

Snowden Testifies In Writing Before The European Parliament

March 9th, 2014 • 1:47 PM

On Friday, March 7 Edward Snowden's written answers to questions submitted to him by members of the European Parliament were released. His testimony exposes Obama as a lying dictator and reveals how European nations have been pressured by Obama to degrade their own legal systems to create a police state in Europe.

Among other things, Snowden stated that he swears under penalty of perjury that "I have personally targeted individuals using these systems under both the President of the United States' Executive Order 12333 and the U.S. Congress' FAA 702. I know the good and the bad of these systems, and what they can and cannot do, and I am telling you that without getting out of my chair, I could have read the private communications of any member of this committee, as well as any ordinary citizen."

In his testimony Snowden specifically challenged Obama's contention that whistle-blower laws in the U.S. would have protected him if he had gone through official channels. "I had reported these clearly problematic programs to more than ten distinct officials, none of whom took any action to address them. As an employee of a private company rather than a direct employee of the U.S. government I was not protected by U.S. whistleblower laws."

Obama has pointed to an executive order he issued that extended protections against retaliation to employees of intelligence agencies, saying, "So there were other avenues available for somebody whose conscience was stirred and thought that they needed to question government actions."

But Snowden noted that Obama's 2012 Presidential Policy Directive 19 "exempted Intelligence Community contractors such as myself. The result was that individuals like me were left with no proper channels."

Snowden reported that the U.S. pressures its allies to take steps to enable surveillance.

"One of the foremost activities of the NSA's FAD, or Foreign Affairs Division, is to pressure or incentivize EU member states to change their laws to enable mass surveillance. Lawyers from the NSA, as well as the U.K.'s GCHQ, work very hard to search for loopholes in laws and constitutional protections that they can use to justify indiscriminate, dragnet surveillance operations that were at best unwittingly authorized by lawmakers."

These efforts to interpret new powers out of vague laws is an intentional strategy to avoid

public opposition and lawmakers insistence that legal limits be respected.

The NSA lobbied heavily for leaders in Sweden, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and Germany to authorize mass surveillance operations, including programs in which intelligence is gathered and then shared across borders with allied nation-states abroad.

"Each of these countries received instruction from the NSA, sometimes under the guise of the U.S. Department of Defense and other bodies, on how to degrade the legal protections of their countries' communications."

Snowden said: "The result is a European bazaar where an EU member state like Denmark may give the NSA access to a tapping center on the [unenforceable] condition that NSA doesn't search it for Danes, and Germany may give the NSA access to another on the condition that it doesn't search for Germans. Yet the two tapping sites may be two points on the same cable, so the NSA simply captures the communications of the German citizens as they transit Denmark, and the Danish citizens as they transit Germany, all the while considering it entirely in accordance with their agreements. Ultimately, each EU national government's spy services are independently hawking domestic accesses to the NSA, GCHQ, FRA, and the like without having any awareness of how their individual contribution is enabling the greater patchwork of mass surveillance against ordinary citizens as a whole.

"The Parliament should ask the NSA and GCHQ to deny that they monitor the communications of EU citizens, and in the absence of an informative response, I would suggest that the current state of affairs is the inevitable result of subordinating the rights of the voting public to the prerogatives of State Security Bureaus." [/quotw]

In answer to the question: Could we help you in any way? Snowden said: "If you want to help me by helping everyone: declare that the indiscriminate, bulk collection of private data by governments is a violation of our rights and must end. What happens to me as a person is less important than what happens to our common rights."

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