

The Limits of Surveillance

— BY NICHOLAS CORRIN —

The Edward Snowden disclosures have severely embarrassed and rattled the governments of Western bloc nations. But their publicly vented fury has not, as many believe, been due to Snowden's unauthorised release of classified information. Large numbers of us already knew the gist, if not the enormous extent, of covert abrogation of our privacy by shadowy, unaccountable security agencies headed by the NSA and GCHQ. No, the real reason for the punitive pursuit of Snowden lies elsewhere: *lack of subservience*.

Unforeseen challenges to monolithic, self-aggrandising state structures are what totalitarian systems fear most. This is for two reasons. First, because anything corresponding to the whistleblower archetype is anathema to hubristic authority built on cronyism and corruption: seamless merger of state and corporate power is *de facto* fascism. When moral corruption is the fundamental building block of power, there will always be paranoia at the core.

Second, because of the unpredictability factor. Absolute power seeks absolute control because it harbours a private, unacknowledged terror. It is deeply, fatally afraid of *chaos* which, in its perverted paternalistic thinking, it equates with democracy, freedom of expression and, indeed, basic human rights. On a deeper level still, what the ancient Greeks named hoary chaos represents Life itself. Which is why the dominant geopolitical system is so infatuated



with control-focused technologies: bio-engineering, synthetic DNA, nano-tech, cloud computing, and the growing plethora of interrelated surveillance apps to which it gives semi-mystical nomenclatures such as Prism and Mystic.

State-Corporate merger is predicated upon obsessive retention and control. This inexorably leads to, in Freudian terms, a constipation of feeling and thought. One metaphorical way to mock the burgeoning police state is to see it as a diseased, compacted version of the human colon, where, due to the blockage of expression, truth turns toxic.

Snowden's 'crime' in the eyes of the state is to have broken rank. By choosing not to be a patsy, Snowden has thrown a small but dangerous wrench into the now grinding cogs of The Machine.

The principal agenda of the

Orwellian state is mind control. Yet this has always been the unspoken tendency of states since their inception in early human history, as evidenced by the case of Athens versus Socrates. It is mostly a matter of the degree to which this meme is cultivated or, as in the present epoch, unleashed.

Yet everything that has been created has inbuilt limits and must meet its end or, in the case of *hubris*, its inevitable demise. Filmmaker Jim Jarmusch has explored the Achilles heel of geopolitical oligarchy in his beautiful thriller, *The Limits of Control*. In the movie, a loosely connected alliance of maverick dreamers succeed in assassinating the head of a corporate-fascist conglomerate through the power of imagination alone.

Cultivation of imaginal power is shown to be a weapon greater

in force of impact than guns or surveillance systems. This is neither an impossibly hi-tech fantasy nor pure make believe, but is founded upon an ontological premise that the Universe is fundamentally artistic and arbitrary and hence cannot be controlled by any idea, meme, religious dogma, cartel, state, oligarchy, or powerful individual.

The inscrutable magic of the imagining mind relies upon a taproot into realms from whence it pulls up 'inventions', discoveries and solutions. We know, of course, that this has been the case with great works of art but no less with major scientific discoveries which began their life as mere intuitions, dreams or even playful musings. Why should the same rules not apply to the engagement of resistance?

To this writer, the idea that the Universe is at bottom, *arbitrary*, is at best a partial truth. That said, the word arbitrary, which implies 'anything goes' derives from *arbitrator*, which implies an adjudicator or some irreproachable form of conscience. Therefore, we could say that the apparent arbitrariness of the Universe conceals within its chaotic surface a *hidden logic*, *rightness* or *dharma*, albeit one that transcends our ken. This would seem, incidentally, to be the fundamental message of the Book of Job.

What does the future hold in store for us? Usually, the optimal crystal ball with which to gaze into the shapeless future is history itself, the past tense. As the old adage goes, what we have collectively failed to learn will necessarily come back to haunt us. Thus in the context of history we will experience a repeat performance, which is to say that the future will turn out to be essentially the past re-visited, or at least a variant on a theme of what has already played out before our time.

Unless, of course, we act together to change the course of events. Will there be sufficient energy left within our capacity to imagine? Can our collective capacity for imaginal intelligence cast off

the tightening grip of an Orwellian state?

Two myths from our collective unconscious point the way to a potential solution. Both involve the action of a small, clever individual who succeeds in overcoming overwhelming physical odds. The first is David, who by means of his sling-shot, kills Goliath. The second is Odysseus who, having been imprisoned in a cave by the Cyclops, destroys his minder by plunging a fiery stake into the giant's single eye.



What these two myths share is the theme of a vastly physically inferior individual who has the audacity and skill to overcome overwhelming odds. In either case this is achieved by targeting the control centre of the foe. With Goliath and the Cyclops, this control centre is symbolised by the location of the Third Eye between the eyebrows. Thus we see in both the Hebrew Bible and in Homeric epic poetry, versions of the same hero's journey on behalf of freedom battling successfully against overwhelming force and control.

If we dwell for a moment on the implicit, or encrypted, message to be distilled from these ancient myths, we will find the following:

Any single individual who refuses, on behalf of a greater good, to surrender their fundamental sovereignty to an overbearing foe – which could, in our day be seen as the global matrix of corporate-political domination – will find the

wherewithal to succeed. But that individual must target the principal organ of their oppressor, and strike at it accurately and swiftly at the opportune moment. This principal organ, the myths show, is neither the body nor the heart; nor is it the brain in any general sense. It is, very specifically, the capacity to envision, the capacity to foresee and to *anticipate what is unfolding*. All these are esoteric functions of the Third Eye, which is symbolically destroyed in both myths.

If we were to translate this understanding into real, bread-and-butter terms, what would we conclude? That the disempowered possess, if they would only acknowledge it, the innate capability to regain control of the world by reclaiming the seat of vision. Or, put another way, the courage to envision.

One last point. We remember that as Odysseus is departing his captor, the now blinded giant cries out, "Who are you? What is your name?" And the traveller's response is, "My name is Nobody." In today's geopolitical environment of banksterism-fascism, Nobody may have returned to us as Anonymous, but equally so as Everyman and as Everywoman. Or, for that matter, as *Anyone* who will not surrender their innate sovereignty, or forgo their innate power to channel a clear vision of truth and justice back into the troubled world we inhabit. ■



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