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Oh man. I can think of no greater, pathetic, fitting, hysterical, sad symbol for the state of our country than the news that the NSA is running out of power.

The demand for electricity to operate its expanding intelligence systems has left the high-tech eavesdropping agency on the verge of exceeding its power supply, the lifeblood of its sprawling 350-acre Fort Meade headquarters, according to current and former intelligence officials.

Agency officials anticipated the problem nearly a decade ago as they looked ahead at the technology needs of the agency, sources said, but it was never made a priority, and now the agency's ability to keep its operations going is threatened. The NSA is already unable to install some costly and sophisticated new equipment, including two new supercomputers, for fear of blowing out the electrical infrastructure, they said.

At minimum, the problem could produce disruptions leading to outages and power surges at the Fort Meade headquarters, hampering the work of intelligence analysts and damaging equipment, they said. At worst, it could force a virtual shutdown of the agency, paralyzing the intelligence operation, erasing crucial intelligence data and causing irreparable damage to computer systems – all detrimental to the fight against terrorism.

Where to start with this? So we're the most

powerful country in the world. But we can't seem to manage our infrastructure—neither civilian, nor military—to ensure we retain access to one of our society's most basic inputs, electricity.