


Former SLC mayor sues NSA, George W. Bush and Dick Cheney over 2002 Olympic spying

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SALT LAKE CITY — Former Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson has filed a class-action lawsuit against the National Security Agency, former President George W. Bush and former Vice-President Dick Cheney over accusations of spying on everyone in Salt Lake City during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games.

In a lawsuit filed Tuesday in U.S. District Court, Anderson accused the NSA and the Bush administration of blanket surveillance over everyone in Salt Lake City and the Olympic venues from the start of the opening ceremonies until the closing ceremonies two weeks later.

From the complaint:

8. The NSA, in conjunction with the FBI, planned and implemented a mass warrantless program—for which there was no probable cause, completely outside the Constitution and outside of any applicable federal statutory laws, including FISA, the Wiretap Act, and the Stored Communications Act—in which blanket surveillance was attempted and achieved during a period preceding the commencement of the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games and throughout the period of the Games, from February 8, 2002 (Opening Ceremony) through February 24 (Closing Ceremony), over everyone within designated geographical areas, including Salt Lake City, Utah, and the areas including and in the vicinity of all Olympic venues. That surveillance included the interception and key-word spotting analysis of the contents of every text message sent and received, every email sent and received, and information reflecting the time and length of, and telephone numbers involved in, every telephone conversation involving any person within the areas subjected to the blanket surveillance. In some instances, people or telephone numbers were targeted by the NSA and FBI and telephone conversations involving such targeted telephone numbers were illegally and unconstitutionally recorded and subjected to analysis, without a warrant and without probable cause.

9. In light of the practice and philosophy of the NSA to horde everything obtained through surveillance, Plaintiffs believe that the communications illegally and unconstitutionally subjected to surveillance, interception, and key-word spotting analysis are presently unlawfully stored by the NSA, subject to unlawful access at any time in the future.

The plaintiffs in Anderson's lawsuit are: Josie Valdez, the former vice-chair of the Utah Democratic Party; Sen. Howard Stephenson, R-Draper; Anderson's former spokeswoman and former Salt Lake City Councilwoman Deeda Seed; former Dead Goat Saloon owner Daniel Darger; author William Bagley; and University of Utah English professor Thomas Huckin.



Former Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson in a recent interview with FOX 13.

The lawsuit claims a Fourth and First Amendment violation and seeks class-action status. In his request for damages, Anderson asks on behalf of his clients an injunction "prohibiting Defendants' continued warrantless surveillance of communications" and also asking the NSA to give his clients the data that was allegedly taken during the 2002 Olympic Winter Games.

A spokeswoman for the NSA did not immediately respond to a request for comment.