



# Who Is Watching The Watchers?

The video surveillance cameras at this location and in thousands of locations throughout the city have been disabled. We are tired of you watching us and taking away our privacy without our consent.

In the park or in the mall, getting gas or doing business at an ATM, in the dressing room, on the train, driving in our car, or on the sidewalk, wherever we go, there you are, keeping tabs on us. Watching us. Waiting for us to trip up and do the wrong thing.

Your reasons for watching us are bogus. Your cameras aren't reducing crime. Potential criminals aren't deterred. If they are aware of surveillance cameras at all (few are clearly marked), they either avoid them or wear disguises.

Of the thousands and thousands of cameras trained on us in public places, only a few are being monitored by real people. On the off-chance you *did* see something, would the police respond in time to prevent it? Not likely and statistics don't support it.

Surveillance cameras don't prevent crime or stop crime, and they aren't much help solving crimes that already happened either. For the most part, these cameras produce fuzzy, indistinct, useless images. With a wide field you can watch everything all at once blurred and far-away, or you can zoom in on a particular spot and miss everything that happens around it. Cameras are no substitute for a pair of eyes.

In the meantime, we have given up our right to privacy in most public places and many private places. We are being watched more and more and most of us are not even aware of it.

And on top of that, surveillance devices are prone to abuse. Police are *right now* spying on dissidents, activists, and organizers. Profiling of both race and class is common. And remember those cases not long ago, when police surveillance cameras were being used to spy on women? How wide-spread is that?

Therefore we are opposed to installation of surveillance cameras in public places – our public places – since we gain little and lose much, particularly our right to privacy. We reject your culture of fear.

Benjamin Franklin could have been talking about life in a post 9/11 world when he wrote in 1759: "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."