
New Book Details Discovery of Domestic Surveillance Program

“Wiring Up The Big Brother Machine...And Fighting It”, By AT&T Whistleblower Mark Klein, reveals how the author uncovered warrantless wiretapping of U.S. citizens

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (MMD Newswire) August 21, 2009

“Wiring Up The Big Brother Machine...And Fighting It”, by Mark Klein is a personal account of government surveillance activities at AT&T by the National Security Agency (NSA) and the author's battle to bring it to light in the face of what he believes was a reluctant media and a disinterested Congress.

A technician for more than 22 years at telecom giant AT&T, Klein was working in the Internet room in San Francisco in 2003 when he discovered secret NSA surveillance activities which, due to the lack of warrants, were eventually denounced as violations of the law and the Constitution. Klein believed he had uncovered documentary evidence of these violations. He fought for months to draw media attention to the story and later became a witness in a lawsuit brought against AT&T by the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

"I was horrified by the massive trampling on democratic rights by the government, especially regarding the Fourth Amendment, and frustrated that I had been forced to be a silent part of it by actually wiring up part of the apparatus as part of my job as a technician," Klein says. "Now that Congress has given the telecom companies retroactive immunity, I decided to write my own book about the whole episode, so everyone would know what really happened."

Klein's discovery garnered national attention after a 2005 report in The New York Times uncovered the existence of the warrantless surveillance program. Engineering documents obtained by Klein, which came out in court and are featured in the book, reveal how equipment was installed on fiber optic cables that carried daily Internet communications-e-mail, Web browsing, phone conversations, pictures, business transactions and more-to the NSA for copying and further analysis. Klein states that the setup amounted to a massive "dragnet" on Americans' personal information.

“Wiring Up The Big Brother Machine...And Fighting It” is available for sale online at Amazon.com, BookSurge.com and through additional wholesale and retail channels worldwide.

About the Author

Mark Klein is the whistleblower who exposed AT&T's participation in the National Security Agency's warrantless surveillance on millions of Americans. A graduate of Cornell University, he was hired by AT&T in 1981 as a communications technician and worked for the company for more than 22 years. Klein has been interviewed on ABC Nightline with Brian Ross, PBS Frontline with Hedrick Smith, MSNBC Countdown with Keith Olbermann, NPR All Things Considered with Robert Siegel and Democracy Now! with Amy Goodman. He retired from AT&T in May 2004, and now lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with his wife.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Mark Klein

Email: markklein2009@gmail.com

Web: <http://sites.google.com/site/markklein2009/>

REVIEW COPIES AND INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE

###

The views and opinions expressed in this press release do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of BookSurge or its affiliates

Communications Workers of America Local 4250
3055 Glenwood-Dyer Road, Lynwood, Illinois 60411
Steve G. Tisza, President (708) 757-4065(Office)
stevetisza@sbcglobal.net (E-Mail)
<http://www.cwalocal4250.org> (Website)

The NSA and AT&T: The inside story



Buy the new book by the "AT&T whistleblower":

Wiring Up The Big Brother Machine...And Fighting It

by Mark Klein

Foreword by James Bamford

--now available on Amazon.com

Communications Workers of America Local 4250
3055 Glenwood-Dyer Road, Lynwood, Illinois 60411
Steve G. Tisza, President (708) 757-4065(Office)
stevetisza@sbcglobal.net (E-Mail)
<http://www.cwalocal4250.org> (Website)

“Had it not been for Mark Klein stepping up, this story might have remained secret for years and years, causing further erosion of our rights.”

--*Senator Chris Dodd, Congressional Record, December 17, 2007*

“When the Bush administration arrogantly trampled on the Constitution by ordering the NSA to eavesdrop on our e-mails and phone calls without a court warrant, only one insider had the courage to come forward to blow the whistle. His name is Mark Klein. Every American should read his chilling and disturbing book.”

--*David Wise, author of Spy: The Inside Story of How the FBI's Robert Hanssen Betrayed America and coauthor of The Invisible Government*

“Mark Klein's book is as precise, detailed, careful, and rational as the fiber-optic networks on which he worked at AT&T. It is fortunate for all of us that he was there, that he understood, and that he wrote this book. I found it spellbinding.”

--*Dr. Brian Reid, Staff Scientist, Internet Systems Consortium*

“One of the most serious civil rights violations in recent years was the Bush administration's seizure of e-mail traffic in the United States. Instituted without Congressional approval and maintained without news coverage, it needed someone to be willing to speak publicly about what they had seen. Mark Klein was that person. As Americans who care about our Constitution, our privacy,

and keeping the government on a legal path, his book is a must read.”

--*James J. Brosnahan, Senior Partner, Morrison & Foerster, LLP*

“Mark Klein is a bona fide hero and the American people owe him a huge debt of thanks. We often celebrate our Constitution, but without people like Mark to stand up for it and alert the rest of us, it's just a piece of paper.”

--*Cindy Cohn, Legal Director, Electronic Frontier Foundation*

“Putting himself at much personal risk, Mark Klein told the truth to whomever

Communications Workers of America Local 4250
3055 Glenwood-Dyer Road, Lynwood, Illinois 60411
Steve G. Tisza, President (708) 757-4065(Office)
stevetisza@sbcglobal.net (E-Mail)
<http://www.cwlocal4250.org> (Website)

would listen about the Constitutional violations he'd witnessed and had proof of. Unfortunately, few in power share Klein's courage, and the story of his fight to be heard should shame the nation's elected officials and the media."
--Ryan Singel, staff writer, *Wired.com*

* * * *

This book is whistleblower Mark Klein's personal account of the illegal government spying apparatus installed at AT&T by the National Security Agency and his battle to bring it to light. After the New York Times revealed in 2005 that the NSA was spying on Americans' phone calls and e-mail without Constitutionally-required court warrants, the Bush administration openly defended this practice. All details of the highly secret program remained hidden from the public—until Klein came forward.

A technician for over 22 years at telecom giant AT&T, Klein was working in the Internet room in San Francisco in 2003 when he discovered the NSA was vacuuming everyone's communications into a secret room, and he had the documents to prove it. He fought for months to get the reluctant media to cover the story, and then became a witness in a lawsuit brought against AT&T by the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

Read the IDG News [interview with Mark Klein published in the New York Times Technology section \(July 17, 2009\)](#)

Read the [Firedoglake book salon chat with Mark Klein \(Aug. 1, 2009\)](#)

[Listen to interview on Peter B. Collins podcast \(July 29, 2009\)](#)

For more research, see [Internet Resources](#)

markklein2009@gmail.com

Subpages (1): [Internet Resources](#)

[Sign in](#) [Terms](#) [Report Abuse](#) [Print page](#) | Powered by [Google Sites](#)

Communications Workers of America Local 4250
3055 Glenwood-Dyer Road, Lynwood, Illinois 60411
Steve G. Tisza, President (708) 757-4065(Office)
stevetisza@sbcglobal.net (E-Mail)
<http://www.cwalocal4250.org> (Website)

The NSA Wiretapping Story Nobody Wanted

Whistleblower Mark Klein tells in his new book of how he was ignored. He spoke with IDG News.

Robert McMillan

July 17, 2009 ([IDG News Service](#)) *They sometimes call national security the third rail of politics. Touch it and, politically, you're dead.*

The cliché doesn't seem far off the mark after reading Mark Klein's new book, "[Wiring up the Big Brother Machine ... and Fighting It.](#)" It's an account of his experiences as the whistleblower who exposed a secret room at a Folsom Street facility in San Francisco that was apparently used to monitor the Internet communications of ordinary Americans.

Klein, 64, was a retired AT&T communications technician in December 2005, when he read the [New York Times](#) story that blew the lid off the Bush administration's warrantless wiretapping program. Secretly authorized in 2002, the program lets the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) monitor telephone conversations and e-mail messages of people inside the U.S. to identify suspected terrorists. Klein knew right away that he had proof -- documents from his time at AT&T -- that could provide a snapshot of how the program was siphoning data off of the AT&T network in San Francisco.

Amazingly, however, nobody wanted to hear his story. In his book he talks about meetings with reporters and privacy groups that went nowhere until a fateful January 20, 2006, meeting with Kevin Bankston of the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF). Bankston was preparing a lawsuit that he hoped would put a stop to the wiretap program, and Klein was just the kind of witness the EFF was looking for.

With the EFF on board, Klein was briefly a media celebrity -- the man who had the guts to expose the NSA's secret wiretapping program. In his book he provides the documents and the stories that illustrate how all of this transpired.

Klein has been politically active since the 1960s, when he protested the Vietnam war. "I came to view the government with great suspicion like a lot of people back then and I still do," he said in an interview he granted the IDG News service on Friday. "I guess that sort of laid the groundwork for my later experience, because I didn't trust the government to begin with."

Today he lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with his wife, Linda, and his two dogs. He self-published his book last week.

Related Story

[Obama administration defends Bush wiretapping](#)

Following is an edited transcript of the interview.

IDG News Service: By some estimates there are 15 to 20 of these secret wiretapping rooms across the country. You're the only AT&T employee who has come forward and talked about them in detail. Why?

Mark Klein: Fear. First of all it was a scary time. It still is a scary time, but during the Bush years it was sort of a witch hunt atmosphere and people were afraid. People are afraid of losing their jobs, and it's a rule of thumb that if you become a whistleblower you'll probably lose your job. And if you have a security clearance, you not only lose your job, but you probably will be prosecuted by the government. The Bush administration made that very clear in statements they made over and over again: 'Anybody who reveals anything about our secret programs will be prosecuted and we are running investigations to find out who leaked this to the New York Times.' Well that puts a fear in people.

IDGNS: Have you heard from other AT&T employees who told you that they knew of these activities?

Klein: I haven't tried to get in contact with people I knew at AT&T for this very reason. I didn't want to jeopardize their livelihood.

IDGNS: In your book you describe how a meeting with your lawyer was videotaped to preserve evidence in case you "disappeared." How scared were you?

Communications Workers of America Local 4250
3055 Glenwood-Dyer Road, Lynwood, Illinois 60411
Steve G. Tisza, President (708) 757-4065(Office)
stevetisza@sbcglobal.net (E-Mail)
<http://www.cwlocal4250.org> (Website)

Klein: I was very worried. The Bush administration was capable of very crazy things and illegal things. I knew they were doing torture. And I knew they had taken into custody and jailed people who were citizens of the United States ... and just thrown them away in a brig with no trial and no charges. So I didn't think it was beyond the possibility that they'd do the same to me. Maybe I was getting a little paranoid in hindsight, but hindsight is cheap.

I was most worried at the time when the *LA Times* was killing my story, but at the same time the *LA Times* showed it to the government. Then I really was panicking because that meant that the government knew everything and probably knew my name, but I didn't have any publicity.

IDGNS: The media merit a full chapter (entitled: 'Going Public vs. Media Chickens') in your book. What happened there?

Klein: The *LA Times* was particularly egregious because they were planning a front-page spread. They were the first entity I'd given all the documents to. Then they talked to the government about it, and it turned out they were talking to not only the NSA director, but the director of national intelligence, who was John Negroponte at the time. So that meant the government knew it. And then a few weeks later the *LA Times* killed the story. So the only thing you can read into is that basically the government squashed the story. [The *LA Times*' editor in early 2006, Dean Baquet, said the government had nothing to do with the decision. 'We did not have a story, that we could not figure out what was going on,' he [told ABC News](#) -- ed.]

IDGNS: How long did they have the story?

Klein: I started dealing with them in late January 2006, and in February they showed it to the government, and then they started wobbling. By the end of March 2006, they officially told me the story was killed.

IDGNS: Did they cover it in April, after it became public?

Klein: No that was funny. After it finally hit the news everywhere else, The *LA Times* didn't run with the stuff I'd given them. They'd squashed the whole thing.

IDGNS: A lot of people you might have expected to be interested in this story weren't interested initially. In the book, you talk about going to EPIC [the Electronic Privacy Information Center] and getting nowhere; you talk about the media and you also talk about Congress. You never testified before Congress.

Klein: This book has several aspects. The first aspect is the spying itself and the technical apparatus; another aspect is the role of the media and how the media has basically functioned as a propaganda apparatus for the government, more or less willingly. Part of the book is about the struggle to make the media cover this story. And the third part of this story is about Congress. It was a struggle, a struggle which failed I might add, to get Congress to investigate and do something about this. Congress ran away from me. They didn't want to touch me with a 10-foot pole, starting with my own senator, Dianne Feinstein, who was a key member of both the Intelligence Committee in the Senate and the Judiciary Committee. She was one of the first legislators I tried to contact in February 2006. I was given the number of her chief attorney in Washington, and he first was very interested. He talked to me on the phone and asked me a bunch of detailed questions and told me he'd get back to me. And then I never heard from him again.

IDGNS: Why do you think you had trouble getting Congress interested?

Klein: With the Republicans, it's obvious why they didn't want to deal with it. Their administration was responsible for the whole illegal spying operation. The first layer of the Democratic party leadership, it turns out, had been knowledgeable and briefed on this program and was complicit, in my view.

IDGNS: What do you think you've accomplished by coming forward with these documents?

Klein: My main accomplishment is to let everybody know about what exactly the government is doing to people. How the government in detail is screwing over people's privacy and trampling over the Constitution and the Fourth Amendment, and lay out in great detail how everybody's personal lives are being delved into by the government and stored in secret databases for future reference.