



Targeted for Tyranny: We're All Suspects Under the Government's Precrime Program

There is now the capacity to make tyranny total in America.— James Bamford, journalist



John Whitehead

We're all being targeted now.

We're all guilty until proven innocent now.

And thanks to the 24/7 surveillance being carried out by the government's spy network of fusion centers, we are all now sitting ducks, just waiting to be tagged, flagged, targeted, monitored, manipulated, investigated, interrogated, heckled and [generally harassed](#) by agents of the American police state.

Although these precrime programs are popping up all across the country, in small towns and big cities, they are not making us any safer but they are [endangering individual freedoms](#).

Nationwide, there are upwards of [123 real-time crime centers](#) (a.k.a. fusion centers), which allow local police agencies to upload and share massive amounts of surveillance data and intelligence with state and federal agencies culled from surveillance cameras, facial recognition technology, gunshot sensors, social media monitoring, drones and body cameras, and artificial intelligence-driven predictive policing algorithms.

These data fusion centers, which effectively create an electronic prison—a [digital police state](#)—from which there is no escape, are being [built in partnership with big tech companies](#) such as Microsoft, Google and Amazon, which [helped to fuel the rise of police militarization and domestic surveillance](#).

While these latest expansions of the surveillance state are part of the Biden Administration's efforts to combat domestic extremism through the creation of a ["precrime" crime prevention agency](#), they have long been a pivotal part of the government's plans for total control and dominion.

Yet this crime prevention campaign is not so much about making America safer as it is about ensuring that the government has the wherewithal to muzzle anti-government discontent, penalize anyone expressing anti-government sentiments, and [preemptively nip in the bud](#) any attempts by the populace to challenge the government's authority or question its propaganda.

As J.D. Tuccille writes for *Reason*, "[A]t a time when government officials rage against 'misinformation' and 'disinformation' that is often just disagreement with whatever opinions are currently popular among the political class, [fusion centers frequently scrutinize peaceful dissenting speech](#)."

Indeed, while the Biden Administration was recently [dealt a legal blow](#) over its attempts to urge social media companies to do more to combat so-called dis- and mis-information, these fusion centers are the unacknowledged powerhouses behind the government's campaign to censor and retaliate against those



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who vocalize their disagreement and discontent with government policies.

Already, the powers-that-be are mobilizing to ensure that fusion centers have the ability to monitor and lock down sectors of a community at a moment's notice.

For instance, a 42,000-square-foot behemoth of a fusion center in downtown Washington is reportedly designed to "[better prepare law enforcement for the next public health emergency or Jan. 6-style attack.](#)" According to an agency spokeswoman, "Screens covering the walls of the new facility will show surveillance cameras around the city as well as [social media accounts that may be monitored for threatening speech.](#)"

It's like a scene straight out of [Steven Spielberg's dystopian film *Minority Report*](#), set in 2054, where police agencies harvest intelligence from widespread surveillance, behavior prediction technologies, data mining, precognitive technology, and neighborhood and family snitch programs in order to capture would-be criminals before they can do any damage.

Incredibly, as the various nascent technologies employed and shared by the government and corporations alike—facial recognition, iris scanners, massive databases, behavior prediction software, and so on—are incorporated into a complex, interwoven cyber network aimed at tracking our movements, predicting our thoughts and controlling our behavior, the dystopian vision of past writers is fast becoming our reality.

Our world is now characterized by widespread surveillance, behavior prediction technologies, data mining, fusion centers, driverless cars, voice-controlled homes, facial recognition systems, cybugs and drones, and predictive policing (pre-crime) aimed at capturing would-be criminals before they can do any damage.

What once seemed futuristic no longer occupies the realm of science fiction.

The American police state's take on the dystopian terrors foreshadowed by George Orwell, Aldous Huxley and Phillip K. Dick have all been rolled up into one oppressive pre-crime and [pre-thought](#)-crime package.

In this way, the novel *1984* has become an operation manual for an omnipresent, modern-day surveillance state in which ordinary Americans find themselves labeled domestic extremists for engaging in lawful behavior that triggers the government's precrime sensors.

The technocrats who run the surveillance state don't even have to break a sweat while monitoring what you say, what you read, what you write, where you go, how much you spend, whom you support, and with whom you communicate and then classifying you as a danger.

Computers now do the tedious work of trolling social media, the internet, text messages and phone calls for potentially anti-government remarks, all of which are carefully recorded, documented, and stored to be used against you someday at a time and place of the government's choosing.

In this way, with the help of automated eyes and ears, a growing arsenal of high-tech software, hardware and techniques, government propaganda urging Americans to turn into spies and snitches, as well as social media and [behavior sensing software](#), government agents are spinning a sticky spider-web of [threat assessments](#), behavioral sensing warnings, flagged "words," and "suspicious" activity reports aimed at snaring *potential* enemies of the state.

It's also a [setup ripe for abuse](#).



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For instance, an investigative report by the Brennan Center found that “Over the last two decades, [leaked materials have shown fusion centers tracking protestors and casting peaceful activities as potential threats](#). Their targets have included racial justice and environmental advocates, right-wing activists, and third-party political candidates.”

One fusion center in Maine was found to have been “illegally collecting and sharing information about Maine [residents who weren’t suspected of criminal activity](#). They included gun purchasers, people protesting the construction of a new power transmission line, the employees of a peacebuilding summer camp for teenagers, and even people who travelled to New York City frequently.”

In one Florida county, police have been using their precrime program to generate “[lists of people it considers likely to break the law](#), based on arrest histories, unspecified intelligence and arbitrary decisions by police analysts.” Then, according to the *Tampa Bay Times*, deputies are deployed “to find and interrogate anyone whose name appears, often without probable cause, a search warrant or evidence of a specific crime. [They swarm homes in the middle of the night, waking families and embarrassing people in front of their neighbors](#). They write tickets for missing mailbox numbers and overgrown grass, saddling residents with court dates and fines. They come again and again, making arrests for any reason they can.”

The goal? “[Make their lives miserable](#) until they move or sue.”

This is how the government is turning a nation of citizens into suspects and would-be criminals.

This transformation is being driven by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the agency [notorious](#) for militarizing the police and SWAT teams; spying on activists, dissidents and veterans; stockpiling ammunition; distributing license plate readers; contracting to build detention camps; tracking cell-phones with Stingray devices; carrying out military drills and lockdowns in American cities; using the TSA as an advance guard; conducting virtual strip searches with full-body scanners; carrying out soft target checkpoints; directing government workers to spy on Americans; conducting widespread spying networks using fusion centers; carrying out Constitution-free border control searches; funding city-wide surveillance cameras; and utilizing drones and other spybots.

Twenty years after being formed in the wake of 9/11, the DHS is a [massive, costly, power-hungry bureaucracy](#) working hard to ensure that the government is all-seeing, all-knowing and all-powerful.

Yet here’s the thing: you don’t have to do anything illegal or challenge the government’s authority in order to be flagged as a suspicious character, labeled an enemy of the state and locked up like a dangerous criminal.

In fact, all you need to do is use certain trigger words, surf the internet, communicate using a cell phone, drive a car, stay at a hotel, purchase materials at a hardware store, take flying or boating lessons, appear suspicious to a neighbor, question government authority, or generally live in the United States.

The following activities are guaranteed to get you censored, surveilled, eventually placed on a government watch list, possibly detained and potentially killed.

Use harmless trigger words like cloud, pork and pirates. Use a cell phone. Drive a car. Attend a political rally. Express yourself on social media. Serve in the military. Disagree with a law enforcement official. Call in sick to work. Limp or stutter. Appear confused or nervous, fidget, whistle or smell bad. Allow yourself to be seen in public waving a toy gun or anything remotely resembling a gun, such as a water



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nozzle or a remote control or a walking cane, for instance. Stare at a police officer. Appear to be pro-gun, pro-freedom or anti-government. Attend a public school. Speak truth to power.

It's just a matter of time before you find yourself wrongly accused, investigated and confronted by police based on a data-driven algorithm or risk assessment culled together by a computer program run by artificial intelligence.

Before long, every household in America will be flagged as a threat and assigned a threat score.

Without having ever knowingly committed a crime or been convicted of one, you and your fellow citizens have likely been assessed for behaviors the government might consider devious, dangerous or concerning; [assigned a threat score](#) based on your associations, activities and viewpoints; and [catalogued in a government database](#) according to how you should be approached by police and other government agencies based on your particular threat level.

Combine predictive policing with surveillance, overcriminalization and precrime programs, then add in militarized police trained to shoot first and ask questions later, and as I make clear in my book [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#) and in its fictional counterpart [The Erik Blair Diaries](#), you'll be lucky to escape with your life.

If you're not scared yet, you should be.

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