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LIFE WITH BIG BROTHER
'Electronic Police State' report cites U.S.
Ultimate Big Brother 'basics are in place'

Posted: May 10, 2009
9:05 pm Eastern

By Bob Unruh
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In what may be the first assessment of its kind, a private company that offers a range of privacy products for computers and other [technology](#) is ranking the United States No. 6 in the world for having the most aggressive procedures for monitoring residents electronically.

The report, called [The Electronic Police State](#), assesses the status of governmental surveillance in 52 nations around the globe for 2008.

The [document](#) was released [Cryptohippie, Inc.](#), which was set up in 2007 through the acquisition of several little-known but highly regarded providers of privacy technologies.

Not surprisingly, China and North Korea ranked No. 1 and No. 2, with Belarus and Russia following up. But the United Kingdom (England and Wales) ranked fifth followed by the United States.

(Story continues below)

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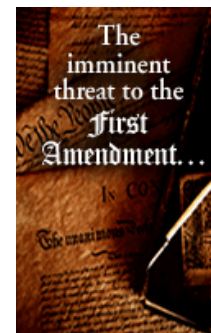
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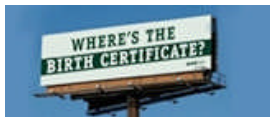
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"Most of us are aware that our governments monitor nearly every form of electronic

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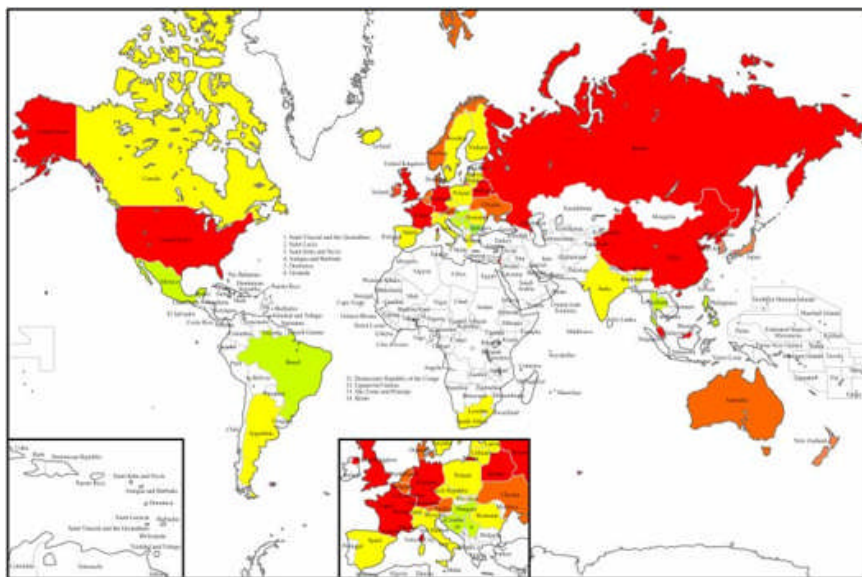
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communication. We are also aware of private companies doing the same. This strikes most of us as slightly troubling, but very few of us say or do much about it. There are two primary reasons for this," the report said.

"We really don't see how it is going to hurt us. Mass surveillance is certainly a new, odd, and perhaps an ominous thing, but we just don't see a complete picture or a smoking gun," the report continued. Also, "We are constantly surrounded with messages that say, 'Only crazy people complain about the government.'"

The report mapped the world, showing the most advanced electronic police states in red, orange reflecting strongly developing electronic police states and yellow showing nations that are developing, but lagging:



Red nations have the most advanced electronic police state capabilities

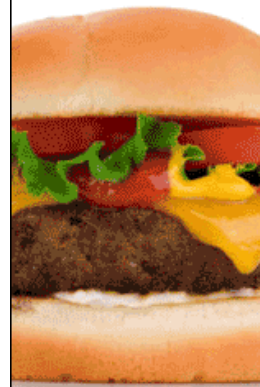
Company spokesman Paul Rosenberg told WND the biggest obstacle, however, is that the image of a "police state" dredges up visions of Nazi Germany's thugs breaking down doors in the middle of the night and hauling people off to blacked-out trains or Stalin's USSR rounding up "offenders" for [imprisonment](#).

"That's how things worked during your grandfather's war – that is not how things work now," the report said. "An electronic police state is quiet, even unseen. All of its legal actions are supported by abundant evidence. It looks pristine," the report said.

To create the rankings, which also included Singapore, Israel, France and Germany in the top 10, his organization searched its worldwide sources for information, checked against a number of other published reports, and assigned a value of 1 to 5 to 17 different factors:

1. Daily documents: How much is required day-to-day for residents to present state-issued identity documents or registration.
2. Border issues: What is demanded for a border entry.
3. Financial tracking: The state's ability to search and record [financial transactions](#).
4. Gag orders: The penalties for revealing to someone else the state is searching their records.
5. Anti-crypto laws: Bans on cryptography.
6. Constitutional protections: Either a lack of protections or someone overriding them.

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7. [Data storage](#): The state's ability to record and keep what it uncovers.
8. [Data search](#): The processes to search through data.
9. ISP data retention: The demand for ISPs to save customers' records.
10. Telephone data retention: States' requirements for communications companies to record and save records.
11. [Cell phone](#) records: The saving and using of cell phone users' records.
12. Medical records: Demands from states that medical records retain information.
13. Enforcement: The state's ability to use force (SWAT teams) to seize someone.
14. Habeus corpus: Either an absence of such rights or someone overriding them.
15. Police-Intel barrier: the absence of a barrier between police and intelligence organizations.
16. Covert hacking: State operatives meddling in data on private computers covertly.
17. Loose warrants: Warrants that are being issued without careful review of police claims by a truly independent judge.

The listings of China, North Korea, Belarus and Russia, all known for their repression of freedom, weren't surprising. Nor was the listing of the United Kingdom with its recent programs to copy and store virtually every telephone call, e-mail and text message within its borders.

But Rosenberg said there's more going on in the United States than many believe want to believe.

The nation's "basic system of gathering evidence and sorting it later is really dangerous," he said. "It's permanent. It's not going to go away."

It goes so far that a person's alcohol consumption actually could be tracked by government agents, if they chose, through credit card documentation, he told WND.

"In an Electronic Police State, every surveillance camera recording, every e-mail you send, every [Internet site](#) you surf, every post you make, every check you write, every [credit card swipe](#), every cell phone ping... *are all criminal evidence*, and they are held in searchable databases, for a long, long time," the report said.

"Whoever holds this evidence can make you look very, very bad whenever they care enough to do so. You can be prosecuted whenever they feel like it – the evidence is already in their [database](#)," the report continued. "Perhaps you trust that your ruler will only use his evidence archives to hurt bad people. Will you also trust his successor? Do you also trust all of his subordinates, every government worker and every policeman?"

"If some leader behaves badly, will you really stand up to oppose him or her? Would you still do it if he had all the e-mails you sent when you were depressed? Or if she has records of every porn site you've ever surfed? Or if he knows every phone call you've ever made? Or if she knows everyone you've ever sent money to?" the report asks.

"This system hasn't yet reached its full shape, but all of the basics are in place and it is not far from complete in some places," the report said.

Rosenberg told WND the organization also sought input on the status of electronic

surveillance around the world from organizations including the [the Electronic Privacy Information Center](#), [Reporters Without Borders](#), [Freedom House](#), the [Ludwig von Mises Institute](#) and [The Heritage Foundation](#).

Following the top 10 were: 11. Malaysia, 12. Ireland, 13. United Kingdom, Scotland, 14. Netherlands, 15. South Korea, 16. Ukraine, 17. Belgium, 18. Australia, 19. Japan, 20. New Zealand, 21. Austria, 22. Norway, 23. India, 24. Italy, 25. Taiwan, 26. Denmark, 27. Hungary, 28. Greece, 29. Canada, 30. Switzerland, 31. Slovenia, 32. Poland, 33. Finland, 34. Sweden, 35. Latvia, 36. Lithuania, 37. Cyprus, 38. Malta, 39. Estonia, 40. Czech Republic, 41. Iceland, 42. South Africa, 43. Spain, 44. Portugal, 45. Luxembourg, 46. Argentina, 47. Romania, 48. Thailand, 49. Bulgaria, 50. Brazil, 51. Mexico, 52. Philippines.



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[Bob Unruh](#) is a news editor for [WorldNetDaily.com](#).



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