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Gentlemen Do Read Each Others Mail: U.S. Bugging Everybody

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All over the media, British, Turkish, Greek, there are stories on how theirs and everyone else's embassies are being spied on. Britain's *Guardian* now reports on another document leaked by Edward Snowden on bugging methods codenamed Dropmire, which is not only used for spying on embassies in Washington, but also other nations' UN missions in New York. One document lists 38 embassies and missions, describing them as "targets." It details an extraordinary range of spying methods used against each target, from bugs implanted in electronic communications equipment, to taps into cables to the collection of transmissions with specialized antennae.



Obama apparently preparing for EU trade talks.

Among those targeted are France, Italy, Greece, Japan, Mexico, South Korea, India, Turkey, U.K., Germany, and other Western European states. An operation against the French UN mission was codenamed "Blackfoot," and the one against the French Embassy in Washington was called "Wabash." The Italian Embassy was tagged "Bruneau" and "Hemlock." The one at the Greek UN mission was known as "Powell," and its embassy was "Klondyke."

By the end of the day in Europe harsh statements emerged, especially from Germany and France, protesting the spying, to the point of calling for postponing the European Union-U.S. trade talks which begin next week.

"We are no longer in the Cold War," German Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert, said. "If it is confirmed that diplomatic representations of the European Union and individual European countries have been spied upon, we will clearly say that bugging friends is unacceptable." As for the trade talks, Seibert said, "Mutual trust is necessary in order to come to an agreement."

"We cannot accept this kind of behavior between partners and allies," French President François Hollande said. "We ask that this stop immediately."

EU Commission foreign affairs representative Lady Catherine Ashton is said to have brought up the issue with U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry on the sidelines of the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in Brunei.

Kerry's response was in effect, yes, gentlemen do read each other's mail: "Every country in the world that is engaged in international affairs of national security undertakes lots of activities to protect its national security and all kinds of information contributes to that. All I know is that is not unusual for lots of nations."

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