

Editorial: NSA vs. U.S. Constitution

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Six months after Edward Snowden revealed that the National Security Agency was indiscriminately collecting the phone records of Americans and holding on to them for years for possible use in terrorism investigations, a federal judge has rightly ruled that the program probably violates the 4th Amendment's ban on unreasonable searches and seizures.

In a powerful opinion released last week in Washington, U.S. District Judge Richard J. Leon castigated what he called an "almost-Orwellian technology that enables the government to store and analyze the phone metadata of every telephone user in the United States." Yet Leon also noted that the government had not cited "a single instance" in which the data had stopped an imminent attack.

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