



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on March 18, 2012

New Spy Apparatus Lets People “Bug” Themselves

"'Transformational' is an overused word, but I do believe it properly applies to these technologies," said Petraeus as quoted in the [Daily Mail](#), a British newspaper. Petraeus was speaking to a venture capital firm about new technologies that aim to add processors and Web connections to previously "dumb" home appliances such as refrigerators, ovens and even lighting systems, the London tabloid reported. Petraeus described to potential investors the effect the technologies will have on what he called "clandestine statecraft"



"Items of interest will be located, identified, monitored, and remotely controlled through technologies such as radio-frequency identification, sensor networks, tiny embedded servers, and energy harvesters — all connected to the next-generation Internet using abundant, low-cost, and high-power computing," the CIA Director said.

People downloading a film from Netflix to a flatscreen or turning on a Web radio may unwittingly alert interested parties as to exactly where they are and what they are doing. Spies will no longer have to break into a home to plant electronic "bugs" because, thanks to the "connected" devices in the new technology, people will "bug" their own homes, Petraeus said. The electronic chips employed are smaller, lower-powered, and cheaper than previous processors and designed to connect nearly every kind of electronic appliance to the Internet. The connected technology even allows the appliances to be remote-controlled and allows those in control of it to read household activities like a book.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation and other organizations concerned about privacy rights have warned of the dangers of misuse of geolocation data. Indeed, it would appear difficult to overestimate the danger posed by enhanced surveillance powers that call to mind *1984*, George Orwell's futuristic novel (published in 1948) in which subjects of a totalitarian state are spied upon in their own homes through a two-way television that can't be turned off. The people are kept in line by the knowledge that the eyes and ears of the state are everywhere — and always, "BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING."

Photo: CIA Director David Petraeus



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