

GNITN

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Prophecy Update:

Big Brother Has an Upgrade — China's AI Surveillance State and the Beast System

Big Brother On Steroids

As if they couldn't get any worse, news of one country using the rapid rise of artificial intelligence (AI) power to create a surveillance state that is Orwellian in scope. I doubt that it would surprise you that the country is China. But it should concern you that what they are doing now is exactly what the Apostle John describes in [Revelation 13:15-17](#):

And it was given to him to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast would even ^[k]speak and cause all who do not worship the image of the beast to be killed. ¹⁶ And he causes all, the small and the great, the rich and the poor, and the free and the slaves, ^[l]to be given a mark on their right hands or on their foreheads, ¹⁷ and he decrees that no one will be able to buy or to sell, except the one who has the mark, either the name of the beast or the number of his name. (NASB)

We can debate whether what we're seeing is what John saw, but this kind of global control is not new in human history. Rome was like this, Nazi Germany was like this, and the list goes on and on. However, the kind of technology China is using is unparalleled in the annals of mankind as we see in an [article](#) from *Prophecy News Watch*:

For years, China has built what many observers have described as the most extensive surveillance network in human history. Now, thanks to rapid advances in artificial intelligence, that network is evolving into something far more powerful--and far more concerning. According to recent reporting from the Financial Times, Chinese authorities are upgrading their already vast surveillance infrastructure with advanced AI systems capable of analyzing behavior, identifying individuals, predicting crowd activity, and even anticipating potential social unrest before it occurs.

This goes way beyond basic CCTV systems that are used like candy in crime procedurals: This is no longer simply about cameras watching street corners. It is about creating a real-time digital map of an entire society. China's surveillance system already includes hundreds of millions of cameras deployed throughout cities, transportation hubs, schools, residential complexes, and public spaces. Citizens are routinely monitored as they travel, shop, work, and interact with others. What is changing now is the intelligence behind the cameras.

More Than Video Cameras

According to the article, the ability to analyze the footage can happen very quickly:

New systems supplied by companies such as Huawei and Hikvision are reportedly equipped with powerful AI chips that allow footage to be processed directly within cameras themselves. Instead of merely recording video for later review, these systems can analyze events as they happen. Authorities can reportedly search vast video archives using natural-language commands. Rather than manually reviewing footage, an officer might simply type:

"Show me everyone wearing black jackets who entered the train station between 3 and 5 p.m." Within seconds, the AI can locate relevant individuals.

And it is even more powerful when you add in this:

The implications become even more significant when combined with facial recognition. China has spent years building facial recognition databases that can identify citizens within seconds. AI now allows authorities to track individuals across multiple camera networks, following movements from one district to another with little human involvement. But identification is only the beginning.

The Why To The What

The days of trying to figure out why a person is doing something now has AI analysis added to it:

Modern AI systems excel at pattern recognition. They are designed to notice unusual behavior, flag anomalies, and generate predictions based on massive amounts of data. According to experts familiar with these new projects, authorities are increasingly focused on using AI to identify indicators of potential unrest before demonstrations or protests occur. In other words, the goal is no longer merely solving crimes after they happen. The goal is anticipating behavior before it occurs.

What could possibly go wrong? In the wrong hands freedom can and will become a thing of the past and our good friends the Chinese government are leading the way:

Imagine a system that notices an unusually large gathering forming, tracks online discussions, monitors transportation patterns, observes increased foot traffic, and alerts authorities that a protest may be developing hours before participants arrive. That is the direction China appears to be moving.

It Gets Worse

We live in a very connected society, too connected for some people's tastes. Nothing you do is private anymore no matter how much tinfoil you use:

Nor is video surveillance the only source of data. China's digital ecosystem already collects extraordinary amounts of information through mobile phones, payment systems, transportation records, internet activity, and social media platforms. Apps record locations. Digital payment systems track purchases. Transit systems monitor travel. Online activity reveals interests, opinions, and relationships.

With AI all this information can be very useful to a people who value control over freedom:

AI's real power emerges when these separate streams are connected. The result is what amounts to a digital profile of each citizen--where they go, who they know, what they buy, what they read, and increasingly, what algorithms predict they may do next.

To be fair this aggregation of data can be helpful in the right hands:

Supporters argue such systems improve public safety, reduce crime, locate missing persons, and help authorities respond more quickly to emergencies. Those benefits are real.

I can see how finding a loved one with Alzheimer's or dementia who wanders off or an abducted child who is in real danger. And solving crimes is always a good thing. This assumes that morals are used to constrain the power, to keep it in check. That is a fatal assumption, though.

Be Afraid, Be Very Afraid

In the case of China, a society not based on Judeo-Christian values the power will corrupt even the best of intentions:

The concern is that every surveillance technology created for legitimate security purposes can also be used for social control. History repeatedly demonstrates that governments rarely surrender powers once acquired. What begins as crime prevention can gradually expand into political monitoring. What starts as public safety can become behavior management. What is marketed as convenience can become compliance.

And lest we think we are better than China, think again:

This is why developments in China deserve attention far beyond Beijing. Many Western observers assume such systems could never emerge in democratic societies. That assumption may prove dangerously naïve. The technologies themselves are not uniquely Chinese. Facial recognition exists throughout the West. License plate readers are widespread. Smart cities increasingly deploy connected sensors. Artificial intelligence can already analyze video feeds, identify individuals, and monitor patterns of behavior. Governments regularly cite terrorism, public safety, organized crime, pandemics, misinformation, cyber threats, and national security as reasons for expanding monitoring capabilities.

We justify giving up freedom for safety all the time. Does anyone remember the pandemic? The famous quote by Benjamin Franklin seems more than apropos now:

Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety.

If only we would remember one of the American Founders who came from a system of oppressive leaders when our leaders try to justify using these systems to make us safer. But I digress.

The Frog In The Pot

In many ways, we are like the proverbial frog thrown in pot of boiling water. The frog would never stay in it when it is obviously going to kill it, but if thrown into cold water will adjust to slowly rising heat until it is too late. We are now the frog and the rising ability of AI to surveil us is the slowly heated water in the pot. The ability to gather intelligence had been around for some time. That camera with a doorbell seemed so innocuous at first. Now it can be used to accuse you of a crime in the wrong hands. The article notes this exact process:

Few surveillance systems arrive all at once. They typically appear incrementally. One camera for safety. One database for efficiency. One digital ID for convenience. One AI tool to help law enforcement. One emergency measure during a crisis. Each step may appear reasonable in isolation. Yet over time, those steps can accumulate into something remarkably similar to the systems many Western nations criticize abroad.

The dreaded Beast system in Bible prophecy is more than a myth. It is a stark reality. The Big Brother society is not a work of fiction anymore:

China's AI overhaul provides a glimpse into where technology is heading. For the first time in history, governments possess tools capable of monitoring populations at scales previous generations could scarcely imagine. The question is no longer whether such technology exists. It does.

Unlike the frog, we can and should be aware of what's happening. The fear is that we've already crossed the Rubicon of restraint:

The question is whether free societies will establish meaningful limits before convenience, security, and fear gradually normalize the same level of surveillance that China is now perfecting. Once a government can see everything, know everything, and predict behavior before it happens, the line between protecting citizens and controlling them becomes dangerously thin. And that is a conversation every free nation should be having now--not after the cameras, databases, and AI systems are already in place.

Fortunately as Christians we have someone who can do all of this better than I ever can. His name is God and the good news is He loves us and only does what is best for us. And He tells us that we shouldn't live in fear:

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. ([2 Tim 1:7, NKJV](#))

Ultimately, God will be our shelter and defender in the most oppressive of human systems. And that is good news folks.