



# The Truman Story

by Douglas Grant

A television news station recently ran the same old story on surveillance cameras in public places, this news item instigated an interesting conversation that I thought was worthy of mention. The conversation began with how frustrating the civil libertarians tend to be regarding, their limited and boring viewpoint of cameras and invasion of privacy.

If the civil libertarians are going to carry on with this bleating, why not lift the lid on this subject and have a really good look in the pot.

Why not use some creative imagination and consider where CCTV could take us if it is truly such a negative factor in people's lives.

The Hollywood production of Truman gave us an insight into an individual's life that was totally controlled by the "Big Brother" figure. Cameras were installed in every imaginable location keeping a constant surveillance of his life.

The nearest likeness of the Hollywood scene in real life would have to be the city mall surveillance systems being installed for local councils. With government funding available these days for surveillance type security systems it can't be long

off before every council has a system in place. We have traffic control cameras viewing long stretches of highway in many locations which reduce traffic snarls and quicken up response time to accidents along the road ways. What's next in the ever expanding market on CCTV?

How about suburban surveillance? The need is certainly there to observe gangs, break-ins and vandalism, even speeding motorists could be easily identified with the use of cameras. You're saying, "We already have speed cameras", I'd have to agree with you the only difference between what we have now and what we saw on the big screen with Truman is the way the individual systems are monitored.

Every surveillance system you read about or have in your local towns are monitored using a closed circuit method of cabling, meaning the information all comes back to a central location and is viewed by operators who stare at video monitors while they control the cameras connected to their system.

Here lies possibly the short-lived difference between the Hollywood version and what we have now. The Truman system of cameras were so numerous they enabled the operator to move from camera to camera capturing the movements of an individual with continuity, this is only made possible when several cameras are connected to one system. Our public surveillance systems are spread over larger areas and controlled by separate operational teams in different localities.

What is going to

happen when the technology becomes available to network all these small system to the larger ones?

Big Brother will have the camera numbers to watch you leave the house in the morning, jump in your car and drive down the highway, maneuver your way through the city. Existing surveillance in parking lots will enable the operators to further



observe you park your car and walk into the downtown shopping area and, if their interested, watch you purchase your shopping.

The Civil Libs are missing out big time on this CCTV issue by continually playing down the figures stated by local police in relation to the reduction in crime. Why not jump into the macrocosm and do some forward analyzing which will make us, the people think. We're tired of the same old scare tactics you guys have been using for the last few years, we want emotional rape and lose of dignity in place of privacy infringement.

To be continued.....

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