

Don't Trust the Government. Not with Your Privacy, Property or Your Freedoms

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"In questions of power then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by [the chains of the Constitution](#)."

—Thomas Jefferson

Public trust in the government to "do what is right" understandably remains at an [all-time low](#).

After all, how do you trust a government that continuously sidesteps the Constitution and undermines our rights? You can't.

When you consider all the ways "we the people" are being bullied, beaten, bamboozled, targeted, tracked, repressed, robbed, impoverished, imprisoned and killed by the government, one can only conclude that you shouldn't trust the government with your privacy, your property, your life, or your freedoms.

Consider for yourself.

Don't trust the government with your privacy, digital or otherwise. In the more than two decades since 9/11, the military-security industrial complex has operated under a

permanent state of emergency that, in turn, has given rise to a digital prison that grows more confining and inescapable by the day. Wall-to wall surveillance, monitored by AI software and fed to a growing network of fusion centers, render the twin concepts of privacy and anonymity almost void. By conspiring with corporations, the Department of Homeland Security [“fueled a massive influx of money into surveillance and policing in our cities, under a banner of emergency response and counterterrorism.”](#)

Don't trust the government with your property. If government agents can invade your home, break down your doors, kill your dog, damage your furnishings and terrorize your family, your property is no longer private and secure—it belongs to the government. Hard-working Americans are having their bank accounts, homes, cars electronics and cash seized by police under the assumption that they have allegedly been associated with some criminal scheme.

Don't trust the government with your finances. The U.S. government—and that includes the current administration—is spending money it doesn't have on programs it can't afford, and “we the taxpayers” are being forced to foot the bill for the government's fiscal insanity. The [national debt is \\$35 trillion](#) and growing, yet there seems to be no end in sight when it comes to the government's fiscal insanity. According to *Forbes*, Congress has [raised, extended or revised the definition of the debt limit 78 times since 1960](#) in order to allow the government to essentially fund its existence with a credit card.

Don't trust the government with your health. For all intents and purposes, “we the people” have become lab rats in the government's secret experiments, which include MKULTRA and the U.S. military's [secret race-based testing of mustard gas on more than 60,000 enlisted men](#). Indeed, you don't have to dig very deep or go very back in the nation's history to uncover numerous cases in which the government deliberately [conducted](#)

[secret experiments on an unsuspecting populace](#)—citizens and noncitizens alike—making healthy people sick by spraying them with chemicals, injecting them with infectious diseases and exposing them to airborne toxins. Unfortunately, the public has become so easily distracted by the political spectacle out of Washington, DC, that they are altogether oblivious to the grisly experiments, barbaric behavior and inhumane conditions that have become synonymous with the U.S. government, which has [meted out untold horrors against humans and animals alike](#).

Don't trust the government with your life: At a time when growing numbers of unarmed people have been shot and killed for just standing a certain way, or moving a certain way, or holding something—anything—that police could misinterpret to be a gun, or igniting some trigger-centric fear in a police officer's mind that has nothing to do with an actual threat to their safety, even the most benign encounters with police can have fatal consequences. The [number of Americans killed by police continues to grow](#), with the majority of those killed as a result of police encounters having been suspected of a non-violent offense or no crime at all, or during a traffic violation. According a report by Mapping Police Violence, [police killed more people in 2022](#) than any other year within the past decade. In [98% of those killings](#), police were not charged with a crime.

Don't trust the government with your freedoms. For years now, the government has been playing a cat-and-mouse game with the American people, letting us enjoy just enough freedom to think we are free but not enough to actually allow us to *live* as a free people. Freedom no longer means what it once did. This holds true whether you're talking about the right to criticize the government in word or deed, the right to be free from government surveillance, the right to not have your person or your property subjected to warrantless searches by government agents, the right to due process, the right to be safe from militarized police invading your home, the right to be

innocent until proven guilty and every other right that once reinforced the founders' belief that this would be "a government of the people, by the people and for the people." On paper, we may be technically free, but in reality, we are only as free as a government official may allow.

Whatever else it may be—a danger, a menace, a threat—the U.S. government is certainly not looking out for our best interests, nor is it in any way a friend to freedom.

Remember the purpose of a *good* government is to protect the lives and liberties of its people.

Unfortunately, what we have been saddled with is, in almost every regard, the exact opposite of an institution dedicated to protecting the lives and liberties of its people.

"We the people" should have learned early on that a government that repeatedly lies, cheats, steals, spies, kills, maims, enslaves, breaks the laws, overreaches its authority, and abuses its power at almost every turn can't be trusted.

So what's the answer?

For starters, get back to basics. Get to know your neighbors, your community, and your local officials. This is the first line of defense when it comes to securing your base: fortifying your immediate lines.

Second, understand your rights. Know how your local government is structured. Who serves on your city council and school boards? Who runs your local jail: has it been coopted by private contractors? What recourse does the community have to voice concerns about local problems or disagree with decisions by government officials?

Third, know the people you're entrusting with your local government. Are your police chiefs being promoted from within your community? Are your locally elected officials accessible

and, equally important, are they open to what you have to say? Who runs your local media? Does your newspaper report on local events? Who are your judges? Are their judgments fair and impartial? How are prisoners being treated in your local jails?

Finally, don't get so trusting and comfortable that you stop doing the hard work of holding your government accountable. We've drifted a long way from the local government structures that provided the basis for freedom described by Alexis de Tocqueville in *Democracy in America*, but we are not so far gone that we can't reclaim some of its vital components.

As an article in *The Federalist* [points out](#):

“Local government is fundamental not so much because it’s a “laboratory” of democracy but because it’s a school of democracy. Through such accountable and democratic government, Americans learn to be democratic citizens. They learn to be involved in the common good. They learn to take charge of their own affairs, as a community. Tocqueville writes that [it’s because of local democracy that Americans can make state and Federal democracy work](#)—by learning, in their bones, to expect and demand accountability from public officials and to be involved in public issues.”

To put it another way, think nationally but act locally.

As I make clear in my book [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#) and in its fictional counterpart [The Erik Blair Diaries](#), there is still a lot Americans can do to topple the police state tyrants, but any revolution that has any hope of succeeding needs to be prepared to reform the system from the bottom up. And that will mean re-learning step by painful step what it actually means to be a government of the people, by the people and for the people.

ABOUT JOHN W. WHITEHEAD

Constitutional attorney and author John W. Whitehead is founder and president of [The Rutherford Institute](#). His most recent books are the best-selling [Battlefield America: The War on the American People](#), the award-winning [A Government of Wolves: The Emerging American Police State](#), and a debut dystopian fiction novel, [The Erik Blair Diaries](#). Whitehead can be contacted at staff@rutherford.org. Nisha Whitehead is the Executive Director of The Rutherford Institute. Information about The Rutherford Institute is available at www.rutherford.org.

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