

Big Brother isn't coming. He's already here.

And you better believe he's watching you.

Every citizen supports efforts to apprehend those responsible for past terrorist events and to prevent future attacks. But George Bush and Dick Cheney act as though their wholesale assault on our constitutional liberties will curb terrorism.

Question the need for suspension of citizens' rights and protections, and you are told that Big Brother knows what's best and he doesn't have to explain.

President Bush told the National Security Council:

"I do not need to explain why I say things. That's the interesting thing about being the President... [I] don't feel like I owe anybody an explanation."

Just follow orders? No public accountability? That's not the American way.

The *New York Times* finds the President on the wrong side of history in an editorial published on the eve of the first anniversary of the attacks on the twin towers:

"...to curtail individual rights, as the Bush Administration has done, is to draw exactly the wrong lessons from history. Every time the country has felt threatened and tightened the screws on civil liberties, it later wished it had not done so. In each case—whether the barring of government criticism under the Sedition Act of 1798 and the Espionage Act of 1918, the internment of Japanese-Americans in World War II or the McCarthyite witch hunts of the cold war—profound regrets set in later."

"...the American people need to make clear that they have learned from history and will not allow their rights to be rolled back. The world has changed since September 11, but the values this country was founded on have not."

New Power to Snoop

The misnamed Patriot Act, passed in the wave of panic after September 11, surrendered an unprecedented concentration of power to the Executive Branch. Repeatedly, the Bush Administration has demonstrated its contempt for open

▶ Reading Your Medical Records

▶ Scrutinizing Your Credit Card Bills

▶ Searching Your Home or Business Without Telling You

▶ Patrolling Your Internet Use

▶ Wiretapping Your Phone

▶ Spying on You and Your House of Worship

▶ Examining Your Travel Records

▶ Inspecting Your Bookstore Purchases

▶ Snooping on Your Library Records

▶ Monitoring Your Political Activities

courts and oversight of its performance by Congress. Now, the Bill of Rights is being shredded. Protections of free speech, privacy, assembly, and fair trial are being sacrificed—under the guise of national security.

Freewheeling FBI Wiretaps

Under the Patriot Act, FBI agents searching primarily for evidence of crime can secretly conduct a physical search or wiretap without demonstrating probable cause of criminal activity in a court of law.

Chilling of Political Dissent

The Patriot Act defines a federal crime of "domestic terrorism" so broadly that it may be used by federal law enforcement agencies to chill political dissent and authorize the surveillance of activists and organizations opposed to government policies. Your freedom to challenge, to mobilize, and to monitor your government is being squeezed.

Widening Government Secrecy

The Department of Homeland Security is given broad authority to withhold information now available to the press and public under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), further increasing government secrecy.

Ending Your Privacy

The Homeland Security Act gives the green light to Bush's Total Information Awareness Program, which could use computer networks to scoop up vast amounts of data on citizens.

Even more draconian schemes to enlist citizens to spy on their neighbors to "uncover suspicious activity" have been on the President's anti-terrorist drawing board.

The Bush Administration has shamelessly used the War on Terrorism as an excuse to operate a secret government that restricts every American's civil liberties while deepening its costly entanglements with avaricious corporations, which are given expanding power, privileges, and immunities. History teaches us that such practices will lead to serious mistakes and boomeranging policies harmful to our country.

Ralph Nader, Consumer Advocate
Marc Rotenberg, Electronic Privacy Information Center
Michael Pertschuk, Former Chair, Federal Trade Commission
Ralph Neas, People for the American Way
Joan Claybrook, Public Citizen
John Passacantando, Greenpeace
Lee Tien, Electronic Frontier Foundation
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Deborah Peel, MD, Mental HealthCARE Foundation
Joanne Doroshov, Center for Justice and Democracy
J.C. Pierce, Consumer Task Force for Automotive Issues
Deborah Pierce, Privacyactivism
Oscar Gandy, Jr., University of Pennsylvania
Theresa Amato, Citizen Works
Lynne Bernabei, Civil Rights Lawyer

Cornel West, Princeton University
Edgar Cahn, Professor of Law, University of the District of Columbia and Author
Ken McEldowney, Consumer Action
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Chris Townsend, United Electrical Workers Union
Remar Sutton, Co-founder, Privacy Rights Now Coalition
David Kortzen, People-Centered Development Forum
Robert Engler, Professor Emeritus, City University of New York

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Seymour Melman, Professor Emeritus, Columbia University
Manning Marable, Professor of History and Political Science, Columbia University

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Affiliations are listed for identification only.

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If you contribute \$100 or more we will send you *Silencing Political Dissent: How Post-September 11 Anti-Terrorism Measures Threaten Our Civil Liberties* by Nancy Chang.

For more information visit www.SnoopWatch.org