



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on January 3, 2015

DARPA Developing Microdrones Designed to Sneak Into Homes

The federal government apparently isn't content with remotely watching and recording your every electronic (and real world) movement; it will soon control microdrones that could then be sent surreptitiously into your home. And unless the warrantless electronic surveillance already being conducted by government-run-amok is brought to a halt, this new form of home invasion will also be warrantless.



DARPA, the military's research and development arm, has announced its intent to sponsor development of a new category of these tiny monitors.

In [a press release soliciting bids](#) for manufacture of the microdrones, DARPA doesn't define the potential target theatre, but any promise of foreign focus is illusory in a world where the Constitution's prohibition on warrantless searches is seen as nothing more than a quaint parchment barrier to those determined to keep an eye (and ear) on every person in the world.

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Of course, in the present climate of near-constant urban unrest, it isn't a stretch to see the deployment of these drones justified by the urgent need to restore peace and order.

The outline of the DARPA scheme, called the Fast Lightweight Autonomy (FLA) program, is set out in a presolicitation announcement posted by the federal government:

The Fast Lightweight Autonomy (FLA) program will explore non-traditional perception and autonomy methods that enable new classes of minimalistic algorithms for high-speed navigation in cluttered environments. Through this exploration, the program will develop and demonstrate the capability for small and fast unmanned air vehicles (UAVs) to fly autonomously through complex, cluttered environments. The FLA program focuses on autonomy algorithms and software specifically on sensing, perception, planning, and control rather than on the flight hardware platform.

If successful, the algorithms developed under this program could impact a wide range of unmanned systems by reducing the amount of processing power, communications, and human intervention needed for low-level tasks such as navigation through a cluttered environment....

In a more detailed version of the announcement, the FLA program takes on an even eerier aspect:

A traditional approach to operating small UAVs uses a human operator as the pilot. The air vehicles are typically remotely controlled with the operator watching the vehicle or teleoperated with the operator watching data from on-board sensors. These techniques work only when a highly skilled operator is coupled with a communications channel having high availability and manageable latency. However, the approach breaks down when obstacles are added to the environment, as communications degrade, and as vehicle speed increases. Birds and flying insects maneuver easily



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at high speeds near obstacles. The FLA program asks the question “How can autonomous flying robotic systems achieve similar high-speed performance?”

Another traditional approach to controlling small, unmanned air vehicles uses Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates to specify a flight path as a series of predetermined waypoints. This method for navigation has proven effective only in situations where GPS is available. It fails when GPS is lost due to interference such as jamming or poor reception indoors; as well as in settings in which GPS bounds on accuracy are not adequate for the size and speed of the platform. Birds and flying insects are able to perform well without using predetermined waypoints or an external position reference system.

Flying insects? Thanks to the legal plunder perpetrated by the federal government and the billions of dollars it puts at the disposal of the Department of Defense, the watchers will soon be able to be the proverbial fly on the wall — walls within the formerly private residences of Americans.

The announcement even appears to boast about such a scenario, saying that “small, fast, autonomous UAVs could enable missions that are not otherwise possible, such as reconnaissance in denied areas (for example, in a protected or structurally damaged building).”

And, later: “For this program, it does not suffice for the UAVs to fly high above the scene looking down. Instead, the UAVs must fly into and through the confined terrain.”

There was a time in the United States when a man’s home was “confined terrain” when it came to unwarranted looking on the part of the government. It seems that now, though, that not only are homes targets of surveillance, but the Constitution seems to be nothing more than an obstacle to be avoided.

As with so many of these drone projects, the goal seems to be the removal of human oversight of the watching and the assassinating. A DARPA spokesman pointed to such a purpose.

“Urban and disaster relief operations would be obvious key beneficiaries, but applications for this technology could extend to a wide variety of missions using small and large unmanned systems linked together with manned platforms as a system of systems,” said Stefanie Tompkins, director of DARPA’s Defense Sciences Office. “By enabling unmanned systems to learn ‘muscle memory’ and perception for basic tasks like avoiding obstacles, it would relieve overload and stress on human operators so they can focus on supervising the systems and executing the larger mission.”

How long will this deprivation of basic liberty take to development and how much will it cost us? DARPA gives the answer:

DARPA anticipates that the FLA program will provide up to two (2) years of funding for Phase 1 efforts, and up to one (1) year of funding for Phase 2 efforts. Phase 1 elements should be proposed as the base effort and Phase 2 as an option. Proposals must clearly allocate the statements of work, deliverables and costs to either the base or the optional effort.

Although DARPA will consider proposals of any scale, team efforts are not envisioned to exceed \$5.5 million in total cost or three (3) years in duration.

In other words, in three years, the U.S. military will possess the power to send insect-sized, autonomous drones into the homes of Americans that are specifically designed to avoid detection, and deliver information on the target instantly to those who launched the drones.

Day by day, the dossier of dictatorship being compiled by President Obama grows thicker and thicker. From the assumption of authority to draw “First Amendment Zones” to the supposed right to capture



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and indefinitely detain American citizens in violation of the Fourth and Fifth Amendments and the capacity to send self-directing miniature drones into homes and buildings, President Obama and his congressional co-conspirators are attacking the constitutional barriers protecting the people from tyrants.

But the complete shredding of the U.S. Constitution protecting us from tyranny is not inevitable, and the damage already inflicted on history's greatest experiment in human liberty can be reversed over time — if enough citizens become informed and then work with others to put the federal government back into its constitutional restraints.

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The New American is an affiliate of The John Birch Society, an organization that provides the means for freedom-loving Americans to work together to save our constitutionally protected freedoms. To learn more about the JBS, [click here](#). — The editors



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