

DICK CHENEY ON THE DANGERS OF INTERNET SPYING

There are several notable things about this interview [Playboy link: mostly SFW] with Dick Cheney (in addition to the detail that Cheney has his “slender, mustachioed housekeeper named Gus” provide a never-ending stream of lattes, prepared at the house, but served in paper Starbucks cups). One of the most striking, however, is how he responds to interviewer James Rosen’s suggestion that the Internet is democratizing.

Do you regard the internet as an intrinsically democratizing force?

[*Chuckles, pauses*] Oh boy, you know, we’re blue-skyin’ it now. I think it clearly has had a significant impact. “A democratizing force.” Um. [*pauses*]

In the sense that whenever you have a freer flow of information, that’s going to redound to the forces of good.

Yeah, but on the other hand, I suppose you could argue that it provides ways in which the government, an authoritarian government, can exert control over and monitor and keep track of what everybody is up to and what they are doing. It’s not a one-way street. It’s not necessarily—I need to think about that before I comment further.

The man who implemented an illegal dragnet admits that governments (only authoritarian ones, he suggests? or does the use of such methods make a government authoritarian?) might exert control via the Internet.

If it weren’t for Cheney’s long history implementing just that type of monitoring (certainly on the rest of the world, and to an extent on Americans), I might think he’d been

hanging around with Edward Snowden!