



Written by [Alex Newman](#) on April 23, 2012

NSA Has Your E-Mails and More, Whistleblower Says

Meanwhile, the domestic spying apparatus  has almost certainly expanded more under President Obama than even under the previous George W. Bush administration, said the former technical director of the NSA World Geopolitical and Military Analysis Reporting Group. Binney exposed the lawless espionage in a [television interview](#) with Democracy Now host Amy Goodman, but he is [hardly the first to blow the whistle](#).

The internal spying regime, instituted under an NSA program known as “[Stellar Wind](#),” began sometime in 2001, Binney said. But after the scheme was implemented, he resigned from the agency in disgust. “At that point, I knew I could not stay because it was a direct violation of the constitutional rights of everybody in the country,” he said.

The NSA, Binney explained, has also enlisted the support of major companies such as AT&T to help spy on the American people. “I don’t think any of them opposed it in any way,” he said of the firms approached by the federal government to aid in the unlawful espionage activities.

According to the whistleblower, the corporations were told by officials that it was legal and “patriotic” to assist. When the lawlessness was finally exposed, however, those same companies had to be given [retroactive immunity for the crimes](#) they were caught committing.

Binney also lambasted the Patriot Act — as well as the federal government’s “secret interpretation” of it — for the role it played in purporting to authorize the unlawful spying. “That gives them license to take all the commercially available data about us, which is exceedingly dangerous,” Binney said, noting that it purports to allow authorities to create detailed profiles on every American.

“[The NSA] can build up knowledge about everyone in the country, and having that knowledge then allows them the ability to concoct all kinds of charges if they want to target you,” he continued. And despite campaign promises by President Obama to rein in the out-of-control spying bureaucracy and the wanton violations of the Constitution, the situation has deteriorated even further since he took office.

“I think the surveillance has increased,” Binney noted, saying data was being gathered on literally everybody to attack specific targets in the future. “I would suggest they have assembled on the order of 20 trillion transactions about U.S. citizens with other U.S. citizens,” he estimated. That figure does not include any Internet searches or financial transactions the NSA may also be compiling.

Binney’s revelations would seem to contradict congressional testimony by NSA boss General Keith Alexander, who [told lawmakers just last month](#) that the agency does not routinely spy on Americans — which would be illegal. Responding to questions from Rep. Hank Johnson (D-Ga.), Alexander acknowledged that, “to conduct that kind of collection in the United States it would have to go through a court order.”

According to Binney, however, the NSA chief was using verbal semantics to conceal the truth about the agency’s lawlessness — and the congressional testimony was itself contradictory. “The point is how you



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split the words,” Binney said. “I wouldn’t say lying — it’s kind of avoiding the issue.”

The persecution of whistleblowers who attempt to expose the criminality, meanwhile, has accelerated under the Obama administration as well. “I think it’s to silence what’s going on,” Binney said after host Goodman claimed that more whistleblowers had been prosecuted under Obama than under all past administrations combined.

It happened to Binney, too. He reported to the FBI in 2007 that senior Bush administration officials criminally “conspired to subvert the Constitution and violate various laws ... that existed at the time.” Then-President Bush, Vice President Dick Cheney, former CIA and NSA boss Michael Hayden, and ex-Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) George Tenet were all involved in the conspiracy, he said.

After Binney began to expose the NSA crimes, the federal government “fabricated” several criminal charges against him, he told the host. The alleged scheme to put him in prison on bogus claims, however, failed spectacularly.

According to Binney, he had assembled evidence showing “malicious prosecution,” which would have embarrassed the administration had it gone forward with its concocted case. Eventually the trumped up charges against him were dropped.

As analysts [have noted in the wake](#) of the most recent scandal surrounding the agency, fears about NSA powers have been around for decades — and the move toward total surveillance of Americans began well before the September 11 attacks. In 1975, Senator Frank Church, for example, who led the congressional investigation in the FBI’s COINTEL counter-intelligence program, offered a particularly stark warning about the potential abilities of the NSA being used against Americans.

“Th[e NSA’s] capability at any time could be turned around on the American people, and no American would have any privacy left, such is the capability to monitor everything: telephone conversations, telegrams, it doesn’t matter,” warned Sen. Church. “There would be no place to hide. [If a dictatorship ever took over, the NSA] could enable it to impose total tyranny, and there would be no way to fight back.”

And according to Binney, at least, America is moving alarming close to such a scenario right now. “We are, like, that far from a turnkey totalitarian state,” he [told](#) *Wired* magazine for a recent article about the NSA’s [massive new spy center being built in Utah](#), holding his thumb and forefinger close together to illustrate the nation’s proximity to full-blown tyranny.

While the trend toward ever-expanding unconstitutional power usurpation has been ongoing for decades, it has accelerated in an unprecedented way over the last 10 years. President Obama, however, has taken it to a new level, claiming to have the power to [assassinate](#) or [indefinitely detain](#) American citizens all over the world [without even charging them with a crime](#) — let alone getting a jury conviction.

Meanwhile, the administration is currently under congressional investigation for [corruption in doling out “stimulus” money](#), sending [weapons to Mexican drug cartels to push domestic gun-control measures](#), [laundering narcotics profits](#), and more. Whistleblowers who exposed some of those unlawful programs also said they were [retaliated against](#).

The government, of course, claims all of the unconstitutional powers and the domestic espionage regime are needed to keep America “safe.” But critics from across the political spectrum — supporters of the Constitution, the rule of law, individual liberty, limited government, civil liberties, and American



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traditions of freedom — are outraged by the justifications.

Congress obviously has the power to stop the administration's schemes in their tracks by cutting off the funding. Whether lawmakers will eventually step in to rein in the abuses, however, remains to be seen. Based on current trends — with legislators and courts continuing to [rubber stamp](#) executive dictates while [refusing](#) to restore checks and balances — not everybody is hopeful. But restoring the rule of law is possible, according to analysts, though it will require a massive outcry from the American people.

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