Why is the Post Office Covertly Monitoring Social Media Accounts of Americans?

April 22, 2021 â€“ Yahoo News is reporting that it has come into possession of a USPS internal document that states that the US Postal Inspector Service is now monitoring Americasâ€™ social media postings. The program is known as the Internet Covert Operations Program (ICOP) and it raises a variety of disturbing questions regarding not only the USPS, but also regarding how the federal government as a whole treats the First Amendment rights of average citizens. It also begs the question. Under what authority is the USPS doing this?

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ICOP is apparently a new program. The document obtained by Yahoo stated that it was being used last month to monitor right-leaning accounts on platforms that include Telegram and Parler. The document mentioned specific accounts on those platforms and stated that the USPS had put out warnings to other law enforcement agencies about them.

Just the fact that any federal agency would name a program that is targeted at American citizens using the word â€œcovertâ€• is disturbing. It implies that the government now views certain American groups as potential enemies. If true, that leaves the country in a very dangerous place.

What the USPS is doing involved in any form of domestic covert activity is just as troubling. Other agencies such as the FBI, DEA, US Marshals, etcâ€¦ would appear to have much more experience in this arena. Additionally, how monitoring social media accounts enhances or protects mail delivery is a complete mystery that the USPS doesnâ€™t seem willing to address..

The extent of ICOP is currently unknown. Clearly the USPS wasnâ€™t counting on a media outlet getting its hands on this information and publishing it. But if the USPS is monitoring activities that are constitutionally protected simply because the current administration has an axe to grind with those that have differing political views, thereâ€™s a problem.

ICOP is a program that the USPS and the Biden administration need to explain quickly, or they need to drop it entirely.
by Jim Malmberg
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