



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on October 28, 2009

NSA Supercenters to Store Americans' Private Data Permanently

The National Security Agency is building huge new storage facilities to store the unconstitutionally gained data on the American people's telephone calls and Internet traffic permanently, including new buildings in suburban Salt Lake City, Utah, and San Antonio, Texas.

The NSA has been [keeping permanent records of all American's telephone call habits and Internet traffic](#) since shortly after September 11, 2001, according to major news reports, without the [constitutionally required warrants](#) from a court.



No longer able to store all the intercepted phone calls and e-mail in its Ft. Meade, Maryland, headquarters, the NSA is engaging in its own housing boom. How much data will these giant, multibillion dollar new facilities hold? According to James Bamford of the [New York Review of Books](#), the facility in Utah alone could hold data that will be measured in Yottabytes. Never heard of Yottabytes? You're not alone. Most computers sold at stores still measure their storage at gigabytes, or billions of bits of data. A few store a terabyte of information, or one trillion bits of information. That's 1,000,000,000,000 pieces of information. Yottabytes is the highest number that has yet been named in computer information. The number is septillions of billions of bits of data, or 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 bits of data.

In his review of Matthew M. Aid's new book on the NSA, *The Secret Sentry: The Untold History of the National Security Agency*, Bamford [noted](#) that the NSA assault on the Constitution's Fourth Amendment has taken place without public opposition or even public debate. "Unlike the British government, which, to its great credit, allowed public debate on the idea of a central data bank," Bamford [wrote](#), "the NSA obtained the full cooperation of much of the American telecom industry in utmost secrecy after September 11." And when the British government held that debate, the people rose up against such a "big brother"-style plan:

When the plans were released by the UK government, there was an immediate outcry from both the press and the public, leading to the scrapping of the "big brother database," as it was called. In its place, however, the government came up with a new plan. Instead of one vast, centralized database, the telecom companies and Internet service providers would be required to maintain records of all details about people's phone, e-mail, and Web-browsing habits for a year and to permit the government access to them when asked. That has led again to public anger and to a protest by the London Internet Exchange, which represents more than 330 telecommunications firms.

Not so in America, where economically challenged communities are welcoming the multibillion dollar construction work to create the facilities. Freedom can be traded for temporary prosperity, according to



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local officials in Utah, as reported by a [news segment on KSL](#), Salt Lake City's NBC affiliate.

"The data center is estimated to be 1 million square feet, sitting on 200-acres, and it couldn't come at a better time for Utah's economy," KSL [reported](#), and will cost taxpayers nearly \$2 billion. The report went on to enthuse that "even Congressman Jason Chaffetz is excited. From Washington he told KSL News: 'It's a benefit to our economy and our national security.'"

In San Antonio, the NSA is dramatically expanding an existing facility rather than creating a new one. *San Antonio Current* writer Greg M. Schwartz explained how the expanded facility would be 470,000 square feet, almost the size of the Alamodome. Schwartz [revealed](#) that San Antonio officials actually courted the NSA, sending trade delegations to Ft. Meade to win the expansion. "The new facility is a potential boon to the local economy since it's reportedly going to employ around 1,500 people," Schwartz noted, "but questions remain about whether there will be adequate oversight to prevent civil-rights violations like Uncle Sam's recent notorious warrantless wiretapping program." Actually, there's no honest question about that. Schwartz is just politely saying in journalistic cant that, like Salt Lake City, San Antonio expects to profit from the destruction of the Constitution's Bill of Rights. Temporarily, anyway.

Schwartz got a personal dose of the destruction of the Bill of Rights while preparing his story for the *San Antonio Current*. "Readers are advised not to take any photos unless you care to be detained for at least a 45-minute interrogation by the National Security Agency, as this reporter was," Schwartz [wrote](#). The security guards asked, but did not demand, that Schwartz destroy photos he had taken of the facility.

They didn't take his camera — this time, that is.

Of course, if the NSA is free to ignore one part of the Bill of Rights, the [Fourth Amendment prohibition on searches without court warrants and probable cause](#), what security can Americans have in preventing the NSA from ignoring the other parts of the Constitution ... such as [freedom of the press under the First Amendment](#)?



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