

The Snowden revelations, five years on

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Edinburgh

These slides: [on my web page](#)

The leak

Background

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- **The Heilbronn Institute**: GCHQ's academic mathematical brand.

Edward Snowden's leaks

Former IT professional for CIA and NSA.

In May 2013, leaked many thousands of classified documents to journalists.



Means of mass surveillance

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- Email

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- Email
- Web browsing

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- Phone calls

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- Text messages

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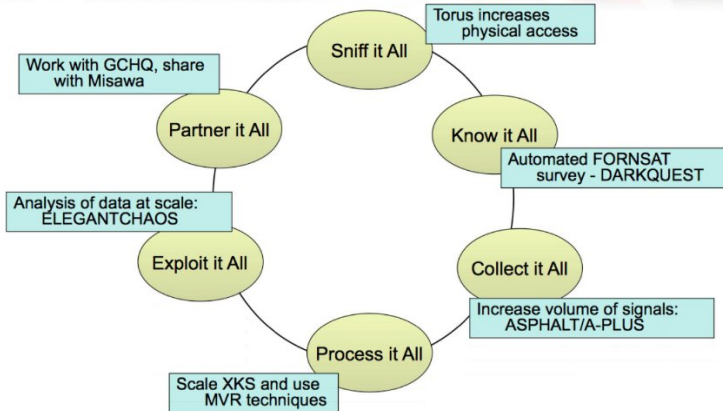
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NSA/GCHQ overarching philosophy

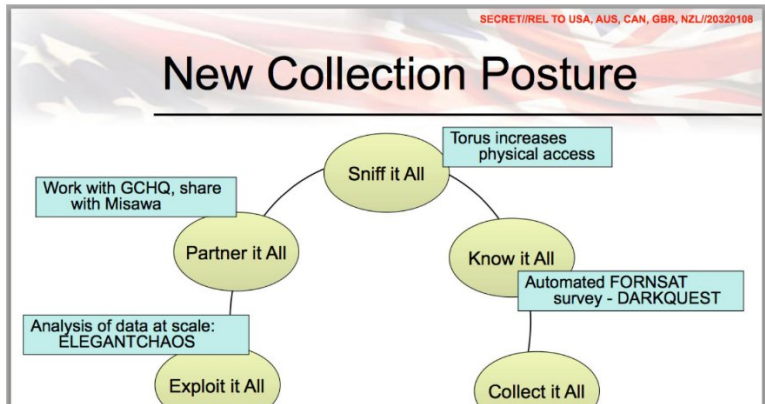
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New Collection Posture



SECRET//REL TO USA, AUS, CAN, GBR, NZL//20320108

NSA/GCHQ overarching philosophy



In extremis, it has been possible to read someone's letter, to listen to someone's call, to listen in on mobile communications. The question remains: are we going to allow a means of communications where it simply is not possible to do that? My answer to that question is: no, we must not. —David Cameron, 2015

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They have had to make out their case . . .
and I have absolutely, clearly, accepted it.

The reactions

Media reaction

Media reaction

NSA collecting phone records of millions of Verizon customers daily

Exclusive: Top secret court order requiring Verizon to hand over all call data shows scale of domestic surveillance under Obama

Media reaction

GCHQ

GCHQ taps fibre-optic cables for secret access to world's communications

Exclusive: British spy agency collects and stores vast quantities of global email messages, Facebook posts, internet histories and calls, and shares them with NSA, latest documents from Edward Snowden reveal



MASTERING THE INTERNET (MTI)



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The NSA files

Optic Nerve: millions of Yahoo webcam images intercepted by GCHQ

- 1.8m users targeted by UK agency in six-month period alone
- Optic Nerve program collected Yahoo webcam images in bulk
- Yahoo: 'A whole new level of violation of our users' privacy'
- Material included large quantity of sexually explicit images



▲ The GCHQ program saved one image every five minutes from the users' feeds. Photograph: Chris Jackson/Getty

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Exclusive: Snowden Docs Show UK Spies Attacked Anonymous, Hackers

A secret British spy unit created to mount cyber attacks on Britain's enemies has waged war on the hacktivists of Anonymous and LulzSec, according to documents taken from the National Security Agency by Edward Snowden and obtained by NBC News.

The blunt instrument the spy unit used to target hackers, however, also interrupted the web communications of political dissidents who did not engage in any illegal hacking. It may also have shut down websites with no connection to Anonymous.

▲ The GCHQ program saved one image every five minutes from the users' feeds. Photograph: Chris Jackson/Getty

Media reaction

Revealed: how US and UK spy agencies defeat internet privacy and security

GCHQ

**GCHQ
access**

- NSA and GCHQ unlock encryption used to protect emails, banking and medical records
- \$250m-a-year US program works covertly with tech companies to insert weaknesses into products
- Security experts say programs 'undermine the fabric of the internet'

**Exclusive: Bulk
quantities of
his
doc**

- **Q&A: submit your questions for our privacy experts**

**Exc
Spic**



▲ Through covert partnerships with tech companies, the spy agencies have inserted secret vulnerabilities into encryption software. Photograph: Kacper Pempel/Reuters

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Data protection

UK gathering secret intelligence via covert NSA operation

Exclusive: UK security agency GCHQ gaining information from world's biggest internet firms through US-run Prism programme



connection to Anonymous.

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The Guardian

Guardian and Washington Post win Pulitzer prize for NSA revelations

Pair awarded highest accolade in US journalism, winning Pulitzer prize for public service for stories on NSA surveillance



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the users' feeds. Photograph: Chris Jackson/Getty

*Why did the math world react like
that?*

The bargain

Glenn Greenwald:

[There is a] bargain that is offered in all political cultures. . . that essentially says: if you make yourself completely unthreatening to what it is that we in power are doing, we will promise you that you will more or less be left alone and unbothered. If you just end up being a submissive citizen who acquiesces to what it is that we want to do and don't impede what it is that we want to do in any way, you don't have to worry—you will more or less be left alone.

*Why is the intelligence community
so patronizing?*

What's happened since

GCHQ/Heilbronn's reputation-laundering



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The power of grassroots action

Margaret Mead:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.