

DATE: / /

Name:- Maseya Amin

Batch:- Rwl-62

"Government Surveillance - Good or Bad?"

Good ←

Bad. →

Brainstorm

- Preventing criminal activities
- Preventing terrorism
- National security
- Safeguarding national infrastructure
- Goal?
- Combating cybersecurity threats.

- ↓ Privacy Rights
- Ethical issues
- Govt. agencies abusing their power
- Secrecy - leading to Lack of transparency
- CCTV
- Public mistrust
- Blackmailing

Outline

1. Introduction

1.1. Hook

1.2. General statements

1.3. Thesis statement.

2. Main Body - Government surveillance is Good.

2.1 Counter Arguments

2.1.1 Opposition 1 - Right to Privacy

2.1.2 Opposition 2 - Lack of Transparency

2.1.3 Opposition 3 - Public mistrust

2.1.4 Opposition 4 - Govt. agencies misusing Power.

2.2 Arguments

2.2.1 Prevention of Criminal Activities

2.2.2 Combating Terrorism

2.2.3 Safeguarding national security

2.2.4 Clear legal frameworks outlining the scope of surveillance. - a solution.

2.3. Conclusion.

THE ESSAY

"At the end of the day, the goals are simple: safety and security" - Jod Rell. Government surveillance encompasses various methods used by the government agencies to monitor public's activities. The purpose is to ensure safety of the citizens and the nation. Due to the rising security threats in the increasingly interconnected world, the role of government surveillance is becoming more important. On one hand, critics assert that surveillant actions of the government lead to violations of the right to privacy. Secondly, the secrecy of such actions puts a question mark on their transparency overall creating mistrust among the people. It leads to the debate of "government mis-using its power". On the other hand, there is a strong view that surveillance measures are necessary to maintain national security and to protect the citizens from potential threats. It

is necessary to shed light on both sides of the argument. By examining the benefits of government surveillance and highlighting the concerns of the public, a balanced approach can be drawn. Although, the critics' concerns regarding the privacy rights, lack of transparency, public mistrust and government agencies misusing power are valid, but the argument of government surveillance preventing criminal activities, terrorism, and safeguarding the national security is a strong one. Clear legal frameworks are necessary to alleviate the grievances of public regarding the government surveillance.

Critics raise voices against the privacy concerns surrounding government surveillance. Firstly, every human being has the right to privacy as given by international human rights agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Through mass surveillance programs the agencies not only access the personal data of the criminals but also of the innocent citizens. The recording of communications is also a threat to "freedom of expression". Secondly, the tools used for surveillance such as CCTV cameras, facial recognition systems, recording of location information etc are not accepted by the people on 'ethical grounds'.

Furthermore, proponents of the idea that government surveillance is bad, argue that the secrecy of such actions lead to lack of transparency. Government surveillance programs are often based on secrecy. On one hand, warrantless searches are conducted, and on the other hand, suspects are arrested without showing evidences to their families. Thus, secrecy of surveillant actions poses a threat to transparency. This lack of transparency results in public mistrust further exacerbating the situation.

A growing resentment and mistrust can be seen against the government surveillant and intelligence agencies among the people.

There is an argument that the lack of personal, civil and social liberties hampers the trust of the public on the government. The people think that their fundamental rights are not being fulfilled by the government. It undermines the trust in democratic institutions. The extensive monitoring leads to a chilling effect on individuals.

Lastly, one of the major concerns surrounding government surveillance is the potential for the abuse of power by the authorities. When extensive access is given to the government agencies, the collected data may be used for

purposes other than national security or law enforcement. This can include political profiling, targeting people of specific political groups, beliefs or associations etc. without proper checks and balance, there is a possibility that the authority may use the power to suppress others.