Government snooping: Different views

Between the lines
The uproar over revelations that the National Security Agency has collected the telephone records of tens of millions of Americans spilled onto the nation’s editorial pages recently. Major newspapers condemned the program saying what the government was doing “undermines US freedoms and threatens us all.”

But a poll taken after the disclosures showed that a majority of Americans supports the NSA program.

Talking points
1. “We are in a war, and we’ve got to collect intelligence on the enemy, and you can’t tell the enemy in advance how you are going to do it,” said Sen. Jon Kyl, R-Ariz. With that quote in mind, decipher what John Trever’s cartoon is saying about the American Press press revealing government actions. Is the press functioning as a spy network for terrorists? Do you agree with polls that the program is OK?

2. Bob Englehart says our liberties have been wounded by the government’s war on terror. How so? Do you agree?

3. List and explain the symbols used in both toons. By the way, Englehart always draws President Bush wearing a bicycle helmet. Why would he do that? What famous recent incident (shooting accident) is part of the parody here?

Additional resources
Association of American Editorial Cartoonists
http://editorialcartoonists.com/
More by John Trever
http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm?TreveJ/
More by Bob Englehart
http://editorialcartoonists.com/cartoon/browse.cfm?EngleB

Get out your newspaper
Gather a collection of political cartoons from your newspaper. Using the Cartoon Evaluation Worksheet (available online at the NIE Website) analyze each cartoon and explain the issues addressed and determine the artist’s point of view.

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