

**A Constitutional Conflict Frame Analysis:**  
**Edward Snowden and the United States Government**

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“Liberty has never come from the government. Liberty has always come from the subjects of the government. The history of government is a history of resistance. The history of liberty is the history of the limitation of government, not the increase of it.”

-Woodrow Wilson

## INTRODUCTION

Just days after the United States celebrated its independence holiday of 2013, the inherent cloak of America's independence was unveiled. On July 9<sup>th</sup>, thirty-year-old, Edward Snowden, a former CIA technical assistant and NSA contractor, disclosed several of the U.S. Government's top-secret mass surveillance programs to The Guardian press, and as a result, to the entire public worldwide (Greenwald, MacAskill & Poitras, 2013). This single act, which has been regarded as the most significant leak in U.S. history (McCarthy, 2013), triggered a conflict between the Obama Administration and Edward Snowden. Furthermore, Snowden's actions and their popularity in the media have fueled debates over mass surveillance, governmental secrecy, and the complicated balance between national security and privacy. Supporters of Snowden hail him as a loyal American hero who acted to reveal the transparency of the U.S. Government's federation of secret law that oppressed U.S. citizens' rights to privacy and free speech (Greenwald, 2013). Critics of Snowden, especially the Obama Administration, frame him as a traitor, claiming his actions harmed U.S. safety and national security, consequently aiding foreign enemies (e.g., al-Qaida terrorists) to dodge the world's most powerful mass surveillance system (Greenwald, 2013).

Whether Snowden is considered a traitor or a hero in the eyes of the public, the heart of the

conflict, and the focus of this paper, is the way both Snowden and the Obama Administration frame their own interpretations of the conflict. A frame-based analysis of both parties may provide crucial insight into the cognitive schema and rhetorical devices each party employs to construct and define their narration of the conflict (Rogan, 2011). Each party's narrative consists of analogous similarities germinated by their vow of fidelity to the inherent democracy of the U.S. Constitution.

Furthermore, Snowden's action against the U.S. Government is deeply rooted in a long history of tension between constitutionally guaranteed rights of U.S. citizens and those governmental actions (i.e., mass surveillance) that abridge these rights in the name of national security (Hindustrian Times, 2013). Theoretically, this constitutionally-based contradiction between civil liberties and federal responsibility is the key element to this conflict analysis. A further frame examination of how abstract constitutional issues lend themselves to parallel framing by both the US government and dissidents, suggests significant trends marked by several democratic contradictions. Further, these similarities may suggest reasons for hindered constructive conflict management.

## BACKGROUND

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1787, the Founding Fathers scripted the Constitution, officially declaring themselves free of a tyrannical governance ("Constitutional Rights", 2013). The framers of the Constitution recognized that governments are inherently made up of imperfect people who have a tendency to abuse power (National Center for Constitutional Studies, 2013). Consequently, they separated the government's authority into three branches (i.e., judicial, legislative, and executive) to minimize the potential for power abuse. "In questions of power... let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution," Thomas Jefferson declared. Thee constitutional 'chains', known today as the separation of powers, prevent injustice (National Center for Constitutional Studies, 2013). Their determination was sought through their primary

motivation to preserve civil liberty through the structure of checks and balances between the three branches of governmental powers. These checks and balances safeguard Americans' liberties against the governmental usurpation of power (“Constitutional Rights,” 2013). Along with the aim for power balances, this document also presents intrinsic commitments for America's government and for its citizenry.

Each party of this conflict similarly justifies its position as adhering to their national duty designated by the fundamental principles of the U.S. Constitution. If you dissect the Constitution, you may see that it imposes an inherent twofold responsibility for American democracy: one for the federal government (i.e., The Obama Administration) and another for the public citizens (i.e. Edward Snowden). The U.S. government's job is to “provide for a common defense,” which emphasizes a concern for national security as the mandatory function of the national government (constitution.org). Consistent with the Bill of Rights, the American government has nationalistic duty to protect and advance freedom of its' citizens (National Center for Constitutional Studies, 2013). Washington, a metonym for the U.S. federal government, has sought it's national responsibility through their U.S. intelligence agencies, mass surveillance programs, and the undeniable and extensive reach of U.S. intelligence world-wide and the and powerful force of the U.S. military, together have been crucial to defending and preserving America's freedom. Furthermore, the US has devoted a copious amount of effort and time on assembling unparalleled intelligence capabilities. The hub of these strengths lays in a federal organization called the National Security Agency (NSA). First implemented in 1952 by President Harry Truman, the NSA's priority and ongoing mission is national security .

On the other hand, the just authority of a constitutional government is actually the responsibility of the people, those innumerable citizens who make up the general public, to delegate to the government only so much power as they think is prudent for government to exercise (Mayeux, 2013). The constitution maintains that the government is the people's creation- not their master. Thus, if

people are sovereign, it is their duty to assure that order, justice, and freedom are maintained (NCCS, 2013). Although many people do not exercise, or even realize their duty to the Constitution, there exist individuals, framed as *whistleblowers*, who do act on their moral commitment to the law and to civil liberties at large.

*Whistleblower* is a colloquial term for individuals who exercise their right to freedom of expression to alert the public about wrongdoing, misconduct, illegal activity and threats to public interest such as law violations, fraud, and corruption (Government Accountability Project, 2013). Whistleblowers perceive themselves as possessing the ability to influence change out of their sense of national responsibility and just motivation to report misconduct (Matthewson, 2012). More importantly to this conflict, whistleblowers are public witnesses to abuses of power and fraud when the Constitution's fundamental structure of checks and balances fail to suffice (Government Accountability Project, 2013). In fact, on his pre-presidential campaign website [change.gov](http://change.gov), Barack Obama strongly encouraged whistleblowers to step forward, labeling their acts as patriotic, brave and as having the ability to save lives. Further, as President, Obama strengthened laws for protection of whistleblowers, highlighting their importance: "Often the best source of information about waste, fraud, and abuse in government is an existing government employee committed to public integrity and willing to speak out." For this analysis, this resulting conflict of interest is between the most recent American whistleblower and governmental employee, Edward Snowden and the current U.S. Government, The Obama Administration. With governmental encouragement of whistle-blowing and as governmental employee himself, Edward Snowden acted out of his perception of federal wrongdoing. As watchdogs of wrongdoing and partners in performance, both valuing patriotism, the dispute between Edward Snowden and the Obama Administration can be increasingly understood through analyzing each parties' framing of the conflict.

## ANALYSIS

The framing process is influenced by prior knowledge, personal intentions and background context that define the interaction through the formation of meaning to ambiguous messages and the interpretation of the conflict's communicative acts (Bateson 1972 as cited in Rogan, 2011). I will analyze each stakeholders' conceptualization of the conflict by using a coding method of micro-level framing devices. These devices involve several framing classes identified by Gray's (2003) four general framing categories: Whole Story, Identity/Self Presentation, Characterization and Conflict Management. The first three of these categories (i.e. Whole Story, Identity/Self Presentation, and Characterization) will be the initial focus for each party and will be analyzed separately. Further, two additional framing categories, Relationship and Moral Judgement, are especially useful for this conflict analysis. For the purpose of this paper, the addition of the Relationship and Moral Judgement categories are the most essential, most commonly coded, and the most widespread components to the constitutional nature of this conflict. As a result of their prevalence and importance, instead of making them their own distinct categories, they will both be frequently intertwined throughout each of the Gray's (2003) framing categories and will be later discussed in the conclusion.

Furthermore, conflict management can be hindered by a lack of understanding of the other parties' frames, which encourages conflict escalation (Rogan, 2011). Putnam & Wondollock (2003) found the knowledge gained through framing devices enables us to reflect upon each parties' conceptualizations of the conflict and to generate options for responding to those articulated concerns as manifested in these frames (as cited in Rogan, 2011).

The majority of this frame analysis is based on the textual material gained through international media disclosure. The perusal of related textual material revealed how similar perspectives of the disputing parties regarding their own role, the other parties' role, and the relationship between them, all emphasize each parties' main issues and overall story. Since the conflict is very recent and yet to be further published in literature, my research and textual material is largely based on the media's reports,

interviews and general disclosure of each party to this conflict interaction.

In fact, Edward Snowden is dominating the media, using it as his primary source to voice his claims of the government's unconstitutional actions, as compared to President Obama who has largely avoided it. However, I did not choose to analyze the media as a stakeholder in this particular conflict because of its overbearing and predominate focus on Snowden. Since Edward Snowden has done a great deal of direct communication and information release to the press about his reasoning and framing, the textual material is largely focused on Edward Snowden.

As a result, Edward Snowden's frames are clear, descriptive, and heavily weighted on his direct disclosure and communicative acts to the public. By comparison, The Obama Administration's lack of public announcements to the media presents a challenge to gaining a clear understanding of their frames, since their public communication has been far less regular and more ambiguous. Consequently, their frames for this conflict will be more heavily determined by the Obama Administration's actions and their fundamental principles, rather than their communicative acts.

As the textual material and media disclosure of the conflict suggest, the relevance of framing processes largely influences the way we define tensions between constitutional principles and national security. The dialectic of these constitutional guarantees is escalated by not only by the role of communication in and of itself, but by the ambiguous structure of the constitution foundation that perpetuates this conflict. As discussed previously, the framers of the Constitution set forth broad and equivocal principles for a democratic society. Consequently, the central challenge for each individual is using their own moral judgement to define and animate the substance of these fundamental principles in the context of America's continuously changing society. The inherent tensions of each parties' frames, then, are due to the ambiguity in the way they interpret the limits of constitutional guarantees. That is, the way they believe civil liberties and national security ought to be balanced. This ambiguity

is what makes interpretive framing processes so significant in this particular conflict.

Finally, with a clear grasp of the constitutionally-based background context and the framing process used for this conflict, the analysis will now shift focus to the framing devices utilized by Edward Snowden to justify his actions since July.

## RESULTS

Edward Snowden, revealed his primary perspective that the U.S. Government is a threat to individual liberty and the rule of law by their excessive measures they undergo to heighten national security (Greenwald, 2013). As a governmental insider, Snowden believes the NSA is legitimizing an illegal affair and asserts that mass surveillance programs breaching our basic civil liberties. Snowden justifies his actions and frames his whole story by highlighting these very principles and policies granted by the US Constitution, he states:

“The 4th and 5th Amendments to the Constitution of my country, Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and numerous statutes and treaties forbid such systems of massive, pervasive surveillance. While the U.S. Constitution marks these programs as illegal, my government argues that secret court rulings, which the world is not permitted to see, somehow legitimize an illegal affair.... I believe in the principle declared at Nuremberg in 1945: Individuals have international duties which transcend the national obligations of obedience. Therefore individual citizens have the duty to violate domestic laws to prevent crimes against peace and humanity from occurring.”  
(Greenwald, 2013)

Through this quote, Snowden presented his whole story frame for leaking NSA documents as a moral duty to protect US citizens' rights under the 4th and 5th amendments of the US Constitution,



which safeguards citizens private lives from unwarranted intrusion by the US government (Manski, 2013). Snowden has publicly explained his motivations behind his actions with a primary incentive of transparency; exposing the US Government and their hidden abuses of power (Greenwald, 2013). In Snowden's own words, his sole motive for his actions was to “inform the public about what is done in their name and which is done against them.” Snowden's primary objective was to reveal the acts of secrecy, unequal pardon, and irresistible executive powers of the U.S. government that dominate the world (Greenwald et al, 2013). Further, he believes the US government's secrecy and mass surveillance programs destroy privacy, internet freedom and the basic liberties of people around the world (Greenwald, 2013). He views the NSA mass surveillance as unnecessary and harmful: “People all over the world are realizing that these programs (i.e., mass surveillance) don't make us more safe. They hurt our economy. They hurt our country. They limit our ability to speak and think and live and have relationships and to associate freely.” He sees these programs as a threat to democracy, as stealing the public's right to privacy, as decreasing safety and as an encumbrance for intellectual exploration and creativity (Greenwald et al, 2013). Initially, Snowden was behind this governmental secrecy and hidden abuses of power as a previous member of the United States Army Reserve, the National Security Agency (NSA), and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). However, after he leaked the highly secretive documents and quit his job at the NSA, he viewed himself as a citizen of America rather than a governmental agent.

Within the Identity and Self-Presentation category, Snowden sees himself as more than a whistleblower. At the start of this conflict, Edward Snowden initially encrypted his identity using the codename “Verax.” As “Verax.” Snowden communicated through e-mail with media outlets about publicly exposing the highly secretive nature of the US Government. His identity was not made public until the day he leaked NSA documents on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2013. He revealed his identity by choosing to forgo protection of anonymity. “I have no intention hiding who I am because I know I have done nothing

wrong,” Snowden explains after ditching “Verax” and revealing his true identity to the public sphere (Greenwald, 2013). Snowden hoped revealing his identity would protect his colleagues from being subjected to any harm or blame by the US Government as they searched for the culprit of the leaks.

Furthermore, Snowden sees himself as a leader and wanted to embolden others to step forward; “You can't wait around for someone else to act. I had been looking for leaders, but I realized that leadership is about being the first to act (Greenwald, 2013).” As stated before, Snowden has been constantly seen as either a hero or a traitor, but Snowden rejects these titles and maintains that he is not a hero because he didn't act out of self-interest. “I am neither a traitor nor hero. I'm an American,” Snowden declares about his self-presentation as a US citizen with a Constitutional duty to transcend the national obligations of obedience to prevent illegal crimes from their abusive, yet powerful government. As choosing to forgo anonymity and rejecting others' heroic image of him, Snowden publicly identifies himself as a righteous and selfless American citizen.

As an American with the right to vote, Snowden admits he was initially a supporter and believer in President Barack Obama's promises for real reforms in increasing accountability of the U.S. Government (Hindustrian Times, 2013). However, Snowden's claims that Obama's failure fueled his frustration and disapproval of federal secrecy and civil abuse greatly intensified. His negative attitude toward the U.S. Government is further reflected in his Characterization frames. Snowden portrays the U.S. Government as a threat to democracy because of their abuse of power and lack of honesty. He sees this threat as reflected by their unequal pardon of going to excessive lengths to protect dishonest governmental officials while using their power towards punishing truth-telling, innocent citizenry (Greenwald, 2013). He believes the US government is not only an abuser of power, but a violator of American's basic and inherent constitutional rights to privacy and freedom of speech. Thus, Snowden sees the US government's actions as invasive, secretive and deceptive, making them a harmful threat to their citizens' privacy and oppressors, even destroyers, of their freedom.

Snowden's actions triggered an international media frenzy and had serious implications for the United States government. The government responded quickly to Snowden's leaks in support of the NSA against their perceived betrayal by one of their very own members. As a result, the Whole Story frames employed by the federal government are mainly concerned with *defending* and *rebutting* Snowden's remarks, which Obama claims are bias and over-exaggerated accusations (Bailey, 2013). In hopes to gain acceptance of his framework, Obama states “frankly, if people are making judgments just based on these slides that have been leaked, they’re not getting the complete story (Mattingly, Talev, & Harris, 2013)”

By suggesting that people need a better picture than what Snowden has provided, the President's Whole Story frames center around providing America with his perception of this ‘better picture.’ When addressing Snowden's assertion of the U.S. Government's secret and unconstitutional imbalance between privacy and security, Obama offers his reasoning on this primary issue. In his 2013 National Defense Speech, before Snowden's actions, Obama had already recognized the complicated balance between our need for security and preserving the freedoms of those who call America home. He explains his Administration's information-gathering approach and it's accused risk of some constitutionally guaranteed civil liberties (Mattingly, 2013). “You can't have 100% security and also have 100% privacy and zero inconvenience. We're going to have to make some choices as a society” (Hindustan Times, 2013). However, he rejects Snowden's claims that this imbalance is abusive, trumping individuals' rights, by reassuring the public that the NSA is under strict supervision safeguarded by the three branches of the government (Scheer, 2013). As a result, Obama asserts that it is highly improbable that he and his administration infringes on citizens' privacy.

Instead, Obama stresses the excessive lengths his administration takes to adhere to their Constitutional duty by nurturing their proud commitment to civil liberties. He maintains this responsibility is achieved largely by the exceptional capabilities and resources of the NSA and he

highlights the NSA's significance in defending and preserving the freedom of American citizens . Thus, the Obama Administration refutes Snowden's claims that mass surveillance programs trump the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Amendment by invading citizen's privacy, and instead argues that Snowden's remarks discredit the constructive magnitude of U.S. national security programs (Wolf, 2013). Rather than actively spying on them, the President assured Americans that telephone and e-mail surveillance programs target foreign terrorists to protect citizens. The head of the NSA, Gen. Keith Alexander, promises that as a product of their immoderate spying efforts, the NSA has kept citizens safe by preventing 54 planned terrorist attacks, making America the most powerful national surveillance system.

Since Edward Snowden leaks and claims did a great deal of damage to the Obama Administration's reputation, the U.S. Government's Identity and Self-Presentation frames may be the most important for them to regain their stature, trust and support from America's citizens. Obama asserts the main problem with Snowden's allegations is that he failed to explain “the big picture” of these surveillance programs, which are lawful, which have saved lives, and which have stopped terrorist attacks. More importantly, the rhetorical devices Obama adopts in his powerful speeches, especially his careful choice of unitary words (e.g. “we”), imply he is one of the people, too. Obama sees his Administration as an allied force with American citizens, acting with the people and out of their best interest; suggesting a regulated democratic and united relationship between the two.

A main part of The Obama Administrations attempt at saving face comes from damaging Snowden's reputation and delegitimizing his actions through his overall negative characterization of the “infamous” NSA leaker. They frame Snowden as a fugitive from justice since he is currently living in Russia under temporary political asylum and have charged him with espionage and theft of governmental property (Wolf, 2013; Bailey, 2013). These charges are parallel with Snowden’s unlawful characterization frames, and suggest Snowden is a unrighteous violator of U.S. national law. The president asserts that Americans would have been better off without Snowden's leaks and framed

Snowden as not acting out of the best interest of society, but for himself (Hager, 2013). Lastly, when Obama was asked whether this increased debate over surveillance would make Snowden a “whistleblower” or a “patriot,” Obama responds, “I don't think Mr. Snowden was a patriot.” This statement is one of the many contradictions embodied in the analogous, parallel frames each party uses to justify this conflict.

The contradictions that make up this conflict are conflated by the similar trends in the coinciding constitutional issues that are central to this conflict. First, President Obama rejecting assertions that Snowden is not a patriot, but claiming he is a whistleblower completely goes against his past declarations of the loyalty and significance of whistleblowers; “I believe that those who have lawfully raised their voices on behalf of privacy and civil liberties are also patriots who love our country.” Further, Obama highlights that a whistleblower exposes unlawful conduct by placing his oath of loyalty to the Constitution above all considerations of legalities (Hagen, 2013). Even before the leaks, Obama believed that himself and Snowden have a collegial relationship possessing similar duties to the constitution, stating that federal employees should be “watchdogs of wrongdoing and partners in performance.” In fact, Snowden highlights the trend of this constitutional relationship as being the primary issue in the conflict. Snowden maintains, “this is not about any sort of particular program, this is about a trend in the relationship between the governing and the governed in America that is increasingly coming into conflict with what we expect as free and democratic people. If we can't understand the policies and the programs of our government, we cannot grant our consent in regulating them (Greenwald, 2013).” This trend in the relationship of the government and the governed is the same trend that leads to parallel frames.

## CONCLUSION

As we can see from this frame analysis, this abstract and constitutionally-based contradiction between civil liberties and federal responsibility has led to several trends in parallel frames by

Snowden and the Obama Administration. More importantly, the interesting aspect of this conflict is that it is perpetuated by analogous framing and justifications between Snowden and the government.

First, within the whole story frame category, each party utilizes the same political framework (i.e., the Constitution) as justification for their actions. They both say their actions are a direct result of their national duty to protect civil liberties and fueled by their concern for public safety. That is, they each are on a pursuit of justice, equality and liberty. Second, their self-presentation and identity frames both stress that they are American, as united with the people, acting out of the best interest of the public citizens. Third, the characterization category may be the most dense with similarities. They both strongly assert the other as a threat to democracy and safety in America, and a violator of the law.

In conclusion, there is an inherent conflict between the duty and responsibility of government to serve and protect its citizens and the fundamental human right of personal freedom. Ultimately, the dynamic tension of these values creates a positive feedback loop which strengthens necessary democratic oversight by its citizens.

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## Appendix: Exemplars of Framing Devices

### *Whole Story- Snowden*

#### **US Government as threat to Constitutional rights:**

not only a threat to privacy” but “threaten freedom of speech and open societies.”

He further argues, “Society can only understand and control these problems through an open, respectful and informed debate.”

#### **US Government exercises of unconstrained power:**

“The government also lacks the authority to spy without legal constraint on anyone it wishes, because that violates the Constitution and fundamentally changes our open and free society. All-hearing ears and all-seeing eyes and unconstrained power exercised in secret are a toxic mix destined to destroy personal freedom”

#### **Objective is transparency:**

"I will be satisfied if the federation of secret law, unequal pardon and irresistible executive powers that rule the world that I love are revealed even for an instant."  
Surrender to

"I'm willing to sacrifice all of that because I can't in good conscience allow the U.S. government to destroy privacy, internet freedom and basic liberties for people around the world with this massive surveillance machine they're secretly building."

### *Whole Story- U.S. Government*

#### **Hardworking and committed civil liberties**

Thwarting homegrown plots presents particular challenges in part because of our proud commitment to civil liberties for all who call America home. That's why, in the years to come, we will have to keep working hard to strike the appropriate balance between our need for security and preserving those freedoms that make us who we are. That means reviewing the authorities of law enforcement, so we Unjust violators with ill motives

" Since 9/11, the federal government has increasingly used the excuse of national security to justify violations of human rights and civil rights, to spy on allied foreign governments, and to increase spending on intelligence gathering, weapons and war. We no know that the National Security Agency has even been spying on millions of American citizens-- monitoring our cell phone calls, emails and even directing the US Postal Service to monitor our letter mail.

#### **US Government as unsafe and hurtful**

“People all over the world are realizing that these programs don’t make us more safe, they hurt our economy, they hurt our country they limit our ability to speak and think and live and be creative, to have relationships, to associate freely.”

#### **Secure, open democracy:**

Obama acknowledged Friday, “because what makes us different from other countries is not simply our ability to secure our nation. It’s the way we do it, with open debate and democratic process.”

### *Identity/Self-Presentation- Snowden*

#### **Selfless**

“I don’t want public attention because I don’t want the story to be about me. I want it to be about what the US government is doing... I really want the focus to be on these documents and the debate which I hope this will trigger among citizens around the globe about what kind of world we want to live in. My sole motive is to inform the public as to that which is done in their name.”

#### **American:**

“I am neither a traitor nor hero. I'm an American,”

"There are more important things than money. If I were motivated by money, I could have sold these documents to any number of countries and gotten very rich."

### *Identity/Self-Presentation- U.S. Government*

#### **Secure, open democracy:**

"...because what makes us different from other countries is not simply our ability to secure our nation. It's the way we do it, with open debate and democratic process."

#### **Lawful and skilled**

"I am comfortable that the program currently is not being abused. I'm comfortable that if the American people examined exactly what was taking place, how it was being used, what the safeguards were, that they would say, you know what, these folks are following the law and doing what they say they're doing."

### *Characterization of Other- Snowden*

#### **Dangerous and inconsistent deceivers:**

"The U.S. government was unwilling to prosecute high officials who lied to Congress and the country on camera, but they'll stop at nothing to persecute someone who told them the truth. If the highest officials in government can break the law without fearing punishment or even any repercussions at all, secret powers become tremendously dangerous."

#### **U.S. Government are Law-breaking Liars**

"The government breaks the law it has been hired to enforce and violates the Constitution its agents have sworn to uphold; it gets caught and lies about it; and no one in government is punished or changes his behavior."

#### **Abusive and self-serving:**

"The majority of people in developed countries spend at least some time interacting with the Internet, and Governments are abusing that necessity in secret to extend their powers beyond what is necessary and appropriate."

### *Characterization of Other- U.S. Government*

#### **Pessimist:**

"The problem fundamentally is he's failed to explain these programs which are lawful, which have saved lives, which have stopped terrorist plots,"

#### **Unpatriotic and unlawful:**

"I don't think Mr. Snowden was a patriot" for leaking the NSA documents. If in fact he believes that what he did was right, then, like every American citizen, he can come here, appear before the court with a lawyer and make his case."

#### **Traitor**

"Disclosing information about the specific methods the government uses to collect communications can obviously give our enemies a "playbook" of how to avoid detection,"

"His leaks harmed US security and made it easier for America's enemies - like stateless al-Qaida terrorist operators - to avoid the never-blinking eye of Washington surveillance."

#### **Whistle-blowers as lawful and patriotic:**

"I believe that those who have lawfully raised their voices on behalf of privacy and civil liberties are also patriots who love our country."

### *Conflict Management- Snowden*

## **Secret, unequal, irresistible**

"I will be satisfied if the federation of secret law, unequal pardon and irresistible executive powers that rule the world that I love are revealed even for an instant. ... I don't want public attention because I don't want the story to be about me. I want it to be about what the US government is doing. ... I really want the focus to be on these documents and the debate which I hope this will trigger among citizens around the globe about what kind of world we want to live in. My sole motive is to inform the public as to that which is done in their name."

## *Conflict Management- U.S. Government*

### **Lawful examination and an informed, fact-base debate:**

"I called for a thorough review of our surveillance operations before Mr. Snowden made these leaks. My preference - and I think the American people's preference - would have been for a lawful, orderly examination of these laws; a thoughtful, fact-based debate,"

## *Relationship-Snowden*

### **Citizens have unregulated and denied civil liberties**

"This is not about any sort of particular program, this is about a trend in the relationship between the governing and the governed in America that is increasingly coming into conflict with what we expect as free and democratic people. If we can't understand the policies and the programs of our government, we cannot grant our consent in regulating them."

## *Relationship- U.S. Government*

### **Whistleblowers as watchdogs of wrongdoing and partners in performance:**

"Often the best source of information about waste, fraud, and abuse in government is an existing government employee committed to public integrity and willing to speak out. Such acts of courage and patriotism, which can sometimes save lives and often save taxpayer dollars, should be encouraged rather than stifled. We need to empower federal employees as watchdogs of wrongdoing and partners in performance. Barack Obama will strengthen whistleblower laws to protect federal workers who expose waste, fraud, and abuse of authority in government."

## *Moral Judgement: Snowden*

### **National duty as morally righteous:**

"The 4th and 5th Amendments to the Constitution of my country, Article 12 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and numerous statutes and treaties forbid such systems of massive, pervasive surveillance. While the U.S. Constitution marks these programs as illegal, my government argues that secret court rulings, which the world is not permitted to see, somehow legitimize an illegal affair.... I believe in the principle declared at Nuremberg in 1945: Individuals have international duties which transcend the national obligations of obedience. Therefore individual citizens have the duty to violate domestic laws to prevent crimes against peace and humanity from occurring."

### **Righteousness:**

"I have no intention of hiding who I am because I know I have done nothing wrong."

## *Moral Judgement- U.S. Government*

### **Future focus on morality and constitution**

"in the years to come, we will have to keep working hard to strike the appropriate balance between our need for security and preserving those freedoms that make us who we are. That means reviewing the authorities of law enforcement so we can intercept new types of communication, but also build in

privacy protections to prevent abuse. ... by means of having a strong privacy and civil liberties board to review those issues where our counter-terrorism efforts and our values may come into tension.”