

The Challenges of Communications Interception and Security in the Internet Age

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Thursday, January 18, 2007
007 Kemeny Hall, 4:00 pm
(Tea 3:30 pm 300 Kemeny Hall)

Abstract

Wiretaps have been used since the invention of the telegraph and have been a legal element of the U.S. law-enforcement arsenal for almost forty years. In 1994, in keeping with law enforcement's efforts to have laws stay current with changing technologies, Congress passed the Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement Act (CALEA). This law was a tremendous change, for it put a law-enforcement agency in charge of the design of wiretapping in digitally-switched telephone networks. In the last several years the FBI has sought to apply CALEA to the Internet. Such an application is less than straightforward. It is not necessarily secure. This talk takes a broad look at wiretapping, the Internet, communications security, and national-security needs a decade after the "Crypto Wars."