

America and Germany: Longstanding Espionage Partners

By [Stephen Lendman](#)
Global Research, July 23, 2013

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Police State & Civil Rights](#)

A [previous article](#) discussed Stasi. It was East Germany's secret police. It was one of the most repressive state apparatuses in modern times.

Its infamous reputation speaks for itself. It's reincarnated in new form. Given today's state-of-the-art technology. It's worse now than then. The previous article said the following:

On July 7, [Der Spiegel](#) headlined "Snowden claims: NSA Ties Put German Intelligence in Tight Spot."

"They're in bed together," said Snowden. NSA partners with foreign intelligence in other countries. Its "Foreign Affairs Directorate (BND)" does so.

It's done in ways to "insulate their political leaders from the backlash." It's precautionary in case people learn "how grievously they're violating global privacy."

BND/NSA cooperation is far greater than previously known. At issue are serious violations of Germany's privacy laws. According to Der Spiegel, NSA provides "analysis tools."

They're for "BND's signals monitoring of foreign data streams that travel through Germany."

Besides other areas, BND focuses on "the Middle East route through which data packets from crisis regions travel."

Der Spiegel said "BND pulls data from five different nodes that are then analyzed at the foreign intelligence service's headquarters in Pullach near Munich."

Gerhard Schindler heads it. He "confirmed the partnership during a meeting with members of the German parliament's control committee for intelligence issues."

Snowden told Der Spiegel that German outrage over NSA spying was pretense. Both countries work closely together. Relations are longstanding.

Current operations far exceed Stasi's. They're conducted with technological ease. Decades earlier spying was crude compared to today's.

Modern methods operate in unprecedented ways. Virtually everyone can be monitored everywhere at all times. Nearly everything about targets is known.

Almost nothing's too secret to escape scrutiny. There's no way to hide. There's no place to do it.

On July 20, [Der Spiegel](#) headlined " 'Prolific Partner:' German Intelligence Used NSA Spying Program," saying:

Chancellor Merkel lied. It didn't surprise. She does it repeatedly. She "and her ministers claim they first learned about the US government's comprehensive spying programs from press reports."

"But SPIEGEL has learned that German intelligence services themselves use one of the NSA's most valuable tools."

BND and its Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) intelligence agency collaborated with NSA. Secret documents reveal it.

They show BfV "was equipped with a program called XKeyScore intended to 'expand their ability to support NSA as we jointly prosecute CT (counterterrorism) targets.' "

"The BND is tasked with instructing the domestic intelligence agency on how to use the program, the documents say."

It's a "productive espionage tool." It's able to "retroactively reveal any terms" targeted persons type into search engines.

It's able to receive "full take unfiltered data including" communications content. It can do so over a period of days.

Documents show up to "500 million (monthly) data connections from Germany accessed by the NSA." XKeyScore collects much of it.

German/NSA cooperation "recently intensified." BND's Schindler expressed an "eagerness and desire" to do so. According to NSA:

"The BND has been working to influence the German government to relax interpretation of the privacy laws to provide greater opportunities of intelligence sharing."

In 2012, Germany showed a "willingness to take risks and to pursue new opportunities for cooperation with the US."

In Afghanistan, BND was NSA's "most prolific partner." The relationship is longstanding. It's hard-wired. Merkel lied. Anger expressed over US spying was fake.

She knows what's going on. She's involved. On September 22, German federal elections are scheduled. Voters will choose Bundestag representatives.

Merkel's coalition needs up to 300 or more seats to retain power. Until NSA spying and Germany's involvement were revealed, easy reelection was expected.

She's seeking a third term. Perhaps she won't get it. Earlier polls showed her ahead. Voters may have second thoughts. They'll decide if she's a spent force. In weeks we'll know.

In the meantime, expect more revelations. On July 19, [Der Spiegel](#) headlined "Greenwald: 'Explosive' NSA Spying Reports Are Imminent," saying:

Expect them in a few days. They'll be the next shoe to drop. They'll be "more explosive in Germany" than previous reports.

They'll tell more about BND/NSA cooperation. Greenwald said he's got around 9,000 to 10,000 top secret documents. He's had them for weeks.

He's been analyzing them. Some documents are "extremely complicated." He's living in Rio de Janeiro. CIA has a "robust" presence there.

He's worried about his safety. He feels "threatened in the sense that there are very prominent American politicians and even American journalists who have called for (his) arrest, who have called (him) a criminal."

Possession of top secret US documents jeopardizes his safety. He's got multiple copies. He maintains regular contact with Snowden. They use "encrypted chat technologies."

German/NSA cooperation isn't at the same level as Britain, Australia, Canada or New Zealand. It's the "next tier where they exchange information all the time."

It's intensifying. BND's Schindler's eager to do so. Perhaps Germany's heading for joint NSA cooperation matching any other country.

A Final Comment

On July 18, the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) headlined "House Judiciary Committee Rails Against Domestic Spying," saying:

House Judiciary Committee members "grilled" government witnesses. It was more show than tell. Obama officials "hid behind secrecy."

Grilling belies congressional sincerity. Congress, the courts, Obama, and administration officials are co-conspirators. It shows in legislation enacted.

It shows in court decisions. It shows America's current state. Washington's criminal class is bipartisan. It includes High Court justices.

Police state lawlessness replaced constitutional law. Full-blown tyranny's a hair's breadth away. America's no longer safe to live in. Universal monitoring persists.

It's official policy. Corporate bosses are complicit. Democracy's a convenient illusion. So is freedom. It's on the chopping block for elimination. It's practically gone already.

Doing the right thing is criminalized. Press freedom's up for grabs. On July 19, The [New York Times](#) headlined "Court Tells Reporter to Testify in Case of Leaked CIA Data," saying:

The US Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Times writer James Risen must do so. It said First Amendment protections don't cover "unauthorized leaks."

Federal District court Judge Leonie Brinkema held otherwise. She got it right. She supported press freedom. She called it First Amendment "reporter's privilege." Obama's DOJ claims it doesn't exist.

Appeals Court Chief Judge William Byrd Traxler wrote the majority (two/one) ruling, saying:

“Clearly, Risen’s direct, firsthand account of the criminal conduct indicted by the grand jury cannot be obtained by alternative means, as Risen is without dispute the only witness who can offer this critical testimony.”

“There is no First Amendment testimonial privilege, absolute or qualified, that protects a reporter from being compelled to testify by the prosecution or the defense in criminal proceedings about criminal conduct that the reporter personally witnessed or participated in, absent a showing of bad faith, harassment, or other such non-legitimate motive, even though the reporter promised confidentiality to his source.”

Risen vowed to go to prison rather than testify. He may end up there. He’ll appeal to the Supreme Court. Odds of winning are slim.

The Court’s stacked with right wing extremists. They’re largely comfortable with police state lawlessness. It shows in their rulings.

Risen may first ask for a full Fourth Circuit ruling. His lawyer Joel Kurtzberg said:

“We are disappointed by and disagree with the court’s decision. We are currently evaluating our next steps.”

Fourth Circuit’s Judge Roger Gregory “vigorous(ly) dissent(ed).” He called the ruling a threat to investigative journalism, saying:

“Under the majority’s articulation of the reporter’s privilege, or lack thereof, absent a showing of bad faith by the government, a reporter can always be compelled against her will to reveal her confidential sources in a criminal trial.”

“Whatever the limits of who may claim reporter’s privilege, it is clear that Risen – a full-time reporter for a national news publication, The New York Times – falls into the category of people who should be eligible to invoke the privilege.”

“The majority exalts the interests of the government while unduly trampling those of the press, and in doing so, severely impinges on the press and the free flow of information in our society.”

Friday’s ruling set a precedent. It applies only to the Fourth Circuit. It’s important. It includes Maryland and Virginia. It’s Pentagon, CIA and NSA headquarters.

Risen’s case pertains to information in his 2006 book, “[State of War: The Secret History of the CIA and the Bush Administration](#).” It’s about Bush era CIA tactics. Clinton also.

It involves “trick(ing) Iranian scientists by having a Russian defector give them blueprints for a nuclear triggering device that had been altered with an error.”

It “portrays the operation as reckless and botched in a way that could have helped the Iranians gain accurate information.”

In December 2010, former CIA officer Jeffrey Sterling was called Risen’s source. He was indicted on Espionage Act charges.

According to Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, since 1984, 17 journalists were

jailed for refusing to testify or disclose sources.

Police states operate this way. America's by far the worst. For sure it's the most reckless, outlandish and dangerous.

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