ES2 TEAM

Edward Snowden was a high school dropout who found his way into the most secretive computers in the U.S. intelligence, only to spill those secrets to the public by telling American citizens of the NSA’s classified surveillance programs. Snowden claims that he “just wanted the public to know what the government was doing” [1]. The Edward Snowden leak has sparked numerous controversial public debates over informationregarding privacy and security which was collected by theNSA. We support Snowden because his efforts should be considered to be more legal than the NSA’s acts. His act of revealing the existence and power of the NSA’s surveillance outweighs any betrayal of trust that he may have committed in the process. Snowden has enlightened the public on these affairs while not damaging the U.S.’s security. Snowden’s morality and motive can be clearly seen in how he selects specific information based on impact on humanity and the contradictions between the NSA’s doctrine and our constitutional rights [4].

Many people have claimed that Snowden has done great damage to the U.S.’s intelligence capabilities. He has released data determining the various NSA assets abroad. Since the information revealed method rather than results [2], casualties in American and Foreign lives would be improbable. This is the same with military, as the NSA’s scope extends to foreign and domestic civilian and political intelligence, while the military intelligence is relegated to the US Armed Forces. Thus, Snowden’s leaks do not immediately put US servicemen in danger, and does not affect civilian populations, as the information leaked did not directly reveal hard information.

We can also look at this: If Snowden is convicted of “stealing” data from the NSA, what would we call the method that the NSA is using? Snowden did an honest thing, and it is important for Americans to know the extent to which their government is spying on them. Edward Snowden decided to become a whistleblower when faced with the violation of Amendment IV of the US Constitution, which highlights the right of protection from unreasonable search or seizure of assets [4]. The information revealed on how the NSA established doctrine to massively gather and store information, both viewing civilian private information, and placing it on record, making it more vulnerable to be revealed through cyber-attacks and leakage. Moreover, it is the responsibility of all citizens to defend their constitutional rights from any threats, and Edward Snowden lived up to this responsibility.

No matter whether one views Snowden as a hero or a traitor, it cannot be denied that the Snowden leak enlightened many American citizens on the NSA’s controversial doctrine. His actions are what personified our duty to preserve our constitutional rights in the changing information landscape. Edward Snowden’s motives and actions simply gave us a warning to see and follow.

Sources (needs to be formatted MLA/APA!)

1) Yan, Barbara, CNNs Smith, and Holly Yan. "Man behind NSA leaks says he did it to safeguard privacy, liberty." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 1 Jan. 1970. Web. 10 July 2014. <http://www.cnn.com/2013/06/10/politics/edward-snowden-profile/>.

2) Eaton, Joshua. "Timeline of Edward Snowden Revelations." . Aljazeera, n.d. Web. 10 July 2014. <america.aljazeera.com/articles/multimedia/timeline-edward-snowden-revelations.html>.

3) Siddique, Haroon. "Edward Snowden asylum: countries approached and their responses." *theguardian.com*. Guardian News and Media, 4 July 2013. Web. 10 July 2014. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/jul/02/edward-snowden-nsa-asylum-application-list-countries>.

4) United States Constitution, Amendment IV