

Hands Off Snowden Campaign

By [Stephen Lendman](#)

Global Research, July 03, 2013

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Law and Justice](#)

Snowden acted heroically. He did so at great risk. He exposed lawless US spying. He represents a noble tradition. Others did before him. Allies do it now. Legions more are needed. Hopefully they'll be emboldened to help.

Doing so exposes fascist state governance. People need to know. America's by far the worst. Activists want Snowden helped. More on that below.

He released a [statement](#), saying:

"One week ago I left Hong Kong after it became clear that my freedom and safety were under threat for revealing the truth."

"My continued liberty has been owed to the efforts of friends new and old, family, and others who I have never met and probably never will."

"I trusted them with my life and they returned that trust with a faith in me for which I will always be thankful."

"On Thursday, President Obama declared before the world that he would not permit any diplomatic 'wheeling and dealing' over my case."

"Yet now it is being reported that after promising not to do so, the President ordered his Vice President to pressure the leaders of nations from which I have requested protection to deny my asylum petitions."

"This kind of deception from a world leader is not justice, and neither is the extralegal penalty of exile. These are the old, bad tools of political aggression. Their purpose is to frighten, not me, but those who would come after me."

"For decades the United States of America has been one of the strongest defenders of the human right to seek asylum."

"Sadly, this right, laid out and voted for by the U.S. in Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is now being rejected by the current government of my country."

"The Obama administration has now adopted the strategy of using citizenship as a weapon. Although I am convicted of nothing, it has unilaterally revoked my passport, leaving me a stateless person."

"Without any judicial order, the administration now seeks to stop me exercising a basic right. A right that belongs to everybody. The right to seek asylum."

"In the end the Obama administration is not afraid of whistleblowers like me, Bradley Manning or Thomas Drake. We are stateless, imprisoned, or powerless."

"No, the Obama administration is afraid of you. It is afraid of an informed, angry public demanding the constitutional government it was promised – and it should be."

"I am unbowed in my convictions and impressed at the efforts taken by so many."

Edward Joseph Snowden

Separately he said:

"I remain free and able to publish information that serves the public interest."

"No matter how many more days my life contains, I remain dedicated to the fight for justice in this unequal world."

"While the public has cried out support of my shining a light on this secret system of injustice, the Government of the United States of America responded with an extrajudicial man-hunt costing me my family, my freedom to travel, and my right to live peacefully without fear of illegal aggression."

Perhaps Obama's intimidation campaign worked. Ecuador's Rafael Correa backtracked. He did so disgracefully. He considers helping Snowden a mistake. He distanced himself from earlier comments. He's not considering asylum.

"Are we responsible for getting him to Ecuador," he asked? "It's not logical. The country that has to give him a safe conduct document is Russia."

"Mr. Snowden's situation is very complicated, but in this moment he is in Russian territory and these are decisions for the Russian authorities."

Initially Correa suggested support, saying:

"We will analyze very responsibly the Snowden case and with absolute sovereignty will make the decision we consider the most appropriate."

Ecuador's Foreign Minister Ricardo Patino criticized Washington, saying:

"The one who is denounced pursues the denouncer. The man who tries to provide light and transparency to issues that affect everyone is pursued by those who should be giving explanations about the denunciations that have been presented."

Snowden expressed gratitude, saying:

"I must express my deep respect for your principles and sincere thanks for your government's action in considering my request for political asylum."

"There are few world leaders who would risk standing for the human rights of an individual against the most powerful government on earth, and the bravery of Ecuador and its people is an example to the world."

"A temporary Ecuadorean travel document helped him. It substituted for his revoked US

passport.”

“The decisive action of your consul in London, Fidel Narvaez, guaranteed my rights would be protected upon departing Hong Kong.

“I could never have risked travel without that. Now, as a result, and through the continued support of your government, I remain free and able to publish information that serves the public interest.”

Correa fell on his sword. He did so for Washington. He betrayed his alleged principles. Perhaps he lacked sincerity in the first place. Bending to America is shameless. Challenging it matters most.

Snowden remains unbowed. Few match his courage. He shames world leaders. He dares take on America courageously. Activists support him.

He applied to at least 21 countries for asylum. They include Ecuador (now denied), Iceland, Venezuela, Cuba, Bolivia, Brazil, Nicaragua, Russia (now retracted), China, India, France, Germany, Italy, Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Finland, and Switzerland.

Nine countries rejected him. They include Ecuador, Brazil, India, Poland, Italy, Spain, Norway, Finland, and Austria. Rejections reflected pro-Western subservience.

Excuses are easy to make. Profiles in courage require tough-minded support what’s right.

He’s in limbo. He’s a man without a country. He’s in Moscow’s Sheremetyevo Airport’s transit area. He awaits word from one or more nations willing to accept him.

Maybe Venezuela will. On June 27, President Nicolas Maduro said:

“No one has requested us asylum for him, but if he wants, Venezuela is willing to protect this brave young man in a humanitarian way, so that humanity knows the truth.”

On July 1, the [International Business Times](#) headlined “Maduro Offers Asylum to Ed Snowden During Official Visit to Russia; Is The NSA Leaker Going to Venezuela?”

Maduro’s in Moscow. He’s attending the second Gas Exporting Countries Forum (GECF). He said:

“Nobody has asked us yet” for asylum. “(B)ut if he did, we would consider it very seriously.”

He deserves a “humanitarian medal. If this young man is punished, nobody in the world will ever dare to tell the truth.”

“Snowden is a man who told the truth and demands protection under international human rights law,” he added.

Bolivia’s Evo Morales said he’s “ready to give political asylum to people who expose spying activities....If we receive a request, we are willing to consider it.”

On July 2, [RIA Novosti](#) said Snowden withdrew his Russian asylum request. He did so in

response to Vladimir Putin's conditions. On Monday he said:

"If (Snowden) wants to go (to another country) and is accepted, he can. If he wants to stay here, there is one condition: He must stop his work aimed at harming our US partners, no matter how strange this may sound coming from me."

According to [The Hill](#), "high level" US/Russian discussions involve "find(ing) a solution over the extradition of Snowden."

What's ongoing isn't clear. Earlier Putin said:

"Russia has never extradited anyone and is not going to do so. Same as no one has ever been extradited to Russia."

Hopefully he means it. Challenging America matters. So does protecting Snowden. Activists are on board to help.

[RootsAction.org](#)'s petition campaign headlined "Mr. President, Hands Off Edward Snowden!"

"I urge you in the strongest terms to do nothing to interfere with the travels or political asylum process of Edward Snowden."

"The US government must not engage in abduction or any other form of foul play against Mr. Snowden."

Doing the right thing is its own reward. RootsAction urges Snowden supporters to sign its petition in his behalf. It's goal is 50,000 signatures. It has nearly 47,000. It's almost there.

It won't stop. Perhaps 100,000 or more is possible. Millions are needed. Signing shows support. We're all Edward Snowden.

A separate petition demanding Obama pardon Snowden has over 120,000 signatures.

Washington seeks unchallenged world dominance. It's waging global wars for it. It's ravaging one country after another.

It ruthlessly persecutes opponents. It targets whistleblowers unconscionably. It wants truth-tellers silenced. It wants its message alone heard.

It mocks democratic values. It spurns rule of law principles. It operates secretly and intrusively. It wants independent governments toppled. It's waging war on freedom. It's ravaging humanity globally.

Stopping it matters most. Humanity's survival depends on it. Restoring constitutional protections is essential. Freedom's too precious to lose.

Fundamental First Amendment rights matter. Without them all others are at risk. On July 1, the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) headlined "Restore the Fourth Campaign Organizes Protests Against Unconstitutional Surveillance."

On July 4, concerned Americans will mobilize on streets nationwide. They'll do in support of Fourth Amendment rights. It protects against lawless searches and seizures.

Out-of-control spying threatens them. Restore the Fourth matters. Americans are on their own. If they won't challenge US lawless, who will?

If they won't mobilize for Fourth Amendment protections, no one will do it for them. On July 4 and every day, get involved for freedom.

Sign the [Stop Watching Us](#) petition. It states in part:

NSA spying "represent(s) a stunning abuse of our basic rights. We demand the U.S. Congress reveal the full extent of the NSA's spying programs."

"This type of blanket data collection by the government strikes at bedrock American values of freedom and privacy."

"This dragnet surveillance violates the First and Fourth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution, which protect citizens' right to speak and associate anonymously, guard against unreasonable searches and seizures, and protect their right to privacy."

"We are calling on Congress to take immediate action to halt this surveillance and provide a full public accounting of the NSA's and the FBI's data collection programs."

"We call on Congress to immediately and publicly:

1. Enact reform this Congress to Section 215 of the USA PATRIOT Act, the state secrets privilege, and the FISA Amendments Act to make clear that blanket surveillance of the Internet activity and phone records of any person residing in the US is prohibited by law and that violations can be reviewed in adversarial proceedings before a public court.
2. Create a special committee to investigate, report, and reveal to the public the extent of this domestic spying. This committee should create specific recommendations for legal and regulatory reform to end unconstitutional surveillance.
3. Hold accountable those public officials who are found to be responsible for this unconstitutional surveillance."

Nothing less is acceptable! Not now! Not ever!

A new update shows over 500,000 people signed the Stop Watching Us campaign. Perhaps over a million will.

A Final Comment

July 4 protests are scheduled in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Washington, DC, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont (July 3), Virginia (July 1), and Washington (on July 6).

Major city protests include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Diego, San Francisco, Washington, Hartford, Miami, Orlando, Tampa, Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, Austin, Indianapolis, Boston, Louisville, Minneapolis, Kansas City, St. Louis, Albuquerque, Albany, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Charlotte, Raleigh, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Portland, OR,

Philadelphia, and Chattanooga.

Hopefully millions will mobilize across America. And not just on July 4.

It bears repeating. If ordinary people won't fight for their rights, no one will do it for them! Precious ones are too important to lose. Restoring them matters most.

People power alone can do it. Doing so makes government of, by and for everyone possible. The alternative's too grim to accept.

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