OMNI

NATIONAL WHISTLEBLOWER’S DAY NEWSLETTER
#9, JULY 30, 2014.

Compiled by Dick Bennett for a Culture of Peace and Justice (#1 Oct. 21, 2011; #2 Dec. 12, 2011; #3 January 31, 2012; #4 Sept. 12, 2012; #5 March 29, 2013; #6 May 22, 2013; #7 June 24, 2013; #8 July 30, 2013).

Please forward to email lists, social media: https://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=2151229136087998997#editor/target=post;postID=8982279213110696802

What’s at stake: “A people who mean to be their own Governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.” James Madison.

NOTE: FOR EIGHT NUMBERS THIS NEWSLETTER ON WHISTLEBLOWERS WAS PUBLISHED PERIODICALLY. NOW IT IS PUBLISHED ON (AT PRESENT the PROPOSED) NATIONAL WHISTLEBLOWER’S DAY, JULY 30. SEE EXPLANATION BELOW.

OMNI’s endowed fund at UA’s Mullins Library for the purchase of books and films on Victims includes books and films on corporations and on resistance to US Imperialism Abroad and Repression at Home—including whistleblowers and investigative reporters, nonviolent action, true heroes, true valor.

OMNI NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL DAYS PROJECT

My blog: The War Department and Peacemaking
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

Newsletters:
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/

Two characters on a barren landscape:

“Finally someone's going to prison over the torture our government practiced over the last decade.

Yeah, the CIA whistleblower who pointed it out.”  Rob Gulliver, Big Bend Sentinel.

Whistleblower Newsletter Contents Nos. 3-8 ARE BELOW. For 1 and 2 see newsletter url just above.
Contents #9 July 30, 2014 National Whistleblower Day

RootsAction, Donate to More Ellsberg Billboards

Tomgram: National Secrecy State Creates Whistleblowers

Liptak: From Nixon to Obama

Public Citizen, Snowden and WB Protection

Film War on Whistleblowers, Rev. by Karen Martin

RootsAction, Prisoner Whistleblowers

GAP, Bridging the Gap

Bridging the Gap on NSA

Zizek, Public Reason and International Network to Protect Whistleblowers

Greenwald on Maher, Who Elected the Whistleblowers and Leakers?

Tomgram, Next Whistleblower Battle?

A profound message from Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg is now on a billboard half a block from the State Department: "Don't wait until thousands more have died, before you tell the truth..."
until a new war has started, don't wait until thousands more have died, before you tell the truth with documents that reveal lies or crimes…"

The billboard has caused quite a stir. But we’re just getting started.

Now you can help put that billboard in other key locations, reaching thousands of employees at places like the Pentagon, intelligence agencies, contractors, the Justice Department, Congress and the White House. To do that, click here.

As Ellsberg says on the billboard, a whistleblower "might save a war's worth of lives."

One billboard has made a lot of impact. Ten would be ten times better. Let's do it!

You can help make it happen now.

If you’ve already donated to RootsAction’s special Ellsberg billboard fund, thank you! Since last week, we’ve raised a bit over half the money necessary to put up more than ten new billboards in key Washington locations by early July.

But time is short. Our goal is a dozen new Ellsberg billboards next month. Please put some dollars in the hat by clicking here.

With war drums now beating for the U.S. to bomb Iraq, a whistleblower could expose the fraudulence of the propaganda by revealing internal documents -- as Ellsberg did.

In a country with a government addicted to militarism, mass surveillance and secrecy, we don't fulfill our duties simply by voting, backing candidates and attending protests. Another task is to support whistleblowing by individuals who see wrongdoing inside government or corporations.

That's why RootsAction is stepping up to support the cutting-edge work of the new organization ExposeFacts.org for independent journalism and an informed public.

Donate here to make possible more of these billboards outside major U.S. government offices.

From Daniel Ellsberg to Chelsea Manning and Edward Snowden to many others, brave whistleblowers have taken risks to reveal official wrongdoing.

* If you want to donate directly to ExposeFacts ($10 minimum), click here. (We now have a bulk discount, so a $40 donation would pay for a square foot of the billboard for a full month. A $1,000 donation would pay for an entire billboard.)
If you want to contribute via RootsAction with a credit card or check, click here to make a special donation. We'll pass along every cent to pay for putting up more billboards.

RootsAction believes that a crucial antidote to official wrongdoing is EXPOSURE -- combined with movement-building to demand change. Progress can't happen when powerful institutions are allowed to operate in the dark.

That's why Daniel Ellsberg is so enthusiastic about this effort spearheaded byExposeFacts.org.

Please click here to show your support.

Our hope is that whistleblowing will spread from federal agencies to local governments to corporations that pollute or have unfair labor practices or produce unsafe products.

You may not work inside a government institution or a corporation engaging in misconduct, but you may have a friend, relative or neighbor who does. Besides billboarding, we need to spread this message person to person.

Let the world know that ExposeFacts.org -- a new organization led by respected independent journalists and brave whistleblowers -- is open for truth-telling business. The ExposeFacts motto: Whistleblowers Welcome Here.

Please forward this email far and wide.

Thank you!

-- The RootsAction.org team

P.S. RootsAction is an independent online force endorsed by Jim Hightower, Barbara Ehrenreich, Cornel West, Daniel Ellsberg, Glenn Greenwald, Naomi Klein, Bill Fletcher Jr., Laura Flanders, former U.S. Senator James Abourezk, Coleen Rowley, Frances Fox Piven, and many others.

Background:
> Daniel Ellsberg: Video Statement for ExposeFacts.org
> ExposeFacts: For Whistleblowing, Journalism and Democracy
> The Real News: New Whistleblower Organization Launched (video report)
> McClatchy News Service: New Whistleblower Group Encourages More Efforts to Inform Public
> Ann Wright and Matthew Hoh: Speaking at Billboard Ribbon-Cutting Near State Department (video)
> Kevin Gosztola: New Organization Launched to Accept Submissions, Provide Support to Whistleblowers
> Norman Solomon: Memo to Potential Whistleblowers: When You See Something, Say Something
September 17, 2013

Tomgram: Engelhardt, How to Build a National Security Blowback Machine

[Note for TomDispatch Readers: I wanted those of you who were kind enough to send in a donation for a signed, personalized copy of Andrew Bacevich's widely hailed new book, Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country, to know that it is now officially in the mail to you! He's been on a book tour, which has slowed the process. (Most recent appearance: the Colbert Report on Monday!) Anyone who still wants a signed book in return for a contribution of $100 (or more), the offer remains open. Just visit our donation page to check it out. Tom]

Letter to an Unknown Whistleblower
How the Security State’s Mania for Secrecy Will Create You
By Tom Engelhardt

Dear Whistleblower,

I don’t know who you are or what you do or how old you may be. I just know that you exist somewhere in our future as surely as does tomorrow or next year. You may be young and computer-savvy or a career federal employee well along in years. You might be someone who entered government service filled with idealism or who signed on to “the bureaucracy” just to make a living. You may be a libertarian, a closet left-winger, or as mainstream and down-the-center as it’s possible to be.
I don’t know much, but I know one thing that you may not yet know yourself. I know that you’re there. I know that, just as Edward Snowden and Bradley (now Chelsea) Manning did, you will, for reasons of your own, feel compelled to take radical action, to put yourself in danger. When the time comes, you will know that this is what you must do, that this is why you find yourself where you are, and then you’re going to tell us plenty that has been kept from us about how our government really operates. You are going to shock us to the core.

And how exactly do I know this? Because despite our striking inability to predict the future, it’s a no-brainer that the national security state is already building you into its labyrinthine systems. In the urge of its officials to control all of us and every situation, in their mania for all-encompassing secrecy, in their classification not just of the millions of documents they generate, but essentially all their operations as “secret” or “top secret,” in their all-encompassing urge to shut off the most essential workings of the government from the eyes of its citizenry, in their escalating urge to punish anyone who would bring their secret activities to light, in their urge to see or read or listen in on or peer into the lives of you (every “you” on the planet), in their urge to build a global surveillance state and a military that will dominate everything in or out of its path, in their urge to drop bombs on Pakistan and fire missiles at Syria, in their urge to be able to assassinate just about anyone just about anywhere robotically, they are birthing you. In every action, a reaction. So they say, no?

Give our national security managers credit, though: they may prove to be the master builders of the early twenty-first century. Their ambitions have been breathtaking and their ability to commandeer staggering amounts of our taxpayer dollars to pay for those projects hardly less so. Their monuments to themselves, their version of pyramids and ziggurats -- like the vast data storage center the National Security Agency is building for almost $2 billion in Bluffdale, Utah, to keep a yottabyte of private information about all of us, or the new post-9/11 headquarters the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency built, again for almost $2 billion, so that its 16,000 employees could monitor our system of satellites nitoring every square inch of the planet -- are in their own way unique. In their urge to control everything, to see everything from your Facebook chatter to the emails of the Brazilian president, they are creating a system built to blowback, and not just from the outside or distant lands.
Chalmers Johnson, who took “blowback,” an obscure term of CIA tradecraft, and embedded it in our everyday language, would have instantly recognized what they’re doing: creating a blowback machine whose “unintended consequences” (another term of his) are guaranteed, like the effects of the Snowden revelations, to stun us all in a myriad of ways. Click here to read more of this dispatch.
FOCUS | Obama Has Followed in Nixon's Footsteps

Adam Liptak, The New York Times

Liptak writes: "The federal government is prosecuting leakers at a brisk clip and on novel theories. It is collecting information from and about journalists, calling one a criminal and threatening another with jail."

RESTORE PROTECTIONS TO WHISTLEBLOWER

Fear retaliation?

Rick, Public Citizen

Dick,
Imagine what it must be like when a worker with access to inside information at the NSA, FBI or CIA recognizes that the government is secretly violating the rights of American citizens.

You believe what the intelligence agency has been doing is not only morally wrong, but against the law. Do your colleagues agree? Does your boss?

Imagine the fear you must overcome to right such a wrong — especially when you lack protection from retaliation if your boss disagrees. If your boss fires you for speaking out, you can’t even take your boss to court.

No one should have to fear retaliation for standing up to government lawbreaking.
Tell Congress to restore whistleblower protections for intelligence contractor workers.

For more about the urgent need for strong whistleblower protections, read the earlier email, copied below, from Public Citizen President Robert Weissman.

Thanks,

Rick Claypool

Dick,

Intelligence agencies — like the NSA, FBI and CIA — are supposed to protect the American people.

But what if they go too far? What if they violate the rights of the very people they’re supposed to be protecting?

That’s when we need those who work at intelligence agencies to step forward and expose violations without fear of retaliation.

Tell Congress: Reinstate safeguards for workers who blow the whistle when our rights are violated or our taxes are wasted.

Intelligence contractor whistleblowers can be fired for exposing government waste, fraud and abuse — and they are denied a day in court to hold their bosses accountable.

A well-known example is Edward Snowden, who, while working for an NSA contractor, exposed the agency’s privacy abuses and then fled the country for fear of retaliation.

Many months before Snowden went public, lawmakers in the U.S. House of Representatives repealed protections for contractor employees who blow the whistle through proper government channels.

Send a message urging your members of Congress to restore protections for the whistleblowers who alert us to government misconduct.

Snowden has repeatedly explained that a major reason he chose to leak was that he had seen how those who worked within the system were harassed and prosecuted.

No one should have to circumvent the law to fight government illegality.

Congress has the authority — and the obligation — to restore these rights.

Tell your members of Congress to restore and strengthen intelligence contractor whistleblower rights.
Thank you for taking action today.

Onward,

Robert Weissman
President, Public Citizen


What Do They Do to Whistleblowers Who Are Already in Prison? RootsAction Team info@rootsaction.org via uark.edu

Kevin "Rashid" Johnson has been blowing the whistle on abuse and torture in U.S. prisons. These actions would take courage even if Rashid were a guard, but Rashid is a prisoner. He describes the abuses and names the names:

“As I sit writing this a lieutenant Deward Demoss passes my cell making segregation rounds. Further down the tier he exchanges words with another prisoner, then yells down to two unit guards, 'make sure cell 118 doesn't eat today.' 'Yessir,' they both chime in. Such is the abusive impunity here in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice’s (TDCJ) Estelle 2 Unit (E2U). In fact, guards’ summarily denying prisoners’ meals in this manner is so routine, there’s a nickname for it here. It's called 'jacking trays'. And that's the least of it."

Click here to add your voice to Rashid's in demanding an end to prison abuse.

Rashid has been documenting widespread and routine food deprivation, sleep deprivation, physical torture, denial of medical care, extended solitary confinement, death threats, the instigation of racial divisions, unsanitary conditions, destruction of property, interference with letters, denial of legal rights, and retribution against those who expose, protest, or organize.

The least we can do is send an email on his behalf.

Rashid is a Virginia prisoner, transferred first to Oregon and now to Texas, facing new abuses at each stop in apparent retaliation for his writing.

If Rashid's story were found in a nation that ours wanted to bomb, it would become war propaganda. But Rashid's story is all-American. And it’s a similar story to those of the Angola 3, of Russell Maroon Shoatz, and of the men at Pelican Bay State Prison who recently sparked a prolonged hunger strike among prisoners throughout California. Prisoners are punished for exposing crimes and organizing to protest them.
It's up to us to hear the cries of one prisoner speaking for many others, and to raise our voices with theirs for basic human rights.

**Please click here to email the Virginia and Texas prison authorities.**

Please forward this email widely to like-minded friends.

-- The RootsAction.org team

P.S. RootsAction is an independent online force endorsed by Jim Hightower, Barbara Ehrenreich, Cornel West, Daniel Ellsberg, Glenn Greenwald, Naomi Klein, Bill Fletcher Jr., Laura Flanders, former U.S. Senator James Abourezk, Coleen Rowley, Frances Fox Piven, and many others.

P.P.S. This work is only possible with your financial support. **Please donate.**

Background:

*Truthout: Beatings and Threats: Odyssey of a Prisoner-Advocate, >From Virginia to Texas*

*CommonDreams: On Soul-Killing Solitary*

*Kevin "Rashid" Johnson: Audio essay "We Are All Doing Time"*


---

**BRIDGING THE GAP (Autumn 2013). Magazine of the Government Accountability Project,** that protects not only government whistleblowers but corporate and international.

Opening article: “GAP Stands with Snowden.” The NSA surveillance whistleblower revealed constitutional violations and deserves support. The article is highly worth reading. The Exec. Dir. Of GAP, Bea Edwards, also wrote an editorial in defense of Snowden. Other articles on a USDA inspector whistleblower now facing retaliation, military whistleblowers, petition to ban the criminalization of whistleblowers, and more.

**GAP: NSA people prior to Snowden who tried to use the system**

Dick, I don’t know if you are the mailing list for the Government Accountability Project (GAP), but if not you may be interested in this (fund-raising) letter from them about the history of NSA people prior to Snowden who tried to use the system and all the grief that caused them. I find the treatment of Drake particularly reprehensible, but am interested to see that the NSA blithely ignored a comparatively cheap in-house program and contracted to an outside vendor a much more expensive and less sophisticated one.

David W. Hart

4 attachments — [Download all attachments](#)

- [GAPwhistleblower1.RTF](#) 12K

- [GAPwhistleblower2.RTF](#) 11K
In these times. With liberty and justice for all...
Radomes at an operating facility of the BND, the main German foreign intelligence gathering agency, near Bad Aibling, Germany. The German government recently confirmed that the BND shares large amounts of data with the NSA, and according to NSA whistle-blower Edward Snowden, NSA operatives work at the Bad Aibling facility. (Photo by Johannes Simon/Getty Images)

FEATURES » AUGUST 13, 2013

Freedom in the Cloud
Assange, Manning and Snowden are the new heroes of the era of digitalized control.

BY SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK


We need more Mannings and Snowdens—in China, in Russia, everywhere. There are states much more oppressive than the United States—just imagine what would have happened to someone like Manning in a Russian or Chinese court (in all probability there would be no public trial!) However, one should not exaggerate the softness of the United States.

We all remember President Obama's smiling face, full of hope and trust, when he repeatedly delivered the motto of his first campaign, “Yes, we can!”—we can get rid of the cynicism of the Bush era and bring justice and welfare to the American people. Now that the United States continues with covert operations and expands its intelligence network, spying even on their allies, we can imagine protesters shouting at Obama: “How can you use drones for killing? How can you spy even our allies?” Obama looks back at them and murmurs with a mockingly evil smile: “Yes we can…”

However, such simple personalization misses the point: The threat to our freedom disclosed by whistle-blowers has much deeper systemic roots. Edward Snowden should be defended not only because his acts annoyed and embarrassed the U.S. secret services. Their lesson is global; it reaches far beyond the standard U.S. bashing. What he revealed is something that not only the United States but also all the other
great (and not so great) powers—from China to Russia, from Germany to Israel—are doing, to the extent they are technologically able to do it. His acts thus provide a factual foundation to our premonitions of how much we are all monitored and controlled. We didn’t really learn from Snowden (or from Manning) anything we didn’t already presume to be true—but it is one thing to know it in general, and another to get concrete data. It is a little bit like knowing that one’s sexual partner is playing around—one can accept the abstract knowledge of it, but pain arises when one learns the steamy details, when one gets pictures of what they were doing.

Back in 1843, the young Karl Marx claimed that the German *ancien régime* “only imagines that it believes in itself and demands that the world should imagine the same thing.” In such a situation, to put shame on those in power becomes a weapon—or, as Marx goes on: “The actual pressure must be made more pressing by adding to it consciousness of pressure, the shame must be made more shameful by publicizing it.” And this, exactly, is our situation today: we are facing the shameless cynicism of the representatives of the existing global order who only imagine that they believe in their ideas of democracy, human rights, etc. What happens in Wikileaks disclosures is that the shame, theirs and ours for tolerating such power over us, is made more shameful by publicizing it.

What we should be ashamed of is the worldwide process of the gradual narrowing of the space for what Immanuel Kant called the “public use of reason.” In his classic text *What is Enlightenment?*, Kant opposes “public” and “private” use of reason: “private” is for Kant the communal-institutional order in which we dwell (our state, our nation…), while “public” is the trans-national universality of the exercise of one’s Reason:

The public use of one’s reason must always be free, and it alone can bring about enlightenment among men. The private use of one’s reason, on the other hand, may often be very narrowly restricted without particularly hindering the progress of enlightenment. By public use of one’s reason I understand the use which a person makes of it as a scholar before the reading public. Private use I call that which one may make of it in a particular civil post or office which is entrusted to him.

We see where Kant parts with our liberal common sense: The domain of State is “private,” constrained by particular interests, while individuals reflecting on general issues use reason in a “public” way. This Kantian distinction is especially pertinent with the Internet and other new media torn between their free “public use” and their growing “private” control. In our era of cloud computing, we no longer need strong individual computers: Software and information are available on demand, and users can access web-based tools or applications through browsers as if they were programs installed on their own computer.

This wonderful new world is, however, only one side of the story, which reads like the well-known joke about the doctor who gives “first the good news, then the bad news.” Users are accessing programs and software files that are kept far away in climate-controlled rooms with thousands of computers—or, to quote a propaganda-text on cloud computing: “Details are abstracted from consumers, who no longer have need for expertise in, or control over, the technology infrastructure ‘in the cloud’ that supports them.” Two words are tell-tale here: abstraction and control—in order to manage a cloud, there needs to be a monitoring system which controls its functioning, and this system is by definition hidden from users. The more the small item (smartphone or tiny portable) I hold in my hand is personalized, easy to use, “transparent” in its functioning, the more the entire set-up has to rely on the work being done elsewhere, in a vast circuit of machines which coordinate the user’s experience. The more our experience is non-alienated, spontaneous and transparent, the more it is regulated by the invisible network controlled by state agencies and the large private companies that follow the state’s secret agendas.

Once we chose to follow the path of state secrets, we sooner or later reach the fateful point at which the very legal regulations prescribing what is secret become secret. Kant formulated the basic axiom of the
public law: “All actions relating to the right of other men are unjust if their maxim is not consistent with publicity.” A secret law, a law unknown to its subjects, legitimizes the arbitrary despotism of those who exercise it, as indicated in the title of a recent report on China: “Even what's secret is a secret in China.” Troublesome intellectuals who reported on China’s political oppression, ecological catastrophes, rural poverty, etc., got years of prison for betraying state secrets, and the catch is that many of the laws and regulations that made up the state-secret regime are themselves classified, making it difficult for individuals to know how and when they’re in violation.

What makes the all-encompassing control of our lives so dangerous is not that we lose our privacy and all our intimate secrets are exposed to the view of the Big Brother. There is no state agency that is able to exert such control—not because they don’t know enough, but because they know too much. The sheer size of data is too large, and in spite of all intricate programs for detecting suspicious messages, computers which register billions of data are too stupid to interpret and evaluate them properly, yielding ridiculous and unnecessary mistakes whereby innocent bystanders are listed as potential terrorists—and this makes state control of our communications even more dangerous. Without knowing why, without doing anything illegal, we can all of a sudden find ourselves on a list of potential terrorists. Recall the legendary answer of a Hearst newspaper editor to Hearst's inquiry as to why he doesn't want to take a long-deserved holiday: “I am afraid that if I go, there will be chaos, everything will fall apart—but I am even more afraid to discover that, if I go, things will just go on as normal without me, a proof that I am not really needed!” Something similar can be said about the state control of our communications: We should fear that we have no secrets, that secret state agencies know everything, but we should fear even more that they fail in this endeavor.

This is why whistle-blowers play a crucial role in keeping the “public reason” alive. Assange, Manning, Snowden… these are our new heroes, exemplary cases of the new ethics that befits our era of digitalized control. They are no longer just whistle-blowers who denounce illegal practices of private companies (banks, tobacco and oil firms) to the public authorities; they denounce these public authorities themselves when they engage in “private use of reason.”

We need more Mannings and Snowdens—in China, in Russia, everywhere. There are states much more oppressive than the United States—just imagine what would have happened to someone like Manning in a Russian or Chinese court (in all probability there would be no public trial!) However, one should not exaggerate the softness of the United States. True, the United States doesn’t treat prisoners as brutally as China or Russia—because of their technological priority, they simply do not need the openly brutal approach (which they are more than ready to apply when it is needed)—the invisible digital control can do well enough. In this sense, the United States is even more dangerous than China insofar as their measures of control are not perceived as such, while Chinese brutality is openly displayed.

It is therefore not enough to play one state against the other (as Snowden did, when he used Russia against the United States). We need a new International—an international network to organize the protection of whistle-blowers and the dissemination of their message. Whistle-blowers are our heroes because they prove that if those in power can do their job of controlling us, we can also fight back and throw them into a panic.

A version of this story ran in the October 2013 print issue of In These Times under the headline “Superheroes of the Digital Age.”

ABOUT THIS AUTHOR

Slavoj Žižek, a Slovenian philosopher and psychoanalyst, is a senior researcher at the Institute for
Advanced Study in the Humanities, in Essen, Germany. He has also been a visiting professor at more than 10 universities around the world. Žižek is the author of many other books, including *Living in the End Times, First As Tragedy, Then As Farce, The Fragile Absolute* and *Did Somebody Say Totalitarianism?* He lives in London.

More information about Slavoj

---

Who elected Daniel Ellsberg and *The New York Times* to take it upon themselves to reveal thousands of pages of the top secret Pentagon Papers to the American public?

Who elected Dana Priest and her still-unknown source(s) to take it upon themselves to reveal in *The Washington Post* the existence of the CIA's top secret network of black sites?

Who elected Sgt. Joseph Darby and *the New Yorker's* Seymour Hersh to take it upon themselves to tell Americans about the classified operations at Abu Ghraib?

Who elected Mark "Deep Throat" Felt to illegally disclose, and Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein to publish, secret information from an FBI investigation in the pages of *The Washington Post*?

Who elected Thomas Tamm, Jim Risen and Eric Lichtblau to spill Bush's top secret NSA warrantless eavesdropping program in the pages of *The New York Times*?

Why did all these people - whom we didn't elect - think they had the right to decide which classified information should be disclosed?
RSN: This is not all there is to this article, right? So, if it isn't, where is the rest of it? If there's more, please correct this error and provide it all here. Thank you.

My guess is that this is the whole article. And my second guess is that it is a response to Bill Maher's (stupid) question to Greenwald Friday evening at the beginning of his show. Unfortunately, if Maher can read, he doesn't have a great track record of being able to learn information and admit that he was mistaken... so this won't likely benefit the HBO host one iota.
Tomgram: Peter Van Buren, The Next Battleground in the War on Whistleblowers

Who can keep up? The revelations -- mainly thanks to the documents Edward Snowden took from the National Security Agency -- are never-ending. Just this week, we learned that GCHQ, the British intelligence agency whose activities are interwoven with the NSA’s, used a program called Optic Nerve to intercept and store “the webcam images of millions of internet users not suspected of wrongdoing” (including Americans). As the Guardian reported, “In one six-month period in 2008 alone, the agency collected webcam imagery -- including substantial quantities of sexually explicit communications -- from more than 1.8 million Yahoo user accounts globally.” Yahoo is now outraged; the Internet Association, a trade group for the giants of the industry, has condemned the program; and three U.S. senators announced an investigation of possible NSA involvement.

At about the same time, Glenn Greenwald revealed that GCHQ was engaging in “extreme tactics of deception and reputation-destruction.” These included “‘false flag operations’ (posting material to the internet and falsely attributing it to someone else), fake victim blog posts (pretending to be a victim of the individual whose reputation they want to destroy), and posting ‘negative information’ on various forums.” Again, this was evidently happening with the knowledge, if not collusion, of the NSA.

Meanwhile, with Washington entering a self-proclaimed era of “reform” when it comes to spying on Americans, we just got a striking you-can’t-win-for-losing Catch-22 message from the front lines of the surveillance wars. Claiming that recent pending lawsuits make it necessary, the Obama administration has requested permission to hang on to phone metadata “on billions of U.S. phone calls indefinitely instead of destroying it after five years.” Hmmm... this may be the only example we have of the U.S. intelligence community fighting tooth and nail to stick to the letter of the law.

And mind you, that’s just dipping a toe in the positively oceanic global surveillance waters. It’s been nine months since the Snowden revelations began and who can keep it all straight? Nonetheless, it’s possible to put everything we know so far into a simple message about our American world-in-the-making: the surveillance part of the national security state has, in its own mind, no boundaries at all. As a result, there is no one, nor any part of communications life on this planet, that is out of bounds to our surveillers.

Given what we now know, it’s easy to ignore what we don’t know about how our government is acting in our name. That's why the figure of the whistleblower -- and the Obama administration’s urge to suppress whistleblowing of any sort -- remains so important. How are we ever to know anything about the workings of that secret state of ours if someone doesn’t tell us? As a result, TomDispatch remains dedicated to documenting the Obama administration’s ongoing war against those who
From the White House: Write or Call

President Obama is committed to creating the most open and accessible administration in American history. That begins with taking comments and questions from you, the public, through our website.

Call the President

PHONE NUMBERS
Comments: 202-456-1111
Switchboard: 202-456-1414
TTY/TTD
Comments: 202-456-6213
Visitor's Office: 202-456-2121

Write a letter to the President

Here are a few simple things you can do to make sure your message gets to the White House as quickly as possible.

1. If possible, email us! This is the fastest way to get your message to President Obama.

2. If you write a letter, please consider typing it on an 8 1/2 by 11 inch sheet of paper. If you hand-write your letter, please consider using pen and writing as neatly as possible.

3. Please include your return address on your letter as well as your envelope. If you have an email address, please consider including that as well.

4. And finally, be sure to include the full address of the White House to make sure your message gets to us as quickly and directly as possible:

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Contents of #3 Jan. 31, 2012
GAP: Government Accountability Project
National Whistleblowers Center
Employment Law Group
FDA Illegal Surveillance of Whistleblowers

Contents of #4
GAP: Government Accountability Project
Sirota: Executive Branch War on Whistleblowers
John Kiriakou
Kiriakou’s Book, Reluctant Spy
Pentagon Fails Its Whistleblowers
Hedges: Obama versus Whistleblowers
Public Citizen
NSA
Misc. via Google
Contents of #5

Wikipedia Whistleblowers

National Whistleblowers Center (NWC)

Protect Federal Employee Whistleblowers

GAP’S Bridging the Gap

GAP: Government Accountability Project

OSHA and Whistleblowers

Greenwald, Documentary War on Whistleblowers

Amy Goodman, Democracy Now Programs on WB

More on Kiriakou

Contents #6, May 22, 2013

Write, Call for John Kiriakou

GAP: Bridging the Gap Spring 2013

Railway Whistleblowers Get Federal Protection

US Government Quick Guide

Department of Labor Whistleblower Regulations

Greenwald, Obama’s War on Whistleblowers (one Google page)

Sibel Edmonds, Book, US and Al Qaeda Collaboration Suppressed

Contents #7  June 26, 2013
OMNI Showing *War on Whistleblowers* Film June 26

Ann Wright on Obama Admin. vs. Manning

GREENWALD

Dick: Greenwald’s *War on Whistleblowers* Film

Greenwald’s *War on Whistleblowers*

Greenwald on Whistleblowers and Government Threats

EDWARD SNOWDEN

Leaker Snowden

Send Thanks to Snowden

Support for Snowden Around the World

Google Search

*Bridging the Gap* Executive Director

*Vance v. Rumsfeld,* Tortured Whistleblowers Sue

**Contents #8  July 30, 2013 National Whistleblower Day**

NWC Requests July 30 Be National Whistleblower Day
NWC’s The Whistleblower’s Handbook

Google Search for NWC

Greenwald, NSA’s Enhanced Cell Phone Tapping

General Cartwright Reveals Cybernet Warfare Against Iran

Pilger, Leakers vs. US Fascism

Amy Goodman Interviews Chris Pyle, 1970s Whistleblower

Bunnatine Greenhouse: Iraqi Oil Contracts Whistleblower

La Franiere, Crackdown on Leakers

Insider Threat Program: President Obama’s Crackdown on Leakers

END WHISTLEBLOWER NEWSLETTER #9 JULY 30

--
Dick Bennett

Newsletters
http://www.omnicenter.org/newsletter-archive/

Index:
http://www.omnicenter.org/omni-newsletter-general-index/
jbennet@uark.edu
Blog
http://jamesrichardbennett.blogspot.com/

j.dick.bennett@gmail.com
(479) 442-4600
2582 Jimmie Ave.
Fayetteville, AR 72703