PORTABLE GCHQ:

In the aftermath of the tragic Charlie Hébdo massacre, many governments are negotiating further changes to the way that they capture data about their citizens. France has banned pro-Palestine demonstrations, while the UK government is using the events of the past few weeks to propose more significant and far-reaching metadata capture and further powers to read the content of personally identifiable information in the name of preserving people’s freedom.

This project seeks to explore the paradox of policy, or the finding of new or alternative routes to subjectivity in an assemblage. This proposal aims to create new, open-source, DIY individual centres of control in the translation, parsing and passing of information from the populace to the bodies that require it. I propose to use social media APIs, cryptography software portable printers and Westminster Freepost addresses to create this system. The aim of this is to examine through art methods the process of data governance and also ways in which individuals can create their own narratives through their personally identifiable information.

This raises multiple questions around control, power and freedom of speech in a biopolitical space that continuously seeks to adjust and refine the idea of what is acceptable human behaviour, and what is not. The increase in monitoring of digital activity creates new and unpredictable layers of governance, and the clandestine capture of information black boxes this process from the citizens subject to it, placing what is said online into new, undefined contexts that can be interpreted in ways that are currently unseen to the people who are speaking.

Post Scriptum:

If you want to encrypt your facebook data, just download a copy of it, and then load the crypt script in the folder with your browser. You may need to set up a few things to get it to work.

You should be able to quite quickly get hold of an encrypted version of your data that you can send around willy-nilly.