

EDWARD SNOWDEN

DATE OF BIRTH
June 21, 1983

HOMETOWN
Elizabeth City, N.C.

WHAT HE LEAKED

Snowden provided internal NSA documents to *The Guardian*'s Glenn Greenwald detailing a previously undisclosed program, PRISM, which gives the agency "direct access" to data held by Google, Facebook, Apple, Microsoft and other U.S. internet giants. Snowden also disclosed a secret court order showing the U.S. government had forced Verizon to hand over the phone records of millions of Americans. Furthermore, Snowden's leaks have revealed massive U.S. surveillance of millions of people's phone and internet activity in countries around the world, including allies in Europe and Latin America.

IMPACT

In a January 2010 poll conducted by Quinnipiac University, the U.S. public said by a 63-25 margin that the government didn't go far enough in restricting civil liberties in the name of anti-terrorism efforts. In the wake of Snowden's leaks, a new poll by Quinnipiac shows respondents now believe by a 45-40 margin that the government goes too far in restricting civil liberties.

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

"In my estimation, there has not been in American history a more important leak than Edward Snowden's release of NSA material — and that definitely includes the Pentagon Papers 40 years ago."

— Daniel Ellsberg, Author of the Pentagon Papers

SNOWDEN, IN HIS OWN WORDS

"I had been looking for leaders, but I realized that leadership is about being the first to act."

"At this point in history, the greatest danger to our freedom and way of life comes from...omniscient State powers kept in check by nothing more than policy documents."

LEGAL STATUS

Snowden was charged with three felonies in June: theft of government property and two charges of violating the Espionage Act. He faces up to 30 years in prison.

IMMIGRATION STATUS

After initially fleeing to Hong Kong, since June 23 Snowden has been stranded in a transit zone in a Moscow airport with a revoked U.S. passport. Three countries — Venezuela, Bolivia and Nicaragua — have offered him political asylum. The U.S. has threatened dire consequences for any country that shelters Snowden.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.guardian.co.uk/world/edward-snowden



THE INDEPENDENT'S WHISTLEBLOWER POSTER SERIES

This is the first in a series of four posters featuring whistleblowers who have taken great risks to expose the crimes and the misdeeds of our government.

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