

Palantir's Database Would Gut the Fourth Amendment

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Let us make no mistake about what this means: It is the construction of a general warrant in digital form. Our Founding Fathers fought a revolution to free us from the oppressive tyranny of general warrants — those vile instruments that allowed British agents to rummage through Colonists’ homes and papers without cause or oversight. The Fourth Amendment was ratified precisely to slam the door on such abuses. It declares, in no uncertain terms, that “the right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated,” and that “no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause.” What, then, are we to call this modern effort to aggregate the private lives of Americans in the hands of bureaucrats? I call it an electronic general warrant — a warrant that seeks everything about everyone, everywhere, all at once.

Harmless “Efficiency”?

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Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on June 2, 2025

over the natural rights of the governed.

This is not a Republican problem or a Democratic problem; it is a constitutional crisis. Yet we are told by the apologists of the surveillance state that Palantir is merely a “data processor,” not a “data controller.” How convenient. This thin semantic defense crumbles under the weight of reality. A processor that can “find hidden things” in the data of every American is not a neutral party — it is the handmaiden of Leviathan. And when the executive branch — any executive branch — has the power to compile a “master list” of personal information on its citizens, history teaches us, that abuse is not a possibility, but an inevitability.

Danger of General Warrants

Let us recall the wisdom of James Otis, that great champion of liberty who denounced general warrants in 1761: “It is a power that places the liberty of every man in the hands of every petty officer.” Substitute “Palantir engineer” or “DOGE bureaucrat” for “petty officer” and Otis’ warning rings truer than ever. The Trump administration’s efforts to merge data from the IRS, Social Security Administration, Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and even the Department of Education into a single, searchable database is a direct affront to the principle that a man’s papers — be they in his desk or on his server — are his own, immune from rummaging by government snoops without probable cause.

Consider the implications: with a few keystrokes, the federal government could create a comprehensive profile of any American — complete with financial records, medical histories, social connections, and ideological affiliations. And let us not pretend this is idle speculation; the *Times* itself reports that Palantir’s software is being deployed at DHS, IRS, and even Immigration and Customs Enforcement to monitor not only migrants but, by extension, every American whose data is held by the federal leviathan. The temptation to wield this power for political vendettas is simply too great. The Fourth Amendment was written to prevent precisely this: “The right of the people to be secure” means nothing if bureaucrats and political operatives can rifle through the digital lives of citizens under the guise of “efficiency” or “national security.”

Who Is Guarding the Fourth Amendment?

Where are the voices of constitutional fidelity? Where are the congressional guardians of our Fourth Amendment rights? Silence — deafening silence. Meanwhile, Palantir’s stock price soars, as though the Bill of Rights were just another line item on a quarterly report. And yet some former Palantir employees, to their credit, have spoken out. For instance, Linda Xia’s warning that “data that is collected for one reason should not be repurposed for other uses” is a reminder that even within the belly of the beast, conscience has not been wholly extinguished. But conscience alone cannot preserve our liberties; only an informed and vigilant citizenry, jealously guarding their constitutional rights, can turn back this tide of surveillance.

We should remember that the Fourth Amendment was not written to protect criminals from the law, but to protect the people from their government. And now, the government — under the leadership of a man who claims to want to “drain the swamp” — is transforming that government into a swamp monster armed with every piece of data on every American.



This Is Our Fight

If we are to remain a free people, we must denounce this unconstitutional colossus. Congress must refuse to fund this Fourth Amendment demolition derby. State governments must pass laws that prohibit their cooperation with these federal data-fusion centers. And the courts — those so-called guardians of liberty — must remember that the Constitution was not written in pencil to be erased at the whim of executive orders.

The Fourth Amendment is not negotiable. It is not subject to the whims of Palantir's quarterly earnings or Trump's fantasies of an all-knowing bureaucracy. It is the shield of the people, and it is time we took it up once again, before it is reduced to a relic — another artifact of a republic that lost its way.

If the Founding Fathers saw what is being done in their name, they would not recognize the America for which they pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. Let us honor their sacrifice by rejecting this high-tech tyranny, by repudiating the surveillance state in all its guises, and by reminding our leaders that no executive order — no matter how gilded with the language of efficiency — can repeal the natural right of the people to be secure in their papers and effects.

This is our fight, and it is one we cannot afford to lose.



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