

Detection Technologies in Counter-Terrorism: some ethical issues

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What's wrong with Terrorism

- Loss of life and harm
- Spreading of fear
- Spreading of mistrust
- Misuse of those not in power to influence decisions of those in power
 1. Violence directed at the harmless
 2. Violence directed at the defenceless

What's wrong with Terrorism 2

- Exploitation of liberties and protections extended to the law-abiding while
- Professing contempt, moral condescension toward system with those liberties and protections

Moral risks of Counter-Terrorism

- Weakening of rule of law
- Curtailment of liberties of law-abiding
- Violation of privacy of law-abiding
- Loss of life and harm to law-abiding, harmless, through misinformation
- Unjust stigmatization of ethnic, religious groups
- Loss of moral reputation

Detection Technology

- Any technology that helps to identify terrorists, on-going or imminent terrorist activity, or their weapons
- CCTV
- Metal and explosive scanners
- Tapping and Bugging devices
- Internet monitoring equipment
- Data-mining using profiling algorithms

Moral risks of Detection Technologies in C-T

- Weakening of rule of law
- Curtailment of liberties of law-abiding
- Violation of privacy of law-abiding
- Indirectly:
 - Physical harm and loss of life
 - Stigmatization

The value of privacy

- PRISE findings (2007-8)
- http://prise.oeaw.ac.at/docs/conf_docs/28/Jacobi-Citizen_Consultations-20080429.pdf
- Eurobarometer (2008)
- http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/flash/fl_225_sum_en.pdf

Quite a lot of support for a whole range of d-t uses across EU countries

PRISE

- “Interview meetings” of 158 participants
 - Random selection
 - From Norway, Austria, Hungary, Germany, Spain, Denmark
1. Threat of terror does not justify privacy infringements
 2. Physically intimate detection technologies unacceptable
 3. Function creep should be resisted

Eurobarometer

Fieldwork was carried out from January 8th to 12th, 2008. Over 27,000 randomly selected citizens aged 15 years and over were interviewed in the 27 EU Member States. Interviews were predominantly carried out via fixed-line telephone, approximately 1,000 in each country. Due to the relatively low fixed-line telephone coverage in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, face-to-face (F2F) interviews were also conducted (700 telephone and 300 F2F interviews) in those countries.

Eurobarometer 2

Most EU citizens were ready to accept restrictions of their data protection rights when this benefited the fight against international terrorism. A majority of respondents answered positively that it should be possible to monitor the different actions listed in the survey, such as telephone calls or Internet usage.

Eurobarometer 3

Allowing the possibility to have people's personal details monitored when they took a flight was the action that was most often agreed to by respondents (82%), followed by the monitoring of people's Internet usage (75%).

Monitoring of people's phone call, Internet usage, credit card usage and personal details when they fly



Q9. In light of the fight against international terrorism, do you think that, in certain circumstances, it should be possible:
%, Base: all respondents

The value of privacy 2

- Rises in proportion to the need to live in public and make public professions of belief, loyalty
- Rises in proportion to degree of official intrusion and unendorsed surveillance
- Decreases the more it becomes culturally acceptable for anything at all to be done in public
- Decreases the more there is a public appetite to watch and be watched (e.g. in return for celebrity) or to engage in public social networking

The value of privacy 3

- Preventive v reactive policing
- The attractions of profiling and pundit-based intelligence
- “Old-fashioned” intelligence and violations of privacy
- Violations of privacy for the sake of evidence-based intervention, prosecution
- Violations of privacy when life and harm in balance

SAFE programme

- Includes technology for in-flight surveillance of European airline passengers to identify terrorists who have evaded airport controls
- Behaviour analysis: normal v abnormal
- Biometric scanning of airline passengers

SAFEE in-flight behaviour analysis

- Has some of the drawbacks of profiling, though it operates close to the site of the possible threat
- What could safely be done about someone whose behaviour was “abnormal”?
- This last question arises for many uses of detection technologies in crowded public places

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