

## **More Obama Administration Lies About NSA Oversight**

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The *Guardian* reports yesterday that the Pentagon's intelligence watchdog (the Deputy Defense Department Inspector General for Intelligence and Special Program Assessment) said he was not aware of the NSA's bulk domestic phone records collection programs before the *Guardian* exposed it in June, nor does his office have investigations open into the controversial surveillance.

"The admission by Anthony C Thomas ... who has oversight responsibilities on the National Security Agency — comes despite months of public assurances that the NSA's vast surveillance activities are thoroughly overseen, including by the Pentagon inspector general," says the *Guardian*. Instead, Thomas leaves it up to the NSA's own Inspector General. This contradicts what NSA head Keith Alexander said in October before the House Intelligence Committee, when he testified that the DOD General Counsel and Inspector General both have oversight over NSA, as do the comparable offices in the ODNI and DOJ.

### ***NSA Can Listen to All of a Country's Telephone Calls, Despite Obama's Assurances***

The NSA has developed a surveillance system capable of recording 100 percent of a foreign country's telephone calls, and enabling the agency to rewind and review conversations up to 30 days after they take place, the Washington Post reported today, citing knowledgeable sources and documents provided by Edward Snowden. This is not metadata, collected by the other NSA programs which have been exposed; these are digital recordings of the actual spoken conversations. The particular country is not named by the Post, which also reports that there were plans to extend it to five more countries by now.

As the Post points out, this contradicts Obama's frequent assurances about NSA programs.

"Ubiquitous voice surveillance, even overseas," writes the Post, "pulls in a great deal of content from Americans who telephone, visit and work in the target country. It may also be seen as inconsistent with Obama's Jan. 17 pledge that 'the United States is not spying on ordinary people who don't threaten our national security,' regardless of nationality, "and that we take their privacy concerns into account."

"A senior manager for the program compares it to a time machine — one that can replay

the voices from any call without requiring that a person be identified in advance for surveillance," the Post also reports. "The voice interception program, called MYSTIC, began in 2009. Its RETRO tool, short for retrospective retrieval, and related projects reached full capacity against the first target nation in 2011.... No other NSA program disclosed to date has swallowed a nation's telephone network whole."

The Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT) released the following statement in response to the disclosures about the NSA program: "This further exposes the NSA's capacity and willingness to monitor the private lives of American citizens and innocent people around the world with shockingly limited restraint... Recording the phone conversations of entire nations, sweeps up the communication of any American calling the targeted countries, for whom there are inadequate privacy protections. This program further exposes the real limits of the President's proposed government surveillance reforms, which still allow for mass surveillance."

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