

On IRC Sunday, as the Torrent with HBGary emails started to spread, HBGary President Penny Leavy, as well as Greg Hoglund and Aaron Barr, spoke to Anonymous.

Early on in the conversation with Anonymous, Leavy remarked that she was aware of Barr's research on [social media](#) and the problems associated with it, including "...the ease of pretending to be one of you..." she told them.

However, Barr was never planning on giving his research to the government, she added. "He was never going to release names, just talk about handles."

The data and information collected by Barr was to show people at RSA next week how easy it is to say they are someone online without actually being the person. However, the reaction from the Anons in the room was that the research and logic for conducting it at all was extremely flawed.

Most of the anger was directed at Barr's list of names and their alleged connections to Anonymous operations. Several Anons commented that the list includes fake names, [reporters](#), and others who are in no way connected to any role in Anonymous. Its existence means that it "...could have and might still get innocent people in trouble for no reason at all."

When asked if she had seen Barr's research, including the infamous list, Leavy said, "...we have not seen the list and we are kind of pissed at him right now." She didn't expand on that comment.

There was a distinction made that HBGary only owns 15-percent of HBGary Federal, and that attacking both was wrong, as one had nothing to do with the other. The networks shared many common elements, that they are only moderately related was irrelevant to Anonymous.

Later, there was talk about making things right. Not really demands, but more of a list of gestures that HBGary could make, such as [donations](#) to various causes, like the EFF or Bradley Manning's defense fund.

In addition, there were several calls for Barr to be burned by HBGary, but given that he is a partner, that is unlikely. At this stage, HBGary's response is unknown. At the time this article was written, aside from the conversations on IRC, there has been no official comment.

When asked by the Anons in the room about his alleged plans to sell the data collected, Barr denied it with a flat refusal that he was never going to sell it, and that they had it all wrong.

"Ok I am going to say this one more time," he told the room. "I did this for research. The FBI called me because of my research. The email you are referring to about selling data was about a model built on this type of research. It was not to sell specifically this data."

"I was going to use it to describe the process of how social media exploitation works... The most data I was going to show was an org chart of IRCs with icons representing those nicks I thought I knew. Social media provides huge vulnerabilities for everyone...nuclear power plants, military installations, and anonymous... this was about research."

When questioned about the data in his research document, Barr said that the document circulating online was an old copy, adding that there was a new version. When asked to present it, he refused.

Just before he exited the room, after facing the same set of questions for several minutes, Barr made one final comment. "...guys you hacked our servers, took our data, and posted it to the public...it's criminal now... it's out of my hands..."

For his part, Greg Hoglund remained neutral, even complementing Anonymous on the hack. His main concern was the release of emails that are not part of the Torrent circulating online. For now, Anonymous says they have no plans to release them.

As this story develops we will report additional updates.



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