

The civil liberties and unlawful government surveillance

Law



Civil Liberty Issues Most of the world civilizations have thrived on the suppression of individuals and certain groups of people. This occurs as a certain group of individuals retain socio-economic and political advantages at the expense of other individuals. Suppression also occurs when powerful entities such as the government infringe on individual liberties and rights. In the contemporary world, individual privacy in the context of a digital age is of utmost importance. Although new technologies have emerged, it has enabled the government to unlawfully spy on people thereby infringing on their individual liberties. Unlawful government surveillance should be fought because it interferes with the right to constructive dissident opinion as well as increase anxiety in personal spaces.

The principles of the First Amendment places values such as the freedom to expression, inquiry, and association at its core. It is essential to review the right to privacy in the context of advances in sciences and technology because these developments make private lives more visible. The right to privacy forms a fundamental part of the welfare of every individual. This is crucial at two levels. To begin with, it is notable that most of the developments that society enjoys today arose out of the capacity for an individual to have unmonitored behavior and thinking. For instance, most scientific innovations arose out of intensive thinking, solitude, and privacy. At the second level, the entitlement to privacy highly benefits the individual since it eliminates anxiety and limits the government authority over the established individual liberties.

The American nation is at the center of this debate because of terrorism linked surveillance. Government surveillance, however, never started at 9/11

terrorist attacks. As early as the 1960's, the government adopted surveillance technologies that would greatly constrain the private space. The Fourth Amendment description of Bill of Rights forbids unreasonable searches, unless a search is propped by a reasonable cause and is supported by a judicial action. The FISA Act of 1978, however, allows for collection of information, without a court order, about the activities of individuals, which may be deemed harmful to the state. On the other hand, the UN recognized the detriment of such laws and counteracted by forming Article 17 of ICCPR, which prohibits unlawful searches of persons (ACLU 1). The Edward Snowden leaks revealed a significant conflict between the need for national security and the right to individual privacy. For instance, it revealed how internet companies such as Google and Yahoo collaborate with the government to reveal individuals' emails, chat content, and profiles to the NSA in spite of these companies' bet for privacy.

I support ACLU's strong resolve to fight government surveillance on individuals. This is because homes, private conversations and behavior, and family life remains the core of people's welfare. Unlawful surveillance of persons disseminate private information to the powerful forces thereby interfering with the domestic space of citizens. Privacy is central to the welfare of individuals since it promotes free expression of thoughts and unrestrained behavior that make human life fulfilling. Privacy also encourages constructive dissident opinions and encourages the development of non-partisan political consciousness, which are of great benefit to the nation. Besides, unlawful surveillance is detrimental since it has led the government to racially profile certain groups such as the Muslims, who are

unlawfully monitored and controlled.

Works Cited

ACLU. “ The Human Right to Privacy in the Digital Age.” ACLU. Web. 2014. 19 Nov. 2014.