

Obama Encourages Spying on World Leaders

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He lied claiming otherwise. He's a serial liar. He's a moral coward. He's a war criminal multiple times over. He did what supporters thought impossible.

He exceeds the worst of George Bush. He plans lots more ways to prove it through 2016. Humanity may not survive the ordeal.

On October 27, [Deutsche Welle](#) (DW) headlined "Media reports suggest Obama knew NSA spied on Merkel."

Der Spiegel said NSA's Special Collection Service (SCS) monitored her cell phone conversations since 2002. Obama lied telling Merkel he knew nothing about it.

He encourages global spying. He wants world leaders monitored. He wants stepped up surveillance doing it.

According to DW, "a report in Bild am Sonntag published Sunday cites an unnamed NSA official who said (Obama) ordered the program be escalated."

NSA chief Keith Alexander told Obama about monitoring Merkel's phone calls. It hacked into her "supposedly secure phone"

"Only a special, secure landline phone in her office was reportedly not accessible to electronic tapping."

Hacked information was reported directly to the White House. Evidence suggests monitoring Merkel continued at least through the "immediate past."

Despite official disclaimers, most likely it continues. A [previous article](#) discussing spying on 35 world leaders. They weren't named. It's not hard imagining likely targets.

Perhaps lots more than 35 are monitored. NSA may add others to its list. Global spying is official US policy. No one's safe from intrusion.

According to the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF), "it's very, very difficult to defend yourself." At most, you can make it tougher, more time consuming and expensive to do it. More on that below.

On October 27, [Der Spiegel](#) headlined "Embassy Espionage: The NSA's Secret Spy Hub in Berlin," saying:

Its research shows "United States intelligence agencies have not only targeted Chancellor Angela Merkel's cellphone, but they have also used the American Embassy in Berlin as a

listening station.”

“The revelations now pose a serious threat to German-American relations.”

“It’s a prime site, a diplomat’s dream. Is there any better location for an embassy than Berlin’s Pariser Platz?”

It’s close to the Reichstag. “When the American ambassador steps out the door, he looks directly onto the Brandenburg Gate.”

It’s in Germany’s “political heart.” It’s an “ideal location for diplomats – and for spies.”

It’s an espionage nest. From its roof, NSA and CIA monitor official German government communications.

Doing so threatens “the trans-Atlantic partnership. Hardly anything is as sensitive (to) Merkel as the surveillance of her cellphone.”

She’s on it constantly. It’s “her instrument of power.” She relies on it for much government business.

She, Brazil’s Dilma Rousseff as well as other European and Latin American leaders want UN resolution action.

They want privacy intrusions stopped. They want spy-proof space. The world body can’t provide it. Technological innovation alone has a chance.

Der Postillon is a satirical web site. It calls itself “honest news, independent, fast, since 1845.”

It inspired America’s The Onion. It combines entertainment with satirical international, national and local news articles.

Steffen Seibert is Merkel’s spokesman. Last week, Der Postillon posted a satirical version of his comment, saying:

“The chancellor considers it a slap in the face that she has most likely been monitored over the years just like some mangy resident of Germany.”

It’s her choice on how much she’s willing to tolerate. Maybe she spies on Obama in return.

Why not? Allies routinely spy on friends and foes. It’s longstanding practice. It’s not about to end now. It’s much more sophisticated and widespread than earlier.

Merkel and likeminded world leaders apparently want a red line drawn not to be crossed. They want their private space kept that way.

UN resolutions won’t help. NSA is easily able to circumvent them. Its Special Collection Service operations (SCS) are highly classified.

They’re involved in spying in hard to reach places. They include foreign embassies, communication centers, and other government facilities.

SCS was established in the late 1970s. It's been called America's "mission impossible force."

It's responsible for "close surveillance, burglary, wiretapping, breaking and entering." It's jointly staffed by NSA and CIA operatives.

They work out of US embassies and consulates. Their mission is all embracing. Get it all describes it.

SCS combines NSA's electronic spying expertise with CIA's covert action capabilities.

Together they target foreign government officials. They're not likely to stop. They use all sorts of sophisticated listening devices.

They bug foreign embassies, communications centers, computer facilities, fiber-optic networks, and other government facilities. Virtually any space is penetrable.

Nothing ongoing is officially acknowledged. Operations are top secret. According to Der Spiegel, SCS maintains two German bases – one in Berlin (Germany's seat of government), the other in Frankfurt (its business hub).

They're "equipped at the highest level and staffed with active personnel."

Teams work undercover. They're in "shielded areas." They're "officially accredited as diplomats." They enjoy "special privileges."

They can "look and listen unhindered. They just can't get caught." Their operations are illegal. They're ongoing.

Sophisticated listening devices monitor virtually all forms of communications. They include online ones, cell signals, wireless networks and satellites.

Equipment is installed on upper floors or rooftops. It's protected from prying eyes.

Window-like indentations atop Washington's US German embassy aren't glazed. They're veneered with "dielectric" material.

They blend into surrounding masonry. Equipment is installed behind radio-transparent screens.

NSA expert James Bamford visited Der Spiegel's Berlin bureau. It's located diagonally opposite Washington's embassy.

"To me, it looks like NSA eavesdropping equipment is hidden behind there," he said.

"The covering seems to be made of the same material that the agency uses to shield larger systems."

SCS apparently uses the same technology worldwide. It goes to great pains to conceal it.

According to top secret internal guidelines, if it's discovered, it "would cause serious harm to relations between the United States and a foreign government."

NSA targeted Merkel for over a decade. It began when she was Christian Democratic Union

(CDU) party head.

It continued when she became chancellor. Despite Washington's disclaimer, it likely remains ongoing. Der Spiegel asked:

"Were all of her conversations recorded or just connection data? Were her movements also being recorded?"

It bears repeating. NSA's mission is get it all. The White House and US spy agencies jointly pick high-profile targets.

A matrix of global surveillance is developed. It's called the "National Intelligence Priorities Framework." It's "presidentially approved."

One category is called "Leadership Intentions." It targets foreign leaders' goals and objectives.

According to former NSA official Thomas Drake:

Post-9/11, "Germany became intelligence target number one in Europe." At issue is a level of mistrust.

"It has always been the NSA's (mission) to conduct as much surveillance as possible," Drake added.

Der Spiegel told German security about NSA monitoring Merkel's cell phone communications. Perhaps it already knew. Its own due diligence confirmed it.

If knowledge about America monitoring Merkel was revealed, "it would be a political bomb," said Der Spiegel.

Obama visited Germany last summer. He lied saying Washington wasn't spying on its ally.

Merkel called Obama last week. He lied again claiming he knew nothing about monitoring her cell phone communications.

According to Der Spiegel, "(a)re the German security agencies too trusting of the Americans?"

Counterintelligence mostly focuses on China and Russia. Consideration earlier was given to looking harder at "what American agents were up to in the country."

It was considered too politically sensitive. The idea was dropped. At issue mainly was to what extent allies should be monitored. Are heads of state off limits? Is anything goes OK?

It sure is for Washington. European capitals no doubt are reevaluating their own policies.

German agencies want their capabilities enhanced, said Der Spiegel. Scrambling across Europe and elsewhere seems likely.

Merkel considers Obama "overrated." He "talks a lot but does little" He's "unreliable to boot."

He says one thing. He does another. He's an inveterate liar. He's not about to change.

Merkel is a creature of habit. She relies heavily on cell phone communications. She uses it to send text messages.

"Only for the very delicate conversations (does) she switch to a secure line," said Der Spiegel.

Maybe close associates will make her take greater precautions. At the same time, maybe nothing is safe from NSA's prying eye.

Arranging a "no-spying" deal with Washington isn't worth the paper it's written on.

An earlier "Five Eyes" deal allegedly excludes spying on English speaking countries. They include Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

NSA spies globally. Agreements are made to be broken. Doing so is kept secret. Israel operates the same way. Perhaps Germany, France and other European states do.

Spying is an ugly business. The expression about no honor among thieves holds manyfold for intelligence agencies.

They operate unaccountably. They do whatever they want. They're unapologetic. They're not about to change longstanding tactics. They're upgraded as technology advances.

A Final Comment

The [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#) (EFF) listed 10 protections against online surveillance:

(1) "Use end-to-end encryption." It's "your friend," says computer security expert Bruce Schneier.

(2) Encrypt as many communications as possible. The more the better.

(3) "Encrypt your hard drive." Without doing so, anyone can access your computer, tablet or smartphone. Contents can be copied with no password.

(4) Long strong passwords are best.

(5) "Use Tor. Free software permits online anonymity. Tor makes it hard to track Internet activity.

(6) Use two-factor or two-step authentication. Google, Twitter and Dropbox have it.

Google calls two-step protection for "your account with both your password and your phone." It helps "keep bad guys out, even if they have your password."

(7) "Don't click on attachments." Request information sent in text form.

(8) Update software. Use anti-virus software.

(9) "Keep extra secret information extra secret." Encrypt and conceal what's most private. TrueCrypt can encrypt a USB flash drive.

(10) "Be an ally." To challenge today's surveillance state, teach others what you learned. Explain why it's important. Get involved in anti-mass-spying campaigns.

"They need to stop watching us; and we need to start making it much harder for them to get away with it," said EFF.

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