

Text 1

Edward Snowden: The Whistleblower* Behind the NSA Surveillance Revelations

1 The individual responsible for one of the most significant leaks in US political history is Edward Snowden, a 29-year-old former technical assistant for the CIA and current employee of the defense contractor Booz Allen Hamilton. Snowden has been working for the National Security Agency (NSA) for the last four years...

5 The Guardian, after several days of interviews, is revealing his identity at his request. From the moment he decided to disclose numerous top-secret documents to the public, he was determined not to opt for the protection of anonymity. "I have no intention of hiding who I am because I know I have done nothing wrong," he said.

10 Snowden will go down in history as one of America's most consequential whistleblowers, alongside Daniel Ellsberg and Bradley Manning. He is responsible for handing over material from one of the world's most secretive organisations – the NSA.

15 In a note accompanying the first set of documents he provided, he wrote: "I understand that I will be made to suffer for my actions," but "I will be satisfied if the federation of secret law, unequal pardon and irresistible executive powers that rule the world that I love are revealed even for an instant."

Despite his determination to be publicly unveiled, he repeatedly insisted that he wants to avoid the media spotlight. "I don't want public attention because I don't want the story to be about me. I want it to be about what the US government is doing."

20 He does not fear the consequences of going public, he said, only that doing so will distract attention from the issues raised by his disclosures. "I know the media likes to personalise political debates, and I know the government will demonise me."

25 Despite these fears, he remained hopeful his outing will not divert attention from the substance of his disclosures. "I really want the focus to be on these documents and the debate which I hope this will trigger among citizens around the globe about what kind of world we want to live in." He added: "My sole motive is to inform the public as to that which is done in their name and that which is done against them."

30 He has had "a very comfortable life" that included a salary of roughly \$200,000, a girlfriend with whom he shared a home in Hawaii, a stable career, and a family he loves. "I'm willing to sacrifice all of that because I can't in good conscience allow the US government to destroy privacy, internet freedom and basic liberties for people around the world with this massive surveillance machine they're secretly building."

He predicts the government will launch an investigation and "say I have broken the Espionage Act and helped our enemies, but that can be used against anyone who points out how massive and invasive the system has become".

--Glenn Greenwald, Ewan MacAskill & Laura Poitras
The Guardian, June 11, 2013

Text 2

NSA leaker Snowden says he'd like to come home, but not to prison

1 Somewhere in the thousands of apartment buildings that ring the Russian capital of Moscow, Edward Snowden remains in hiding. He cannot come home. Two years ago, he angered the American government by disclosing that it was collecting the cell phone calls of millions of ordinary U.S. citizens.

5 Snowden also released classified, or secret, files he took from his job with the National Security Agency, a government department that gathers information to protect the United States from enemies. Snowden's leaks triggered a global debate on government interference with its citizens' right to privacy. They also led to last month's decision by Congress to stop collecting the telephone records. That was the first major restriction on
10 spy agency powers in decades.

After taking the information, Snowden passed it on to journalists, who have received the highest honor of their profession. Laura Poitras, the director of a film about Snowden called "CitizenFour," has won an Academy Award.

15 But Snowden has gained little from the leaks beyond the sense of accomplishment he is said to feel. In rare interviews, he has said he would like to return to America, but not to prison.

Snowden, 32, who has been charged with espionage, or spying, seems to believe he can set the terms for his return to the United States. The problem is that he may think he is more popular than he actually is.

20 Although many younger Americans applaud what he did, a majority of U.S. citizens dislike him for it. In a U.S. News & World Report poll in April, 64 percent said they held a negative view of him. Even those helping him try to get home say that he does not have a good chance of avoiding prison.

25 "Edward loves America and he would definitely like to return home," said Anatoly Kucherena, Snowden's Moscow lawyer. Kucherena said that as long as politicians are still talking about him, he will not be able to go back to America.

Kucherena said Snowden will not talk with the American government about returning without making a deal "that he won't go to jail for 100 years."

30 The Russian lawyer points out that what Snowden did could have been worse. He did not give up his American citizenship and switch his allegiance to Russia. He also did not give the secret material to Russian intelligence agents.

"It is 1,000 percent true that he did this as an act of conscience*," Kucherena insisted. He noted that Snowden has said that he took the information because he wanted people to know that the American government was listening in on their phone calls.

35 Intelligence and security experts say what Snowden did was treason* and that he deserves the charges against him.

40 "Whether he intended to become a foreign agent, he has become one," said Kori Schake. She is a former National Security Council member and is now with Stanford's Hoover Institution. She worries that more of the secret information he stole could be made public by Snowden or others.

If what Snowden did wasn't spying, "I can't imagine what would be," Schake said. Snowden never set out to stay permanently in Russia. He was reportedly attempting to fly through Moscow to a Latin American country. However, the American government canceled Snowden's passport, leaving him stranded at the Moscow airport. Sergei

- 45 Markov, a Russian government adviser, said Snowden needed Russia's protection. "We can't send him back just because America demands it," Markov said.
Ronald Goldfarb, a former attorney who represented the United States, put together a book on security versus privacy in the Information Age titled "After Snowden."
"He has raised profoundly important issues," Goldfarb said.
- 50 Goldfarb said it is important to determine what information Snowden stole and whether it fell into the hands of hostile governments. It's also not known whether the information did actual damage other than embarrassing intelligence officials who lied about how closely they were observing ordinary Americans, Goldfarb said.
Even if Snowden was willing to return to the United States and go on trial, that may
- 55 not be possible if he waits too long. Any deal could become a hot button issue in the presidential campaign. It seems unlikely that candidates with a serious chance of winning would risk standing up for the man responsible for one of the biggest thefts of classified information in history.
"This is the wrong time for the politics of it," Goldfarb said.
- 60 Ben Wizner, a lawyer representing Snowden, acknowledges that his client is not likely to be going home soon.
"Right now he has two choices. Stay indefinitely there or report to a U.S. prison," Wizner said, referring to the espionage charges that could bring a 30-year prison sentence.

Los Angeles Times
August, 8, 2015

*conscience: an inner feeling or voice acting as a guide to rightness

*treason: the crime of betraying one's country

Text 3

Snowden is a Traitor in All But Name

- 1 Edward Snowden stole hundreds of thousands of American secrets and sprinkled them across the Internet. Should he be considered a traitor?
- The Australian government thinks so. Snowden's revelation of highly sensitive intelligence operations "down under" led Australian Federal Attorney-General George
- 5 Brandis to brand the former National Security Agency contractor an "American traitor." No wonder the Aussies were angry. For years they had cooperated covertly* with Indonesian intelligence services.
- In disclosing national security secrets, Snowden was following in the footsteps of Julian Assange, the Australian-born founder of WikiLeaks. Both men claim a noble
- 10 purpose: to use the power of the Internet to expose the corruption and wrong-doing of totalitarian regimes. But in practice, they have told us almost nothing about countries like North Korea, Iran, China, Cuba and Venezuela.
- Instead, they've mostly spilled secrets from nations ranked at the top of the Freedom House "Index of Freedom in the World." These are the countries that organize the
- 15 peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, combat nuclear proliferation, champion human rights, fight terrorism and human trafficking, and hold free and fair elections. Regardless of their stated intentions, Snowden's and Assange's actions have undercut the world's champions of freedom and given aid and comfort to the world's totalitarian regimes.

20 Further, they have betrayed the idea of freedom. The Assange/Snowden doctrine asserts that complete transparency equals freedom. That's not just naïve. It's as pornographic a description of freedom as Auschwitz's "Work Makes You Free" sign.

25 Respect for individual privacy is an inherent* aspect of freedom. The government of free peoples is an extension of the people, exercising supreme power on their behalf. Free societies recognize that keeping legitimate secrets is a legitimate function of government.

30 Democracies operate under the concept of "ordered liberty." They establish rules to protect both the individual and the community as whole — guarding both individual freedom and public safety. No one has the right to discard those rules and substitute rules of his own devising. Flouting ordered liberty doesn't advance freedom. It creates chaos. And chaos enables evil and kills democracies.

Snowden is neither "freedom fighter" nor "whistle-blower." His leaks are indiscriminate. The vast majority expose no wrong-doing whatsoever.

35 What about those cases in which Snowden might argue he has revealed practices that might cross the line? His actions are still, at best, irresponsible.

40 The United States system of ordered liberty offers multiple ways to raise claims of malfeasance or abuse of power without compromising national security. Federal agencies have inspector generals. Congress routinely investigates such claims. And, yes, we have whistle-blower protection laws. The notion that Snowden had no option but to leak is indefensible.

Finally, Snowden betrayed the trust he was given by the U.S. government to safeguard the nation's secrets.

45 Free societies depend on a trustworthy citizenry. If bank tellers, lawyers, doctors, police officials and others in positions of trust were to decide they were, individually, the best arbitrators of what information should or should not be dumped in the public sphere, we wouldn't be living in Assange's paradise. We would be living in North Korea, where no one is trusted ... ever.

Edward Snowden has betrayed freedom. In the end, that's a much greater offense than intentionally acting like an enemy agent.

--James Jay Carafano
The Heritage Foundation
January 12th, 2014

*Covertly: secretly

*inherent: permanent

Text 4

Why President Obama Can't Pardon Edward Snowden

1 A president can pardon anyone from any crime for any reason, or no reason at all, but, as the hours tick away on his presidency, it is unimaginable that Obama, a former law lecturer, will ignore all he knows about what Snowden did and absolve* him of his crimes.

5 This may surprise many people, in part because most of what they know about this case came from the mouth (and tweets) of a single source, Edward Snowden. Here is the sanitized version of his story: On May 20, 2013, just over month after he began working at the NSA Cryptologic Center in Hawaii, he failed to show up for work. He called in sick—but he wasn't sick, he was running. He had flown to Hong Kong with a massive

10 collection of stolen secrets including methods the U.S. uses to invade citizens' privacy. While in Hong Kong, he gave a very small portion of these documents to three handpicked journalists: Laura Poitras, a Berlin-based documentary filmmaker, Glenn Greenwald, a Brazil-based blogger, and Barton Gellman, a Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for The Washington Post. The exposes these journalists produced, based on
15 those documents, dominated the headlines for weeks. As the world reeled, Snowden vanished again, this time for 13 days, from June 11 to June 23, before turning up in Russia, which gave him sanctuary, protection and a global platform for his campaign to expose further NSA secrets, and which offered to protect him from prosecution for his crimes.

20 From Moscow, he repeatedly claimed he was an idealistic whistleblower who had been deliberately stranded in Russia by the Obama administration, which, he suggested, was hoping to demonize* him because he had made the U.S. government look bad. He claimed the State Department had trapped him in Russia by revoking his passport while his plane was airborne on June 23. As for the documents he had taken, he insisted he
25 had given all of them to the three journalists while in Hong Kong. He asserted that he had kept no copies and had no access to any of the materials after he left Hong Kong.

I spent three years investigating Snowden's story for my book, *How America Lost Its Secrets: Snowden, the Man and the Theft*. I went to the places in Hawaii and Japan where Snowden worked for the NSA, the places he staged his anti-surveillance
30 "crypto-parties" in Honolulu, and to Moscow, where I interviewed former Russian intelligence officers, Kremlin insiders and the lawyer who serves as Snowden's intermediary there. Aside from Oliver Stone—who paid this lawyer \$1 million, supposedly for the rights to his novel—I am the only American journalist to interview him face-to-face. What I learned, bit by bit, from my many months of investigation, was
35 that the key parts of Snowden's story, although endlessly repeated in the media as fact, do not check out.

Obama knows that Snowden stole much more than files regarding illegal activities or domestic surveillance by the NSA. The report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (partly declassified on December 22, 2016) stated that
40 Snowden had "removed" (not merely touched) 1.5 million documents, and he gave journalists only a tiny fraction of his haul. And even the portion Snowden "handed over" to journalists, the report found, compromised "secrets that protect American troops overseas and secrets that provide vital defenses against terrorists and nation-states."

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No matter how loud the clamor from Snowden supporters, Obama will not grant Snowden a pardon.

--Edward Jay Epstein
Newsweek
January 5th, 2017

*absolve: free from

*demonize: show as threatening or evil