



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on July 14, 2015

Minority Report-Style Crime Prediction to Target “Terrorists” on Twitter?

The federal government believes it can predict “radicalization” by reading tweets.

During an appearance before the Senate Judiciary Committee on July 8, FBI Director James Comey warned that members of the Islamic State were using Twitter to radicalize and recruit “thousands of English-language followers.”

Just in case the threat wasn’t clear or present enough, Comey added, “This is not your grandfather’s al-Qaida. There’s a device, almost a devil on their shoulder all day long saying, ‘Kill, kill, kill, kill.’”

That device is social media, a platform used, Comey insists, by ISIS to send out its kill orders. The FBI has its hands full, he said.

“Our job is to look at a haystack the size of this country to find needles that are increasingly invisible to us because of end-to-end encryption,” Comey testified. “This is an enormous problem ... we are stopping these things so far, but it is incredibly difficult.”

One “creative solution” being offered to help the government sort through the straw is a software application that can analyze tweets and target the potential terrorists. *Huffington Post* [reports](#):

One of the best ways to do this is to use tools like University of Liverpool, Jon Cole’s the Inventory of Vulnerable Persons [IVP] to rate individuals that endorse ISIS to learn what other signs they are showing of vulnerability to becoming violent extremists and then investigate and intervene with the serious ones. This has already been done and works well. Jeff Weyers, a Canadian researcher identified 300 such persons, turned them over to law enforcement. When investigations were done police found explosives, guns and other evidence of terror plots that were thankfully, thwarted.

While thwarting attacks is certainly commendable, there is something sinister about the means employed by the government that led to the identification of the alleged (potential) evildoers.

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Although the author of the *Huffington Post* piece, Anne Speckhard, admits the proposal’s “potential for entrapment,” she diminishes that danger, preferring to sacrifice civil liberty on the altar of identifying Islamic extremists. Well, *alleged* extremists.

Speckhard, quoting [her own book on fighting ISIS](#), cites the story of some “undercover FBI agents” that arrested a man that they “caught trying to bomb the U.S. Capitol.” Well, not really. Here’s the rest of the story:

In January 2015 the FBI arrested Christopher Lee Cornell, a 20-year-old from Green Township, Ohio, charging him with “the attempted killing of a U.S. government officer and possession of a firearm in





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furtherance of attempted crime of violence” among other crimes.

Just how did Cornell come into contact with the FBI? According to court papers, “the FBI said the unidentified informant had been cooperating with authorities to obtain ‘favorable treatment’ in an unrelated case.”

In July 2014, *The New American* reported on the [FBI's role in fomenting](#) (some say creating) terror threats from those who would otherwise be guilty of nothing more than boasting:

The U.S. government often manufactures and creates the alleged “terrorism threats” it purports to be fighting, in some cases even prodding mentally challenged dupes into bogus “plots” that authorities concocted in the first place, according to a newly released report highlighting the troubling practices. Perhaps the most outrageous finding: Almost every high-profile domestic terror case across America since the September 11 attacks featured the “direct involvement” of government agents or informants. In some cases, virtually the entire “terrorism” plot — from start to finish — was actually led and financed by government operatives.

Also alarming, the investigation found, are routine violations of constitutionally protected rights such as due process and fair treatment amid the never-ending and increasingly domestic-oriented terror war. From the use of “secret evidence” and anonymous juries to schemes that border on “entrapment,” the report suggests that U.S. terror policies are officially out of control. The authors of the report said the controversial tactics may even be putting national security at risk by diverting law enforcement and other resources from real threats.

Speckhard muses that without the FBI’s timely nudge toward terror, Cornell “may also have carried out a successful and lethal attack.”

And then again, maybe he wouldn’t have.

Again, from *The New American*:

Since the September 11, 2001, attacks on U.S. soil, there have been some 500 terrorism-related cases in federal courts. “This is a number that sounds really big, and it makes it sound like Americans are being kept safe from terrorism attacks,” explained Andrea Prasow, deputy Washington director for Human Rights Watch. “But we found that in a lot of these cases, people were prosecuted who never would have committed a terrorist attack in the first place, if it weren’t for the involvement of the FBI.”

The New American has also documented more than a few similar cases in recent years. Among the myriad examples: Duping mentally ill Muslims into agreeing to help with fake government-orchestrated terror plots, providing fake “bombs” and convincing a group of young anarchists to plant them on a bridge, and countless more. In press releases announcing arrests and prosecutions, authorities regularly boast about the fact that the “terrorists” arrested were actually prodded and led into the scheme by government agents and informants. Sometimes the dupes are even offered taxpayer money.

We are entering a frightening futuristic era where crime fighting has become crime predicting and where the Constitution and over a thousand years of *Anglo-American* protection of individual liberty are ignored by the federal government and their mainstream media mouthpieces.

Speckhard doesn’t have a problem with this. In fact, she recommends “using tools like the IVP [so] we can track and rate vulnerability of individuals moving into extremism and stop them before they attack.



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The important thing is as ISIS gets more sophisticated, we must have the will and the smarts to get out in front of them and prevent and thwart potential attacks.”

Stopping “potential” crime threatens *actual liberty*, particularly when those potential perpetrators would never have taken any actionable moves toward terror were it not for the prodding and prompting of agents of the federal government and the criminals with whom they cut deals for helping them find the “fanatics.”

Especially when fanaticism means whatever the oligarchy says it means.



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