Paul Garrin

Invisible Harvest

(of the DataBodies)

"The best propaganda is invisible"

Joseph Goebbels

In the root of cyberspace there lies an invisible "." (dot). That "." is the beacon which illuminates the global namespace to the rest of the internet.

Dot is in the heart of its creators, the DISA (Defense Intelligence Systems Agency), who have silently maintained control of the "." as it was quietly slipped into the newly privatized intelligence and military-corporate state.

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secure# whois -h whois.nic.mil. disa.mil

DISA Information Systems Center (DISA-DOM)

11440 Isaac Newton Square

Reston, VA 20190-5006
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At the gateway into the internet namespace lies a group of self-proclaimed, but silent feudal lords -- one of the hosts on their network is aptly named "harkonnen.internic.net" after the evil Overlord Baron Vladamir Harkonnen in the cult movie classic by David Lynch, "Dune".

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secure# nslookup harkonnen.internic.net.
Server: NS.AUTONO.NET
Address: 209.48.2.11

harkonnen.internic.net       internet address = 198.41.2.155
internic.net                 nameserver = rs0.internic.net
internic.net                 nameserver = ns2.internic.net
internic.net                 nameserver = noc.cerf.net
internic.net                 nameserver = ns.isi.edu
internic.net                 nameserver = ns0.clt.internic.net
rs0.internic.net             internet address = 198.41.0.5
ns2.internic.net             internet address = 198.41.0.11
noc.cerf.net                 internet address = 192.153.156.22
ns.isi.edu                   internet address = 128.9.128.127
ns0.clt.internic.net         internet address = 198.17.208.6
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So very telling is their choice of hostnames.

Their game is a silent harvest of dollars and databodies, drawn through the portal into the bowels of ECHELON for a complete strip-search.

ECHELON* is the equivalent of the "digital thought police"…not unlike the STASI who went to extraordinary means to know what people were thinking and discussing in private. Perhaps the 10 year cue for new telephone lines was due more to a shorage of cassette tapes and recorders than to bad service by the phone company. On nearly every installed telephone in former East Germany, there was a tape recorder triggered by keywords from an analogue voice recognition device. The STASI even went so far as to collect "odor" samples of target individuals--some 30,000 such samples were found in 1991 when the "archives" were opened up--each in its own sealed vacuum-jar with a neatly lettered index card linking the sample with a dossier file. The odor samples were used to train dogs to sniff out the individual…this enabled the STASI to secretly track the movements of their subjects, as the dogs could sniff out where they had been….The most invasive measures of all were found all in one place--a STASI "safe-house" in the countryside. It was the epitome of total surveillance using every available state-of-the-art in technology and strategy. Besides multiple hidden cameras in all the most unexpected places (even in the bathroom) there were hidden microphones and recording devices everywhere, and even a filter on the sewer drains to collect everything flushed away, for detailed analysis.

Picture this level of invasiveness in the physical world, and substitute the metaphors into the digital realm. Picture, instead of the dogs, software agents that "sniff" out your meanderings on the net…automated monitoring of your email messages triggered by keywords, to the STASI phone system, and the drain filter, to the collection of all the links and search queries that you submit through the "portals" set up to "lead" you through the net.

It's a nasty business with lots of little smilies and lovable hype that lures the unsuspecting victims into the predatory depths that will consume their databodies and profit from them…

; BEGIN RANT HERE

Seduced into complacency, infected by many a virus of brand loyalty, logos emblazoned across the bodies of the conquered who blindly fight the battle for brand dominance at their own expense…youth no longer at war in foreign lands, in their gangs do battle over rights to claim hilfiger as their colors using deadly means to enforce their logo domain within the shattered halls of their "too high in high-school"…the war is at home. The invasion has taken place and you don't even know it. Forget about it being televised, it's inside--your mind--and you act in kind to deliver yourself to be sacrificed for the bottom line…squashed at the foot of the pyramid, out of reach of the apex, the upper ECHELON, the invisible "." (*Exposing the Global Surveillance System* by Nicky Hager http://caq.com/echelon) seems less and less imortant to us as we struggle to climb our way up from the fourth to the third, or even the second-level of "any-access will do as long as I'm on the net I don't care that the invaders have raided my databody or can terminate it at any moment…I'm online!"

When the euphoria dies down and you realize what a terrible hangover you have, waking up in your sanitized padded cell where AOL and Microsoft will hold your hand along with Mickey Mouse to be sure that your journey on the net is safe and trouble-free. No need to worry about that troubling free expression, we have it all for you so just sit back and fit right in with the program. We know what you like--we microanalyzed your user profile and can project your desires and needs into the future and deliver only the ads you want to see…

You're a casualty of a war that you don't even see. And one small part of it lies behind an invisible "." that has Governments and corporations at odds over what will become of it now that it is known to parts of the world who know enough to want to share its power.

; END RANT HERE

Who Owns the Dot? Professor Hank Perritt calls the "." a "Global Commons" much like the oceans and waterways, space, and other shared resources of the earth that are not exclusively controlled by any soverign. Presently, the "." is in the hands of Network Solutions, Inc. (NSI) a/k/a InterNIC, a publicly traded company who started out as a contractor for the US Government. NSI is located in Herndon, Virginia, in an area referred to as "Spook Alley"…the corridor of Maryland, Virginia and DC that houses the CIA, NSA, NRO, Pentagon, Mitre, NSI, CNRI, MCI, and other "nondescript" entities who have their hands at the root of the internet, in both its creation and its control. NSI is owned by SAIC, a privately held government contractor whose board of directors could easily be mistaken for a NSA-CIA-Pentagon retirees´ club. (perhaps not coincidentally SAIC in reverse reads "CIAs"). NSI has a monopoly over global domain name registrations and is contracted to manage the "." which globally routes toplevel domains such as ".at" or ".com" over the entire internet. The lucrative business of selling "dot-coms" by the millions has helped NSI gain over 600 million dollars in market capitalization between September, 1997 and July, 1998.

The challenge to their lucrative monopoly comes in the form of new, generic toplevel domains poised to ease the shortages of memorable domain names artificially created by limiting generic, global tlds to com, org and net. In order for the new gTLDs to work globally, they must be listed under the ".", a simple text edit. [http://name.space.xs2.net/admin]

NSI, along with the NSF (National Science Foundation/US Government) are defendants in an antitrust/free speech case in US Federal Court in New York brought against them by Name.Space/pgMedia, Inc., an independent, small Internet Service Provider who pioneered the field of new toplevel domains and decentralized global management of the "." [http://name.space.xs2.net/law]

NSI/NSF's strategy is a shell game of deniability, elusive authority and unaccountability which serves to divert attention from the rude realities of the degree to which the US Governmet and its Defense and Intelligence agencies control the internet, and how they will maintain their control at all costs. Driving a small company line Name.Space into bankruptcy is but a bump in the road to maintaining total control. They underestimate the chance that "bump" is really a serious land mine. [http://Name.Space-Slams.Com]

As long as the business of handing out ip numbers and domain names is in the hands of SAIC, the US Government can be sure that they will have the complete listing of all those who have registered hosts on the internet and therefore can easily track use, content and affiliation. Coupled with ECHELON scanning of contents transmitted over the net, full profiles can be culled from the bitstream on all individuals who use the net.

By controling the DNS, they control accessability of content and communications…they can switch off whole countries with a simple text edit. Not that it would "black hole" them entirely, unless ip blocks were killed from the routing tables….much more decentralized… but do-able with a few, well-placed phonecalls… but mail and web services which used dns would fail…and users would then have to know ip numbers of hosts in order to communicate…most people lack the skill or knowledge to dig up that info in order to make use of it…

So what's in a name? That seemingly normal, harmless thing that all of us hold so dear yet take so much for granted, is a key to control over content and access over the net. Trusting control of all that in one place is a very dangerous thing to do.