

“Spies R Us”: Mass FBI Aerial Surveillance of Americans Using Drones

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Free and open societies don't spy on their citizens. They don't invent phony threats as justification.

America is a belligerent nation waging endless wars of aggression against invented enemies.

Fear-mongering is rife. It's a tactic used to scare people to believe they're safer by sacrificing fundamental freedoms. Mass surveillance is a defining rogue state characteristic.

Tuesday Senate passage of the USA Freedom Act (the renamed Patriot Act) changed little.

Government intrusion into the private lives of its citizens remains largely unchanged. The only good news is that USAF slightly rolled back its intrusiveness instead of giving spy agencies more powers.

History shows restrictions imposed are easily circumvented or ignored.

Bureau secrecy and cover-up make it impossible to know the full extent of its lawlessness. It operates ad libitum with minimum oversight and accountability.

One example is its mass surveillance of US citizens by drones and other aircraft. On June 2, [AP reported](#) “(s)cores of low-flying planes circling American cities...”

“They're “part of a civilian air force operated by the FBI and obscured behind fictitious companies...”

It's not secret. It's been reported before. In July 2013, the agency admitted using drones for domestic surveillance numerous times without court authorized warrants or other forms of oversight.

At the time, deputy director Stephen D. Kelly said “(t)he FBI uses UAVs in very limited circumstances to conduct surveillance when there is a specific operational need.”

“Since late 2006, the FBI has conducted surveillance using UAVs in eight criminal cases and two national security cases.”

Former FBI director Robert Mueller admitted spying on US citizens with no “operational guidelines.”

Warrantless spying by any means threatens everyone. No probable cause is needed. No restraints are imposed. Constitutional protections are circumvented.

Once a program is established, it takes on a life of its own. In the last decade, FBI aerial spying expanded to “civilian air force” level.

In April alone, AP identified at least 50 FBI aircraft conducting more than 100 flights over urban and rural areas in 11 states.

It cited a 2009 budget document indicating 115 planes, including 90 Cessna aircraft.

FBI aerial spying is longstanding. Today, drones and other aircraft are equipped with high-tech cameras for close-up visual surveillance as well as technology able to monitor thousands of cell phones – a blatant breach of privacy.

According to Senate Judiciary Committee chairman Charles Grassley (R. IA):

“It’s important that federal law enforcement personnel have the tools they need to find and catch criminals.”

“But whenever an operation may also monitor the activities of Americans who are not the intended target, we must make darn sure that safeguards are in place to protect the civil liberties of innocent Americans.”

No safeguards whatever exist – nor does Congress back up high-minded rhetoric with effective policies protecting the public from abusive government practices.

Rogue agencies like the FBI, NSA, CIA, DEA and Homeland Security operate by their own rules – easily circumventing weak and ineffective restraints on their authority.

Congressional inaction effectively rubber-stamps them. It permits unaccountable police state practices no free society would tolerate.

AP learned the FBI uses at least 13 fake companies to conceal its activities – including FVX Research, QQM Aviation, NBR Aviation and PXW Services.

ACLU policy analyst Jay Stanley called its flights significant if they’re “maintaining a fleet of aircraft whose purpose is to circle over American cities, especially with” today’s sophisticated surveillance technology.

Details the FBI confirmed concur with published reports since at least 2003 about suspicious-looking planes overflying US cities being government ones.

The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and US Marshals Service have their own aerial surveillance programs using sophisticated technology, much like the FBI’s.

Basic information about these programs are secret. Heavily redacted Justice Department Inspector General documents alone inadequately explain what the public has a right to know.

They’re spied on – by the FBI, NSA, CIA, DEA, Homeland Security and other government agencies, especially post-9/11.

Spies “R” us defines US policy. America is a total surveillance society unfit to live in. Big Brother watches everyone intrusively – in blatant breach of fundamental constitutional protections.

Fabricated national security threats justify the unjustifiable. The so-called “war on terror” is phony. The war OF terror by Washington on its citizens is real.

Unconstitutional spying today in America is pervasive. It’s institutionalized. Privacy rights no longer matter. Fundamental freedoms are being trampled. They’re disappearing in plain sight.

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