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NSA Spying on Foreign Leaders: Of Course Obama Knew

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The Obama White House knew about the surveillance of foreign leaders, and most of the media is honest enough to report it.

* NY Times: "[Spying Known At Top Levels, Officials Say](#)" [1] — Reports that DNI Clapper testified "that the N.S.A. had kept senior officials in the National Security Council informed of surveillance it was conducting in foreign countries. He did not specifically say whether ... Obama was told, ... but he appeared to challenge assertions in recent days the White House had been in the dark..."

* Washington Times: "[Clapper: Obama aware of spying on U.S. allies; Contradicts administration](#)" [2]. The lead is that top U.S. intelligence officials acknowledged that "Obama and other senior White House officials were well aware of U.S. surveillance activities targeting leaders of friendly foreign nations," contradicting what the Administration has been insinuating, that Obama was unaware. Reports that U.S. intel has been monitoring world leaders for decades, and every President in modern history has been aware of this. Obama has specifically received intelligence briefings concerning Netanyahu, the Pakistan Prime Minister, Putin, and Ban Ki-moon.

* Tribune news service, in Stars & Stripes: "[White House approved spying on allies, US intelligence officials say](#)" [3] — Leads with: "The White House and State Department signed off on surveillance targeting phone conversations of friendly foreign leaders, current and former U.S. intelligence officials said Monday, pushing back against assertions that President Barack Obama and his aides were unaware of the high-level eavesdropping. Professional staff members at the National Security Agency and other U.S. intelligence agencies are angry, these officials say, believing the president has cast them adrift as he tries to distance himself from the disclosures by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden that have strained ties with close allies."

* Foreign Policy's The Cable, by Shane Harris: "[Intel Vets: Of Course Obama Knew About NSA Spying](#)" [4] — Everyone from the President to Congressional overseers are claiming they had no idea about spying on foreign leaders. "But that claim is laughable, according to veteran members of the intelligence community, former White House advisers, and now one of the NSA's main overseers in Congress. A former White House official, who served in a prior administration, said it was essentially impossible that the President wouldn't know foreign leaders were being monitored by U.S. intelligence agencies, and principally the NSA, as part of regular operations aimed at keeping him informed about diplomatic relations and negotiations. Information on foreign leaders that is based on recorded calls or other signals intelligence is 'unique,' the former official said, and its nature is obvious to anyone reading or hearing an intelligence report or receiving a briefing." The President gets briefed on foreign leaders before any meetings with them, and it would be a firing offense not to tell the President that the information came from spying. "It's almost a dereliction not to tell him."

Links:

[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/30/world/officials-say-white-house-knew-of-spying.html?_r=0

[2] http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/oct/29/clapper-contradicts-white-house-says-obama-was-awa/?utm_source=RSS_Feed&utm_medium=RSS

[3] <http://www.stripes.com/news/us/white-house-approved-spying-on-allies-us-intelligence-officials-say-1.249820>

[4]

http://thecable.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/10/29/intelligence_vets_of_course_obama_knew_about_nsa_spying

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