor’s medical licenses.
- ☛ **Stepped up confiscation of assets without trial**, through hundreds of new federal and state civil asset forfeiture laws that, for instance, allow seizure of all assets from doctors who don’t code insurance claims properly and from businesses that hire (even unknowingly) illegal immigrants.
- ☛ **Created a national database of gun owners**, even though that’s illegal. Similar state gun databases have been a prelude to banning most privately-owned guns in New York, Boston and other cities.

Clearly your privacy is under siege. Fortunately, there is still a LOT you can do to protect it.

## **7 Great Ways to Protect Your Privacy**

**1. Keep your mouth shut.** I frequently attend libertarian conferences where there’s always some bozo talking in a loud voice in the hall about having not paid taxes in seven years.

Wake up people! Libertarian, tax, and investment conferences are regularly attended by government moles who are looking for precisely such braggarts.

The first law of privacy is: Keep your mouth shut, particularly when you’re in public, on the phone, or sending faxes or email. In fact, electronic communications are now so vulnerable to interception by government agencies, private investigators, and other snoops, that you shouldn’t say anything in these communications you wouldn’t want published on the front page of the *New York Times* or recorded by the IRS.

**2. Don’t flaunt your wealth**, particularly if you have a lot of money. If you own a fancy home, make sure it looks as modest as possible from the outside. Don’t drive a brand-new luxury car, and don’t pay for a new apartment or house in cash. The IRS regularly searches car-purchase and property records. If they suspect tax evasion – real or imagined – they can freeze your assets, and seize your car and home.

When traveling overseas, you have to be even more careful. Driving a fancy car or dressing like a “rich” American – i.e., the way you normally dress – can make you a target for robbers, kidnappers and anti-American terrorists. Also limit your credit card use. Every time you use your credit card, thieves could steal the number and rack up huge charges. It could take months or even years to get it all sorted out.

**3. Shred or burn important documents.** The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that it’s 100% legal for snoops to rummage through your curbside trash and keep any papers they find. So never throw any important papers in the trash without shredding them – including bank and credit-card statements, utility bills, letters from Social Security or other government agencies, information from your stock broker, etc.

Make sure and use a cross-cut shredder (\$100-\$150) which reduces documents to confetti, rather than a less-expensive shredder that cuts paper into strips which can be pasted back together. For ultra-sensitive documents, nothing beats burning them.

**4. Isolate sensitive computer files from snoops.** As we use our computers more and more to keep sensitive records and correspondence, it becomes more important to protect them from snoops.

The #1 threat to your sensitive files is your

modem, fax, or DSL Internet connection – anything that electronically connects your computer to the outside world. Thanks to cookies, email wiretaps, and other techniques, when you’re browsing the web or reading your email, snoops at the other end can download files from your computer hard drive.

The only sure way to protect yourself is by keeping all sensitive information on a different computer (or at least a different hard drive *with its own, separate operating system*) than the computer you use for web browsing. In other words, you use Computer #1 to browse the web and send email; and you use Computer #2 for word processing, accounting, and storing important information. Computer #1 has no important files or sensitive information. Computer #2 has no electronic connection to the outside world.

To minimize expenses, your two computers can share the same keyboard and monitor, by the addition of a network hub (about \$100).

**5. Keep your web browsing and email private.** Whenever you contact a company or organization on the Internet, the computer at the other end will often insert a “cookie” into your computer – enabling merchants and government agencies to keep track of your web browsing. The information that can be collected about you in this way is absolutely mind-boggling and includes your name, address, phone number, detailed information on the type of computer you are using, your Social Security number, credit-card numbers, a list of your friends and business contacts, and much more.

To keep your web browsing private, use an anonymous connection service, such as Anonymizer (<http://www.anonymizer.com>). Another alternative is Hushmail, based in Anguilla, which offers a free email service that allows you to encrypt email using ultra-powerful 1024-bit encryption.

For further protection, encrypt your email, using high-level, 1024-bit encryption software, such as Pretty Good Privacy (PGP). <http://www.pgp.com>

Zero Knowledge Systems (ZKS) offers software called “Freedom” which also uses 1024-bit encryption and which:

- Allows you to use multi-pseudonyms that can’t be traced to your real name
- Prevents the receipt of Internet cookies
- Provides multi-layers of encryption

**6. Keep your home address and phone private.** This is the single most important step you can take to protect your privacy. Government snoops can’t nose around your home, bug your computer, or listen in on your calls, if they don’t know where you live or what

your phone number is.

To keep your home address private, rent or buy your home in the name of an out-of-state corporation (Delaware and Nevada corporations are best). Also put your utilities in the name of the corporation, as well as your phone, and magazine and newspaper subscriptions. This is precisely what TV personalities, professional athletes, and film stars do to protect their privacy. And it's not expensive. A Delaware corporation can be set up for as little as \$150 and maintained for \$50 a year!

Receive all mail personally addressed to you at a nearby mail drop, such as Mail Boxes, Etc. (about \$15 a month), or an Executive Office Service (\$50 to \$150 a month), or at the address of a friend who owns a nearby business (free). Then use this address for your driver's license and car registration. Naturally, your car will also be registered in the name of your corporation.

Properly set up, a Delaware or Nevada corporation can also dramatically lower your taxes, if you're an independent contractor. (Please consult your attorney.)

For a private home phone, use a company name when setting up a new phone account, rather than your own, and make sure and get caller ID, complete blocking.

To add a further level of phone privacy, purchase a prepaid cell phone – such as those offered by Trac Fone through Blockbuster, WalMart, and Staples. No name, address, credit check, etc. is required to set up an account, and you can buy phone cards for cash to add more time.

**7. Keep your medical records more private.** Information in your medical files can be used to deny you insurance, jobs, and legal benefits. It could be even used by a government just slightly more authoritarian than the one we now have, to take away your children or commit you to a mental hospital. Unfortunately, each time you see a doctor or check into a hospital or clinic, they will usually demand your Social Security Number, which in turn will be used to file and locate your medical records.

You can protect yourself from unwanted snooping by getting an alternative Medical photo ID from ID Network (IDN). No SSN is required, and medical records are kept in your own handwriting. \$9.95. Call 1-888-329-3686 or 314-416-7411, <http://www.idnetwork.com>.

### **The Crucial Importance of Privacy**

Philosopher-novelist Ayn Rand once commented that the development of civilization and freedom are inseparable from the increase in personal privacy. In a primitive society, there is no privacy or freedom. The tribe knows all and controls everything you do. But in the civilized society, we each have a crucial

zone of privacy shielding us from outside snooping and control.

Privacy is about keeping more of what you earn ... protecting the sensitive information in your computer ... avoiding being hassled by the IRS or police ... protecting your children ... and minimizing your chances of a 2 am visit by a machine-gun-toting SWAT team.

The battle for your privacy is the battle for your freedom. Ultimately it is a battle we will win. Twenty years from now we'll look back at intrusive Big Brother government the same way we now look at dinosaurs: Huge and ferocious, but dead.

### *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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# SEVEN GREAT WAYS TO PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY & FREEDOM



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– ISIL EDUCATIONAL PAMPHLET SERIES –

June 2001