Pine Gap: ‘ethical eavesdropper’ David Rosenberg steps out from the shadows


• EXCLUSIVE
At a time of unprecedented scrutiny into the activities of the so-called “deep state”, one of its former operatives, US National Security Agency analyst David Rosenberg, has stepped from the shadows to offer an unfashionable counterpoint to the dominant narrative of our times.

Far from being a menace to free people the world over, the NSA and its allies are ethical eavesdroppers who every day provide invaluable intelligence that saves lives.

Mr Rosenberg spent 18 years working as a weapons analyst in Pine Gap, the secret facility buried deep in the heart of the Northern Territory desert.

Now a civilian, Mr Rosenberg has written a book, *Pine Gap: The Inside Story of the NSA in Australia*, that provides a limited yet tantalising insight into the role of the establishment, which as well as being the most sensitive intelligence facility in the country was for years the flashpoint of anti-American protest.

Missile launches, radar signals, intelligence gathered from caves of Afghanistan; Pine Gap has played a vital role in safeguarding the US and its allies, as well as coalition troops fighting abroad.
Mr Rosenberg said during the Iraq war, Pine Gap played a key role in providing high-level strategic intelligence on Saddam Hussein and his generals.

“We were looking for leadership conversations during conflicts,’’ he said of his work at Pine Gap. “During the Iraq war, we would target those types of communications. Obviously (they) are encrypted but we certainly do try to obtain as much intelligence as we can on those types of people.’’

Mr Rosenberg, who worked at Pine Gap from 1990 to 2008, said he never spied on a US or Australian citizen, a practice forbidden to both the NSA and the Australian Signals Directorate, the listening arm of Australia’s intelligence apparatus. Instead, he paints a picture of an ethical, almost boringly bureaucratic organisation governed by a strict legal framework and an oversight committee.

“What I can tell you is that the signals we were intercepting were located outside of Australia and America. We didn’t target Australian or Americans,’’ he said.

Company spin? Perhaps. Certainly Mr Rosenberg acknowledges that American and Australian voices were among the millions of communications picked up by the constellation of satellites feeding intelligence into Pine Gap.

Mr Rosenberg is coy about discussing the details of his work at Pine Gap, although he suggests the facility is as valuable now as it has ever been.

“Pine Gap has the capability to detect heat from ballistic missile launches,’’ he said.

“That means Australia also effectively has access to counter measures against weapons that may be used against Australian forces, like any kind of anti-ship cruise missile that’s out there. What you do is you learn about weapons capability as they’re being tested.

“The more you learn, the more likely you are to be able to build effective counter measures against them.’’
Steven

It's a story that needs to be told. I can well believe that the US position in Pine Gap is of vital importance to us all. The Left feed our children with bed time stories of gloom and defeat, division and discrimination and try to turn our heads so we turn against our friends. It seems quite clear that the Cold War never ended and is as pernicious as ever. What that means is that the communists, at home and abroad, seek to wreck our great democratic community. The enemies of freedom today include feminists in our institutions who want to wreck our culture in order to exterminate masculinity. Environmentalists who are prepared to do anything to stop climate change and perceive authoritarian states as best situated to solve the problem - when in fact authoritarians are much worse. Ironically, the greatest threat to democracy is globalization which allows weak states to attack great states through ease of physical infiltration via open borders, cyber warfare, and pervasive propaganda via the internet. It is not enough for governments to regulate. Individuals need to take responsibility too, but pushing back against infiltration and subversion.

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