



Obama Supports Tapping Your Phone & Internet

The April 15 news story noted that Justice Department whistleblowers described the scope of the illegal snooping as “significant and systemic,” entailing “millions of calls and e-mail messages” and including an attempt by the NSA to wiretap without a warrant a member of Congress traveling overseas.



The *New York Times* published the story just days after the Department of Homeland Security declassified a [report \(pdf\)](#) entitled *Rightwing Extremism* that paints law-abiding but politically conservative Americans and military veterans as potential violent terrorists. (For more on this report, see *The New American's* exposé [here](#).)

President Obama claims he will fight in court for the ability to wiretap law-abiding American citizens. The day after the *New York Times* published its story on the NSA’s illegal excesses, Obama [publicly stated](#): “While I believe strongly in transparency and accountability, I also believe that in a dangerous world, the United States must sometimes carry out intelligence operations and protect information that is classified for purposes of national security. I have already fought for that principle in court and will do so again in the future.”

The “principle” Obama was referring to was the Bush policy of eavesdropping on Americans’ electronic communications through the NSA without a warrant. Last year Congress [outlawed](#) the NSA’s warrantless wiretapping of American citizens within the United States (although warrantless searches were already illegal under the [Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution](#)).

The Justice Department [told the New York Times](#) that it “acknowledged Wednesday night that there had been problems with the NSA surveillance operation” but claimed the illegal surveillance had been fixed. Meanwhile, the NSA issued a blanket denial that it had violated any law, sending the *Times* a statement that its “intelligence operations, including programs for collection and analysis, are in strict accordance with U.S. laws and regulations.”



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