

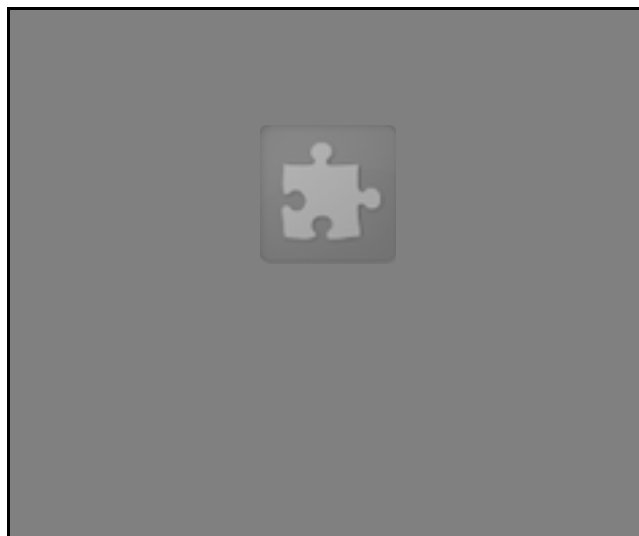
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Whistleblower Snowden was right to avoid justice system

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In her July 19 op-ed column, "[A shortage of courage](#)," Ruth Marcus argued that a whistleblower should use internal channels and face the music. She then compared Edward Snowden unfavorably to Martin Luther King Jr. and Socrates.



The Government Accountability Project has provided legal representation for three National Security Agency whistleblowers who disclosed unlawful surveillance through internal channels and reported properly to Congress. All three — along with the congressional staffer they consulted — were subjected to armed raids by the FBI in 2007. One, [Thomas Drake](#), was indicted under the Espionage Act although he revealed no classified information, and the criminal case against him ultimately collapsed. In short, the retaliation they suffered was ruinous.

Mr. Snowden knew this history, and although there are new [whistleblower protections for federal contractors](#), they do not extend to national security workers.

As for facing the music, because the government is talking about charging Mr. Snowden with aiding the enemy, he's potentially facing the death penalty. That's a hell of a last crescendo.

It's true that Socrates — Ms. Marcus's model martyr philosopher — accepted his own capital punishment and drank the hemlock, but it might have been better if he had resisted.

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