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| Creative – On the Edge  Bill was a few metres away from the edge of a jagged cliff. He precariously shuffled his way further toward the edge, where he found it difficult to take a full step due to the ferocity of the wind striking against him. He finally got to the edge and, after some difficulty, looked down, below there was waves battering against the coast, underneath there were cars with their headlights flickering the swash of the waves turning them on and off until the barites ran dead eventually turning all the lights off with no sign of them ever being there in the first place. Beep, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, Bill spontaneously jolted himself into conciseness.” Sound track to my life” Bill said in between the breaths of his panting to the emptiness that surrounded him  That day Bill got a day off his work to go to the doctors he had suffered with an unknown to medical science illness his whole life. It never really affected him too much up until now when he started forgetting whole chunks of his pre-adolescent life. Bill got off the bus and stepped onto the path accidently standing on some chewed gum. This infuriated him he thought to himself why, why on this day at this time at this place did he have to be the one to suffer this inconvenience it aggravated him so much he through his shoes away. Bill walked into the hospital wearing only socks on his feet and shuffled towards the reception at the desk there was a rather unpleasant woman with a name tag that read Brenda. He looked up at her and saw her chewing gum with a phone to her ear completely ignoring Bill’s existence. He let out a quite cough to try to grab her attention she looked at him and held up her weirdly deformed hand. Bills patience was growing thin so said in a disgruntled manor “ Bill For three o’clock “ she immediately put the phone down and with a flushed look on her face guided him to Dr Bradford’s room “go in when you’re ready” said Brenda in a high pitched sympathising tonne somehow managing to force a smile on her face. The plaque on the door read Dr Bradford Room: CRM 114 he twisted the door knob anxiously slowly trying to prolong the inevitable.  “Come in, come in” Dr Bradford said in a melancholy tone Bill looked around the room pensively the room was rather small for a doctor’s office there were piles of boxes with paper inside all-around “good morning?” Bill nervously said, he didn’t answer which heightened his anxiety so he made a joke about a skeleton in the corner “not foreshadowing I hope” the doctor told Bill to take a seat. “I’m just going to be straight with you” the doctor said very sternly “you don’t have long two to three weeks by my estimation” the doctor went into more detail but Bill could not hear. The frightening weight of realisation hit Bill with the force of two neutron stars colliding, he felt the weight drag him from the blissful lightness pinning him to the ground with no escape. His whole life shrunk to perspective he could see the big picture and all it was a randomly spattered blobs each indistinguishable from the last. A sudden wave of sickness hit him he stood up and asked “can I go to the toilet sir?” sounding drunk as he did so BANG! His body seemed to have caught up with his mind, he had passed out. Bill dreamed hi was in a massive room with white walls on all sides he looked around the room for a while and came across tall oak double doers with a large button marked open on the side at first he was apprehensive to push it but did. The doers opened slowly Bill was suddenly filled with unbridled happiness he took a step. “Bill, Bill wake up “he slowly opened his eyes as it turns out he had been out for about 3 days.  They had to keep him in hospital for a sometime they said he thinks anyway. In the few days following in the hospital Bill noticed objects he couldn’t put a name to, people’s faces started to blur together he could barely distinguish between people. Most of his visitors were unrecognizable. As Bill was sat there in his hospital bed he looked back on his life and struggled with the thought that his life was full of mediocrity that all the things that he thought was his life was just a brief moment in-between the everyday things cleaning, driving, watching TV that was his life. Not getting married, not graduating, not travelling they were just anomalies in-between. Several days later Bill found himself in a room full of people claiming to be close relatives he had a vague felling that he knew some of them but wasn’t certain. That day they were sure Bill was as good as dead but he survived. After a few days Bill was released and was able to go home. A week later Bill decided to go for a walk he didn’t know where he was going but knew he wasn’t coming back. As he stepped out the door then jolted himself awake. He could see it now the line and shapes defined everything in vibrant colour the blissful lightness dawned on him he becoming as light as life its self he saw how insignificant it all was, he took one deep breath... the light dimmed, it became blurred, a burst of light came through the shade, “This can’t be…” Bill exclaimed, “you ca…..”.  Word Count: 953  **Snooper’s Charter**  In this modern day it is becoming more and more difficult to have any privacy at all. Sometimes it seems as if though we’re only a few steps away from having cameras in our houses watching our every move. For years now the government has been trying to pass a bill that allows them to force ISP’s(Internet Service Providers) to collect and store data from all users so that it can later be accessed by the police and security services. The nick name given to the bills that the government has being trying to pass since the revelations revealed by Edward Snowden is the Snoopers Charter or snoopers’ charter.  First of all, if the government where to pass this law it would represent a blatant disregard for one of our most basic human rights, which is the right to privacy, as stated in article eight of the EU rules on Basic Human Rights:  “2.There shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic wellbeing of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.”  I understand the need for targeted surveillance. In this rapidly expanding society it can be hard to keep up with the crime that’s expanding alongside it but it is not acceptable to breach are liberties and rights to do so. The main argument I have heard for the Draft Communication Bill which is the official name of snooper’s charter is that it would be a great tool against the ever prevalent threat in our society, terrorism. I would argue that if we let terrorists bully us into paying the government to spy on us why stop at internet surveillance, why not put cameras into all our houses? This is because people like their privacy and don’t feel free without it and the same applies to the internet.  Another controversial tool used by the British government to collect private data of an unwary public is IMSI catchers – this is a tool that serves the purpose of monitoring phone calls and text, the catcher acts as a phone tower in order to do so this makes them extremely difficult to detect. Many countries admit to using ISMI catchers such as Germany but in the United Kingdom there has been no official statement from the government on the issue despite their being sizeable evidence of their use, a Vice report was recently done on this issue in which the reporter teams up with a software engineer to try detect IMSI scanners in the city of London and the results were successful in finding a few. When interviewing police many of them stayed quite on the topic with one stating that he as “unable to disclose that information” but it was later revealed by a manufacturer of ISMI catchers that they were in fact being sold to law enforcement in the United Kingdom. Displaying further evidence of the government’s willingness to covertly spy on its own citizens and the mistrust that lies between us.  Another point I would like to make about this bill is that the unlawful spying of private citizens has, in fact, been going on for a while- both in this country and our neighbours most notably the USA. In the May of 2013 Edward Snowdon started copying classified files and compiling them in a dossier, which was then later released to the public. These files contained the American governments operation to spy on its own citizens unlawfully and indiscriminately. It was later revealed that Britain had a similar operation in GCHQ. After these events took place, Snowdon had to flee the country with America declaring him guilty of espionage and after all the lies and deception from the government perhaps the most disturbing thing is that 49% of Americans think he is a traitor for telling the people the truth of the blatant disregard of their own rights by their own government. It seems if though people are in complete denial of the threat this poses to themselves.  It has come apparent to me that what the Draft Communications bill wants companies to do would be very costly and perhaps detrimental to our economy. The latest draft of this bill would mean that ISP’s such as Virgin Media, Sky, BT, etc… would have to spend a lot of money to upgrade and buy storage areas and devices for all this user information which would result in the price of internet packages to increase dramatically which in turn means less people will be able to afford it and in this day and age it’s almost impossible to get things done efficiently without it. Another major issue would be the fact that popular applications and instant messengers that heavily encrypt their user data will be forced to change or be outright banned by the British government. The instant messengers that could be banned include Snap Chat and Whatsapp two very popular social media platforms it all seems to be reminiscent of North Korean polices which is not a path I think anyone wants to follow.  I think that weakening the encryption of data so it is easier for the government to see is a ridiculous idea. First of all because it’s a violation of our rights as I’ve said before and it doesn’t just make it easier for the government it also makes it a lot easier for cyber criminals to get their hands on it, possibly creating more cybercrime than it prevents. This point is especially relevant because it’s now more than ever that we hear about hackings of business super powers such as Apples I cloud last year, the repeated Sony hacks of the Playstation Network and a whole movie being stopped from being released in theatres just Imagine the damage that could be done if they had to be weakened.  In conclusion, I think in this ever evolving technological epoch, it is vitally important to make sure our defences are keeping up but it is absolutely obscene to strip our freedom of privacy away with it. If this bill is ever passed it would be a corruption of justice and the start of totalitarian society and with each passing moment I can feel Britain becoming more and more of an Orwellian society.    <http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/bob-morgan/drip_b_7528432.html>  <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Draft_Communications_Data_Bill>  <https://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/human-rights/what-are-human-rights/human-rights-act/article-8-right-private-and-family-life>  Word count 998 |