

## **Documents Reveal Inspectors from the USPS Have Been Spying on Americans and Conservative Groups**

Eddie Molina

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U.S.A.: According to Patrick Eddington, a senior official of the CATO Institute, the United States Postal Service, or USPS, has been conducting online surveillance to spy on people, particularly those with ties to Trump, conservative organizations and the Republican party in general.

Eddington retrieved heavily redacted documents through a Freedom of Information Act. The act, which was adopted in 1966, allows anyone to gain access to government information.

This includes memos, laws, rules, policies, procedures and more.

Eddington acquired the documents using these channels, in partnership with the Cato Institute.

The Cato Institute is a public policy research institution who wants to promote and continue libertarian ideas.

According to their website, <u>cato.org</u>, they state:

"Our mission is to originate, disseminate, and advance solutions based on the principles of individual liberty, limited government, free markets, and peace."

The work they provide balances any government or political agenda to preserve these important American values.

Eddington was instrumental in acquiring these alarming documents, and American's need to know about what the USPS was up to.

According to an article written by Ken Macon of reclaimthenet.com, he wrote:

"According to the records, between September 2020 and April 2021, postal inspectors spied on protests, including through a covert social media surveillance program dubbed the Internet Covert Operations Program (iCOP)."

Inspectors went well beyond their typical roles of responsibilities, just to pursue an agenda. They are also the least likely to be suspected of spying on people and businesses. But they did it anyway. And they weren't just going after everyone, they targeted specific groups with conservative affiliations.

According to an <u>article</u> by the Washington Times, it stated:

"Postal inspectors tracked the actions of gun rights activists gathering in Richmond, Virginia; people preparing to demonstrate against police in Louisville, Kentucky, after an investigation into

the police shooting of Breonna Taylor; and far-right groups headed to the District of Columbia after Mr. Biden's election."

The postal inspectors also went to great lengths to attempt to conceal and cover themselves. They routinely sent out bulletins to inform others in the surveillance arena of important issues at hand. Within these bulletins included a disclaimer that the 'surveillance program' is designed to provide law enforcement with information that could lead to potential criminal activity and/or violence.

But the inspectors just couldn't resist.

The inspection branch of the USPS did, however, try to defend its position of spying on Americans, especially Americans with conservative political views.

Their position was that its inspectors are trained observers in a federal law enforcement capacity whose job is to protect its staff and facilities.

In the column written by Macon, he wrote:

"The U.S. Postal Inspection Service occasionally reviews publicly available information in order to assess potential safety or security threats to Postal Service employees, facilities, operations, and infrastructure, the agency said in a statement."

That sounds like a standard justification response for an agency that was up to no good. But there were red flags and whistleblowers leading up to the discovery of misuse and abuse by the USPS inspectors.

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"However, last year, the USPS inspector general said that the surveillance was an overreach and potentially illegal. The institution faced backlash over its covert program to scan citizens' social media In the column written by Macon, he wrote:

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For the USPS to have money in their budget to spy on conservative groups and Americans, is a miracle itself.

The column stated:

"The Kentucky representative Thomas Massie expressed his concern over the USPS's move. "The USPS has been losing money for many years ... so where do they find money to run this surveillance program?""

Eddington told the Washington Times that:

"The Postal Service cannot reliably deliver mail to my own home, yet they can find the money and people to effectively digitally spy at scale, including on Americans engaged in First Amendment-protected activities."

This is still a developing story as more and more facts are likely to be released over the coming days and weeks.

And if you already had little faith in the USPS, here's another reason to stay that way.