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The Deep State's Talking Points

General Alexander at Black Hat USA

by BILL BLUNDEN

The man who presides over the NSA and CYBERCOM appeared recently at Black Hat USA, repeating a number of standard talking points about the emerging surveillance state. Pulling the national security card, he pleaded that Orwellian¹ mass interception² is necessary to keep us safe. It's a ridiculous argument that essentially extorts privacy (e.g. as Tom Friedman and Bill Keller both asserted, we must undermine³ the Constitution to save it⁴). A notion, by the way, that Founding Father Benjamin Franklin⁵ found abhorrent:

"They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

Likewise, a former Stasi officer warns⁶:

"It is the height of naiveté to think that once collected this information won't be used... This is the nature of secret government organizations. The only way to protect the people's privacy is not to allow the government to collect their information in the first place"

To help support his stance, in a public statement⁷ given by General Alexander on June 25, 2013, the NSA director claims:

"We provided over 50 cases to both the House and Senate Intelligence Committees that show the specific contribution of these programs to our understanding and, in many cases, disruption of terrorist plots in the United States and over 20 countries throughout the world."

Kenneth Roth, the Executive Director of Human Rights Watch (and a former federal prosecutor during the 1980s,) says⁸ otherwise:

"Upon scrutiny, however, many of these plots appear in fact to have been uncovered not because of the mass collection of our metadata but through more traditional surveillance of particular phone numbers or email addresses—the kinds of targeted inquiries that easily would have justified a judicial order allowing review of records kept by communications companies or even monitoring the content of those communications."

Addendum: In a hearing that took place on July 31st, the NSA's own Deputy Director John Inglis admitted that the NSA's mass collection of phone metadata under Section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act has been pivotal in stopping only a single terror plot. Journalist Spencer Ackerman notes that⁹:

"In open session, directly, they can't even say that seven years' worth of phone records collection, basically a network of everyone's social interactions conducted over the telephone, which is very easy to tell from metadata, for seven years, from all Americans, has maybe stopped one terrorist plot."

When asked about why terrorists are attacking the United States (this is where he *really* shows the true extent of his indoctrination) General Alexander asserts¹⁰ that terrorists attack us to impose a caliphate of sharia law:

"'Why do so many countries want to attack us?' the person asked."

"The general replied that America stands in the way of them reaching their objective, which is to force everybody to comply with sharia law."

More unadulterated propaganda; terrorists are attacking us because the United States is engaged in an unrivaled global¹¹ campaign¹² of state-sponsored terror. President Obama's own words¹³ explain the basic dynamic at work:

"There is no country on Earth that would tolerate missiles raining down on its citizens from outside its borders"

The same people who have attacked the United States confirm¹⁴ President Obama's observation. Glenn Greenwald points out:

"In the last several years, there have been four other serious attempted or successful attacks on US soil by Muslims, and in every case, they emphatically all say the same thing: that they were motivated by the continuous, horrific violence brought by the US and its allies to the Muslim world - violence which routinely kills and oppresses innocent men, women and children"

It's well documented that the Deep State has embarked on a self-perpetuating¹⁵ program of systematic¹⁶ mass¹⁷ murder¹⁸ that has killed¹⁹ hundreds²⁰ of innocent²¹ children²². Is it any wonder why²³ people abroad despise us? It's not our freedoms that they hate; it's the brutal reign of terror²⁴ that our leaders are executing.

Addendum: In other words, Muslims look around and conclude that *the United States hates their freedoms*²⁵.

The epicenter of the progressive movement, Noam Chomsky, describes²⁶ the contradictory nature of General Alexander's various explanations:

"You can't seriously on the one hand be not only carrying out massive terror but even generating potential terrorists against yourself and claim that we have to have massive surveillance to protect ourselves against terror. That's a joke. It should be headlines."

General Alexander, sitting on mountains of pilfered data, is no doubt aware of this. The very fact that he falls back on such a blatantly flawed argument reveals the interests that he represents. General Alexander serves the deep forces of wealth and power that reside outside of government.

¹ <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/15/crux-nsa-collect-it-all/print>

² http://www.democracynow.org/2013/7/9/edward_snowden_on_why_he_stood#

³ <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/12/opinion/friedman-blowing-a-whistle.html>

⁴ <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/06/17/opinion/keller-living-with-the-surveillance-state.html>

⁵ <http://books.google.com/books?id=W2MFAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA270&lpg=PA270t#v=onepage&q&f=false>

⁶ <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/06/26/v-print/195045/memories-of-stasi-color-germans.html>

⁷ <http://cryptome.org/2013/07/nsa-workforce.htm>

⁸ <http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2013/jul/02/electronic-surveillance-missing-laws/>

⁹ http://www.democracynow.org/2013/8/1/nsa_confirms_dragnet_phone_records_collection#

¹⁰ http://news.cnet.com/8301-1009_3-57596420-83/hackers-to-nsa-chief-read-the-constitution/

¹¹ http://www.democracynow.org/2013/4/24/the_world_is_a_battlefield_jeremy

¹² http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/books/2013/05/06/130506crbo_books_coll?printable=true¤tPage=all

¹³ <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/nov/18/israeli-envoy-egypt-gaza-talks/print>

¹⁴ <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/apr/24/boston-terrorism-motives-us-violence/print>

¹⁵ <http://www.alternet.org/print/news-amp-politics/chomsky-boston-bombings-gave-americans-taste-terrorism-us-inflicts-abroad-every>

¹⁶ <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2013/04/09/v-print/188062/obamas-drone-war-kills-others.html>

¹⁷ <http://web.law.columbia.edu/human-rights-institute/counterterrorism/drone-strikes/counting-drone-strike-deaths>

¹⁸ <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/05/23/opinion/the-forgotten-victims-of-obamas-drone-war.html>

¹⁹ <http://www.alternet.org/print/high-civilian-death-toll-cia-drone-strikes-leaked-report-reveals>

²⁰ <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/category/projects/drones/>

²¹ <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/dec/17/us-killings-tragedies-pakistan-bug-splats/print>

²² <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/19/world/asia/after-airstrike-afghan-points-to-cia-and-secret-militias.html>

²³ <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/may/01/ibrahim-mothana-yemen-drones-obama/print>

²⁴ http://livingunderdrones.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Stanford_NYU_LIVING_UNDER_DRONES.pdf

²⁵ http://www.democracynow.org/2011/9/13/noam_chomsky_looking_back_on_9#

²⁶ <http://antonyloewenstein.com/2013/07/29/chomsky-praises-snowden-and-condemns-us-hypocrisy/>