

# Are You the New Enemy in the New World of Drones?



**SPECIAL REPORT**

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Unless you've been living under a rock in recent days, you've heard about the new messenger for package delivery: drones. But unless you've been paying close attention to your government, you've probably missed the reason that they're cause for concern.



When Amazon founder Jeff Bezos announced on the December 1 airing of "60 Minutes" that drones would soon be cruising the skyway as the newest, most expeditious form of package delivery, images of little flying robots bringing books and games to homes across America led to a flurry of speculation as to how a world of drone activity might actually look.

Maureen Dowd of the New York Times expressed trepidation about a world in which, "Howard Schultz will want to drop your half-caf, bone-dry, ristretto, venti, four-pump, sugar-free, cinnamon dolce, soy, skinny Starbucks latte on the front step at 7 a.m., and Tim Cook will want to deliver the latest Apple toys the soonest, and Disney's Robert Iger will want his drones gussied up like Mary Poppins."

It's understandable that people might have some reservations about the prospect of flying robots becoming commonplace – fears of drones hitting pedestrians in the head and colliding with buildings abound – but the most audible opposition seems to have had more to do with the efficacy of drones' ability to simplify our lives than with the intrusion of "extra eyeballs" into our private affairs.

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Like it or not, the prospect of a drone-filled sky gives the government a great advantage in its ability to usurp Americans' liberties. If this is their goal, the day-to-day use of drones will make it very easy. According to Dowd, "there may be as many as 30,000 unmanned private and government drones flying in this country by 2020, ratcheting drones into a \$90 billion industry, generating 100,000 jobs." Is there any doubt that many of those won't be government jobs, especially in light of the rapid growth of the Government State?

With the mainstreaming of drones into day-to-day activities comes an opportunity to use them to infringe on our rights. Take, for example, the broad liberty (pardon the pun) that the Obama administration has repeatedly taken in spying on American citizens. As if Google's aerial shots of your home weren't enough to make you feel overly exposed – the whole world now knows you park your bikes in the back yard – just think how drones could be used to nail you for something going on indoors; for some activity that used to be protected by the Constitution.

Take, for example, smoking in your privately owned residence – California recently became the first state to do this –

or conducting a Bible study in your home. (In Arizona the government clamped down on a small group of churchgoers who were holding Bible studies at their pastor's home, despite no complaints from neighbors.) While "offenses" such as these often go "undetected," drones will enable the government to catch you in the act – and not just for smoking or conducting Bible studies, but for whatever the government decides is illegal or threatening.



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A December 3 op-ed in the Dallas Morning News unveiled the extent to which the Obama administration has already expanded the use of drones overseas, using them to kill “innocent civilians in a way that is obscene and immoral.” Categorizing Obama’s war on terror as a “morally ambiguous” “campaign of assassination,” the author expressed his belief that “the defini-

tion of ‘enemy’ is, basically, “someone the United States decides to target.”

So, what’s to keep the enemy from being defined as you or me? Is there any reason to think the government couldn’t find an “enemy” here – especially if that enemy was getting in the government’s way? Alarming, the government has already found a few. One is the Tea Party; another, evangelical Christians. In fact, according to FoxNews, the U.S. military has been told to consider both of these groups a threat to the nation. As for Islamists? They weren’t really mentioned.

Many may not know it, but President Obama has already given a green light to the killing of American citizens without a trial. To quote legal scholar Jonathan Turley, “senior administration officials have previously suggested that the president may kill an American anywhere and anytime, including within the United States.”

Turley, known not only for his legal expertise, but also for his liberal leanings, was nevertheless aghast in 2011 when many Americans nodded in approval at the president’s ordering of the killing of two American citizens. Pointing out that the Founders would have clearly viewed this as a sign of authoritarian power, Turley expressed serious concern that Attorney General Eric Holder’s only consolation was “an assurance that the

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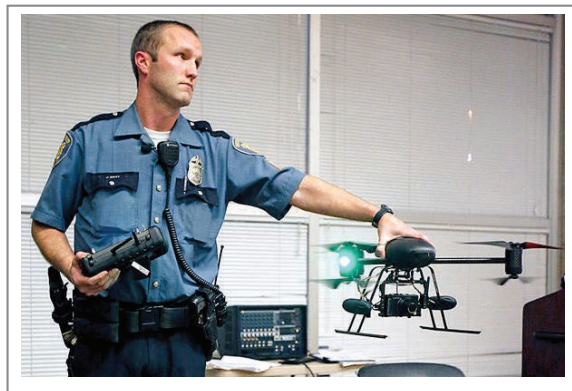
president would kill citizens with care.”

Think of that... and then think how much easier this will be when drones rule the skies. How much more easily will drones be able to report on your personal activities, if not execute a kill order, when they’re camouflaged among drones from Amazon and Target?

It’s this type of blatant disregard for our Constitution, as well as the common practice of governmental lying, that is likely a factor in Americans’ deteriorating trust in government.

According to Pew Research, Americans’ trust in government dropped to its lowest point since 1956 under President Obama and now hovers, slightly higher than its 2012 nadir, at 19 per-

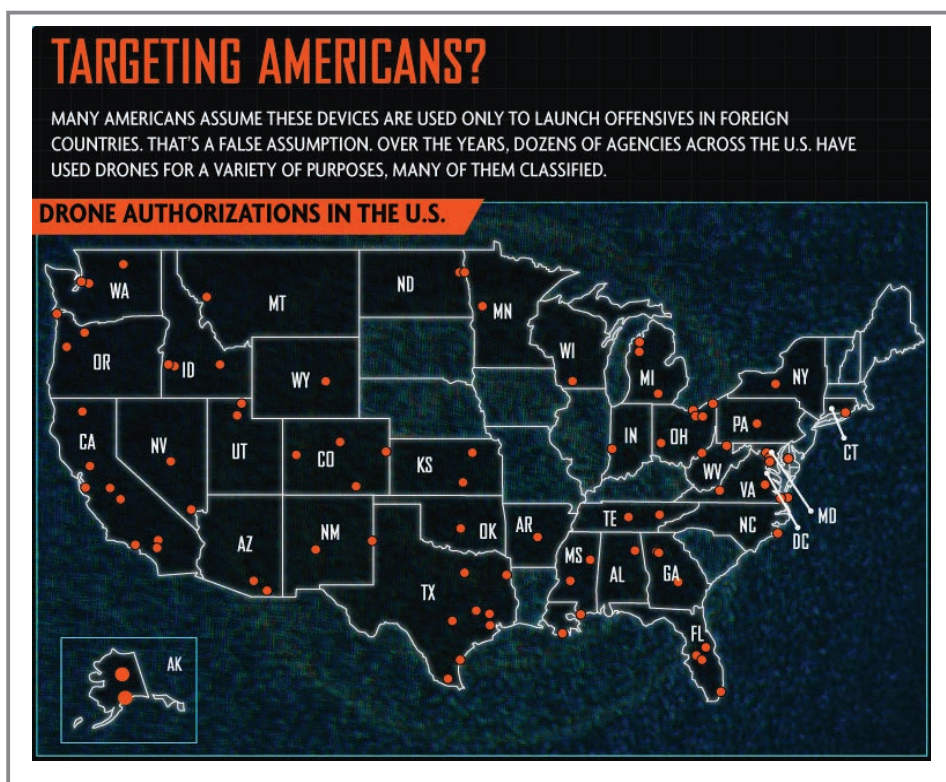
cent. Even worse, only one-third of Americans trust each other any more, an AP-GfK poll reports.



Trust matters. Trust is that “a gut-level ingredient of democracy — trust in the other fellow” without which we’re living in an entirely new universe. The key question is: What universe is that? Are we still a constitutional republic or is our country being stealthily wired to become something else – something in which government isn’t of the people, by the people and for the people, but against the people – or at least against those who would stand up for its founding principles? The actions of President Obama would lead one to conclude the latter if he or she is intellectually honest, and fortunately, a few Americans still are.

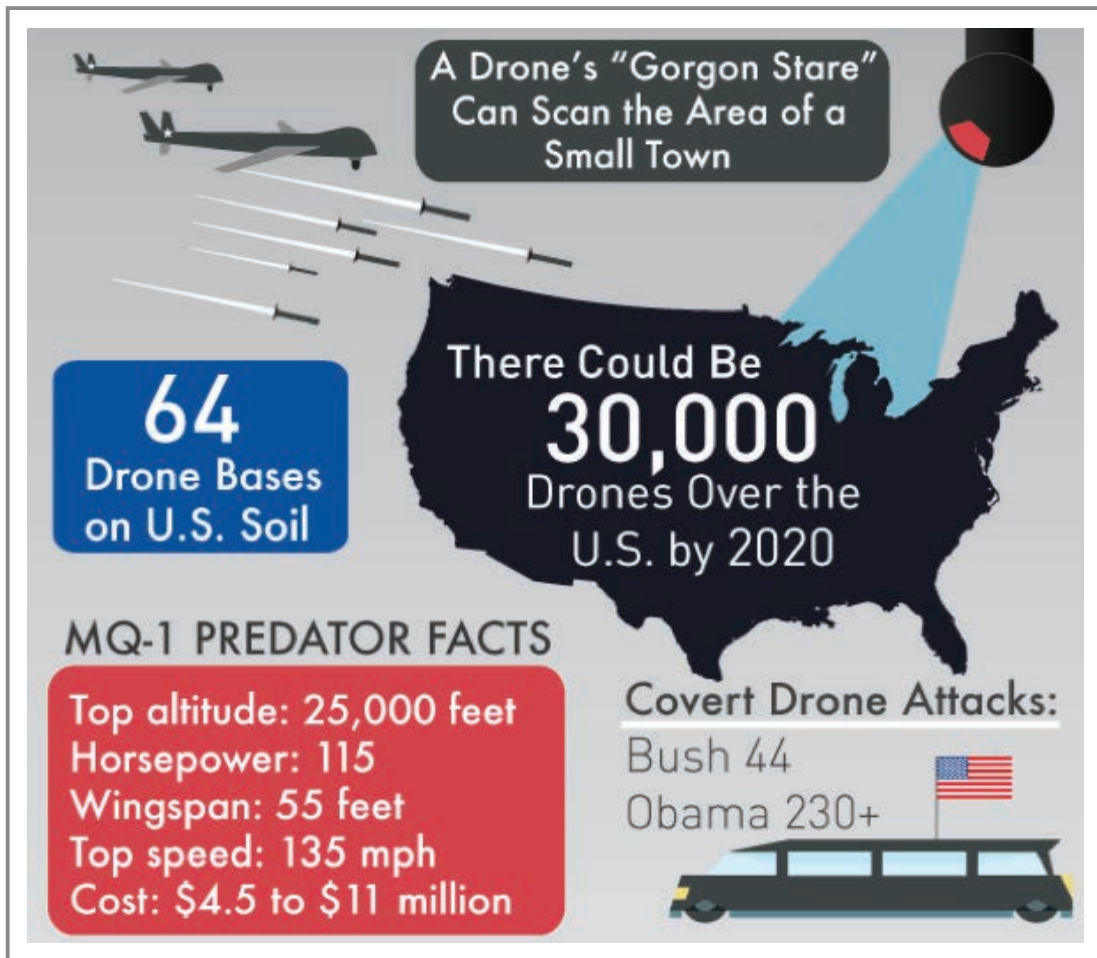
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The Christian Science Monitor reported that on December 3, two constitutional law professors, Nicholas Rosenkranz of Georgetown University and the aforementioned Jonathan Turley of George Washington University, presented their case before the House Judiciary Committee that the president is engaging in broad executive power overreach, while bypassing Congress and “picking and choosing which laws to enforce.” Under-scoring his assertion that the Founders wouldn't even recognize this country today, Turley said, “I really have great trepidation over where we are heading because we are creating a new system here.”



And that's the key point. What, exactly, is this new system that the government is putting in place? If laws don't matter, if the definition of enemy is anyone the Administration dislikes, and if robotic drones are being used to silence – perhaps permanently – America's “enemies,” clearly a new framework is being created; one that in no way resembles the framework we've known.

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When the switch of the “new machine” is turned on, assuming Americans do not wake up in time to stop it (which they very well might), the new normal will not resemble anything we’ve known. Even if the switch isn’t turned on, either because Americans stand up against it or the new system’s inner workings collapse under their own weight, getting us back to the country our Founders envisioned will not come through a peaceful or calm process. From people trying to get their “just due” to government crackdowns as a form of control, change takes many forms, and it always brings upheaval. Have faith in the power of freedom, but make sure you are prepared.

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