"Operation Karma Police": The British Government Spied on Everyone's Web Activity, Cell Phones. Massive GCHQ Data Bank

Targeted Internet Radio Listeners

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Global Research, September 26, 2015

Infowars 25 September 2015

Region: Europe, USA

Theme: Intelligence, Police State & Civil Rights

GCHQ called the operation 'Karma Police' because they were Radiohead fans; Mammoth operation bigger than anything NSA did

Spies with GCHQ, the British equivalent of the NSA spied on "every visible" user's Internet activity and called the operation 'Karma Police' after a song by the band Radiohead.

The new revelation comes from documents provided to journalists with The Intercept by whistleblower Edward Snowden.

The report notes that the program, which enables spooks to monitor practically every facet of Internet activity, has been running for seven years.

The report states:

> The origin of the surveillance system's name is not discussed in the documents. But KARMA POLICE is also the name of a popular song released in 1997 by the Grammy Award-winning British band Radiohead, suggesting the spies may have been fans.
>
> A verse repeated throughout the hit song includes the lyric, "This is what you'll get, when you mess with us."

The documents expose how the program is more intrusive than anything the NSA has attempted that is publically known. GCHQ itself referred to the program as the "world's biggest" Internet data-mining operation.

The documents state that the program's aim was to correlate "every user visible to passive SIGINT with every website they visit, hence providing either (a) a web browsing profile for every visible user on the Internet, or (b) a user profile for every visible website on the Internet."

The GCHQ program works by pulling web data from intercontinental data cables landing at Cornwall. The cables provide British spies with access to up to one quarter of all global web traffic.

It is claimed that the program scours only 'metadata'. However, the information contains full records of websites visited, usernames, and passwords.

It appears that there is ZERO judicial oversight of the GCHQ program, meaning spooks can sift through anything they want without any legal recourse.

The genesis of the program appears to have been an operation to track individuals listening to Internet radio. The spies were undertaking research into how 'radicals' could "misuse" Internet radio to spread their messages.

The Intercept report notes an example where GCHQ specifically targeted any Internet radio station that was broadcasting any spoken recitations from the Quran.

The spies then used the program to bulk collect information on all listeners of the radio stations, most of which were simply music stations with absolutely no link to Islam.

The documents reveal that the spies used tracking cookie networks to trawl the Internet and discover other accounts held by the radio listeners on Skype, Yahoo, and Facebook.

That specific aspect of the program enabled GCHQ to [attack the SIM card manufacturer Gemalto](), giving it access to the phone data of up to 2 billion SIM cards.

The Karma Police program targeted Gemalto employees, uncovering their passwords and allowing the government spies to insert malware and gain bulk access to Gemalto's encryption keys, compromising the data of untold numbers of smart phone users.

The documents also reveal that the program was instrumental in enabling "Operation Socialist," a hack of the Belgian telecom company Belgacom, which provided spies with the IP addresses of individuals they were targeting.

According to the GCHQ documents, by 2009 the program had stored over 1.1 trillion web browsing sessions, referred to as "events" in what was termed a "Black Hole" database. Just one year later in 2010, the system was said to be collecting 30 billion+ records per day of Internet traffic metadata. A further GCHQ document notes that by 2012 the volume was up to 50 billion per day.

The documents note that some of the websites specifically targeted for covert cookie collection included Facebook, Microsoft Live, Amazon, YouTube, Reddit, WordPress, Yahoo, Google, YouPorn and news sites such as Reuters, CNN, and the BBC.

The operation makjes the East German Stasi look like amatuer hobbyists.

The deputy director of Privacy International, Eric King, reacted to the revelation with the following tweet:

> Best argument for Judicial Authorisation I've seen comes from GCHQs own internal documents. https://t.co/oDLjyinPKX pic.twitter.com/7MlJJlVK0x
>
> — Eric King (@e3i5) [September 25, 2015]()

Way back in 2008, the British government announced its intention to [create a massive]()

central database, gathering details on every text sent, e-mail sent, phone call made and website visited by everyone in the UK. The timing correlates with GCHQ's Karma Police program.

The program, referred to then as the "Interception Modernisation Programme", was slated to allow spy chiefs at GCHQ to effectively place a "live tap" on every electronic communication in Britain in the name of preventing terrorism.

Following outcry over the announcement, the government suggested that it was scaling down the plans, with then Home Secretary Jacqui Smith stating that there were "absolutely no plans for a single central store" of communications data.

However, as the "climbdown" was celebrated by civil liberties advocates and the plan was "replaced" by new laws requiring ISPs to store details of emails and internet telephony for just 12 months, fresh details emerged indicating the government was implementing a big brother spy system that would go way beyond the original public announcement.

The London Times published leaked details of a secret mass internet surveillance project known as "Mastering the Internet" (MTI).

Costing hundreds of millions in public funds, the system was implemented by GCHQ with the aid of American defence giant Lockheed Martin and British IT firm Detica, which has close ties to the intelligence agencies.

The stated goal was to give every internet user a unique ID code and store all their data in one place. The "Black Hole" database mentioned in the newly leaked GCHQ documents seems to be a very similar concept.

The documents expose a huge leap forward in an incremental program to implement an already exposed full scale big brother spy system designed to completely obliterate privacy on a global scale.

Steve Watson is a London based writer and editor for Alex Jones' Infowars.com, and Prisonplanet.com. He has a Masters Degree in International Relations from the School of Politics at The University of Nottingham, and a Bachelor Of Arts Degree in Literature and Creative Writing from Nottingham Trent University.

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