

# America Spying on its European Allies: The Routine Surveillance of Politicians

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*The revelations made by Edward Snowden about the extent of Washington spying on its own citizens and other states caused a huge dent in the legitimacy of the U.S. More recent reports and findings illustrate that the U.S. sees nobody as a potential ally, leading its European partners and other countries to treat American “friendship” with caution.*

[The arrest](#) of a German intelligence employee for spying for the US has caused uproar among German politicians. German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier has [demanded](#) an immediate clarification of the situation from Washington. He said: “If the reports are true, then we’re not talking about trifles.”

He added that prompt clarification of the details in the case were in the US’s own interest. German Chancellor Angela Merkel expressed surprise and disappointment over the possible involvement of US intelligence in the BND espionage scandal.

Anger towards the U.S. has spread beyond Europe. In India, reacting to [revelations](#) by Snowden that India and the Bharatiya Janata Party, in particular, were under American surveillance in 2010, both the party and Ministers expressed outrage and said they would take up the matter with the U.S.

U.S. surveillance is not only limited to spying on other states. New [findings](#) published by security company Kaspersky Lab, concerning the widespread state deployment of digital surveillance tools used in some countries to spy on political dissidents, journalists and human rights advocates, place a further question mark over the western liberal agenda. The new [report](#) by Kaspersky Lab provided a rare glimpse of the extensive ways in which law enforcement and intelligence agencies surreptitiously record and steal data from mobile phones. This is done through newly uncovered components within a digital surveillance tool; these are Remote Control System (RCS) Trojans that work on both Android and iOS.

Perhaps most astonishing of all the revelations from the Kaspersky Lab report are the findings on which countries use this spying tool most regularly. Kaspersky has tracked more than 350 command-and-control servers in more than 40 states. While they found only one or two servers in most of these countries, 64 were found in the United States—by far the most. The United Kingdom had 32, more than beyond the average.

Furthermore, [it has been found](#) that ordinary Internet users, American and non-American alike, far outnumber legally targeted foreigners in the communications intercepted by the National Security Agency from U.S. digital networks. Nine of 10 account holders found in a large cache of intercepted conversations, which Snowden provided in full, were not the

intended surveillance targets but [were caught](#) in a net the agency had cast for someone else. Nearly half of the surveillance files, a strikingly high proportion, contained names, email addresses or other details that the NSA marked as belonging to citizens or residents.

These revelations have had a detrimental effect on the U.S. For example, Brad Smith, executive vice president and general Counsel for Microsoft, has [admitted](#) that one year after U.S. government surveillance activities were revealed by Snowden, American technology companies continue to feel negative repercussions. Global customers are concerned about the geographic scope of warrants the U.S. government is serving today. However, a more far-reaching consequence is the possibility that American allies such as the European Union and countries in Asia will start to look for opportunities to break ties with Washington. They would be right to do so, as the U.S. treats nobody as a friend, but only as a means to achieve their own global neoconservative agenda.

The tide has been turning against the U.S. for quite some time and these new revelations about American surveillance are likely to speed up the inevitable collapse of the U.S hegemony, as it is impossible to run the world without any allies.

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