

TRACK THIS POST: U.S. POSTMASTER DEJOY MUST BE FIRED AND HAJJAR HIRED

[NB: Check the byline, thanks. /~Rayne]

No. Hell no.

Facial recognition, fake identities and digital surveillance tools: Inside the Post Office's covert internet operations program

<https://t.co/5D9dMx9cAj>

— Yahoo News (@YahooNews) May 18, 2021

The U.S. Postal Service has been covertly monitoring Americans' social media. The surveillance program was first reported last month; this is some seriously ugly stuff.

Now we learn the USPS has been using Clearview AI for facial recognition, Signal Labs for keyword searches, and Nfusion software to create untraceable covert accounts.

Why has the USPS been using anything other than intelligence from the Department of Justice for monitoring events which may pose risks to normal mail delivery?

Why were these resources used to monitor First Amendment-protected protest rallies like those in the wake of George Floyd's death last year?

While this was running under Louis DeJoy's tenure at the U.S. Postal Service, it began under the previous postmaster Margaret Brennan's term. Did Brennan know the scope of this surveillance program when it began? Did the scope change over time with or without her awareness?

Did the USPS Board of Governors know about this

program and its spying on American's social media?

Surprisingly, there are GOP members of Congress who are unhappy with USPS' spying on Americans – Matt Gaetz and Louis Gohmert have both expressed concern. One might wonder why.

Of course these GOP members tipped their hand and submitted a bill to defund the USPS which gives away GOP's desire to kill the USPS as a government service which private sector businesses could carve up, ditching unprofitable parts along with the USPS' obligation to protect privacy of mail contents.

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All of which brings us to another ongoing problem: the U.S. Postal Service's Board of Governors still doesn't include all of Joe Biden's nominees. At least one of three nominees remains unapproved, obstructing Biden administration's ability to deal with the lousy mail service under DeJoy's leadership and the covert domestic spying program. There's ample reason for both parties to light a fire under the confirmation process based on the history of the USPS under DeJoy's highly-questionable leadership:

16-JUN-2020 – Louis DeJoy assumed office as U.S. Postmaster; he joins a Board of Governors which are all Trump appointees, white and all male.

10-JUL-2020 – A USPS internal memo restricted overtime and ordered postal personnel to return to their post office on time, thereby reducing priority on timely delivery of mail.

07-AUG-2020 – DeJoy overhauled USPS' upper management; 23 senior USPS officials were reassigned or displaced.

24-AUG-2020 – Before the House Oversight Committee, DeJoy said, "I did not direct the elimination or any cutback in

overtime.”

SEP-NOV-2020 – Several lawsuits were filed due to USPS’ handling of mail related to the election including ballots and dissemination of false information by the USPS about voting by mail in Colorado.

02-NOV-2021 – On the eve of the election, first-class mail on-time delivery rate had dropped to 80% after DeJoy’s changes from over 90% before DeJoy became postmaster.

21-FEB-2021 – By way of a FOIA lawsuit, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington obtained documents which showed DeJoy lied to Congress about cutting overtime.

23-FEB-2021 – USPS awards Oshkosh Defense a contract worth approximately \$6 billion for a next-generation fleet of 165,000 delivery vehicles which are “equipped with either fuel-efficient internal combustion engines or battery electric powertrains and can be retrofitted to keep pace with advances in electric vehicle technologies.”

24-FEB-2021 – Hearing before House Oversight Committee in which DeJoy testifies about mail slowdown.

24-FEB-2021 – Biden announced three nominees for open seats on the USPS Board of Governors.

11-MAR-2021 – House members submitted a bill to halt the contract with Oshkosh Defense as the contract may violate Biden’s executive order dd. January 27 requiring all federal fleet vehicles purchased thereafter to be “clean and zero-emission.”

22-APR-2021 – Confirmation hearing before Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee for all three Biden nominees.

12-MAY-2021 – Ronald Stroman (Democrat) confirmed by the Senate; his term will expire December 8, 2028.

13-MAY-2021 – Amber Faye McReynolds
(Independent) confirmed by Senate for term
ending December 8, 2026.

19-MAY-2021 – Anton Hajjar (Democrat)
remains unconfirmed.

Finish this job, Senators. Constituents on both sides of the aisle need better, more reliable postal service; they also don't need a postmaster who is so egregiously disrespectful of his role as a public employee, nor another covert surveillance program outside the scope of USPS' mission relying on iffy platforms like Clearview AI.

The public also needs more diverse representation within their federal government; Hajjar's confirmation would realize two men of color on the Board of Governors, both appointed by Biden along with McReynolds.

But it doesn't stop with Hajjar's confirmation. Governors Ron A. Bloom and Donald L. Moak, both identified as Democrats, both appointed under the Trump administration, may need to be replaced. They failed to object forcefully enough to the use of a covert surveillance system on Americans' protected First Amendment speech. Can the country depend on them to do the right thing to work with the other Democratic and Independent appointees to remove DeJoy after they've failed the public?

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A few last thoughts: Since the USPS was surveilling the American public, did it also fail to advise Capitol Police and the Department of Justice there was a growing threat leading up to the January 6 insurrection?

Did someone use the USPS system to see what the other intelligence agencies saw ahead of the insurrection?

Did the USPS collect documentation about what it saw brewing?

Sure hope somebody asks behind closed doors on

Capitol Hill.