

# NSA official: 'We're really screwed now'



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The National Security Agency is [reportedly reeling](#) from [comments made by Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Dianne Feinstein](#) — one of the agency's staunchest defenders — in the wake of revelations that the NSA spied on foreign leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel.

"With respect to NSA collection of intelligence on leaders of U.S. allies — including France, Spain, Mexico and Germany — let me state unequivocally: I am totally opposed," Feinstein [said in a statement Monday](#). "Unless the United States is engaged in hostilities against a country or there is an emergency need for this type of surveillance, I do not believe the United States

should be collecting phone calls or emails of friendly presidents and prime ministers. The president should be required to approve any collection of this sort.

"It is my understanding that President Obama was not aware Chancellor Merkel's communications were being collected since 2002," Feinstein continued. "That is a big problem."

[According to Foreign Policy magazine](#), Feinstein's public reversal shocked at least one NSA official.

"We're really screwed now," the official said. "You know things are bad when the few friends you've got disappear without a trace in the dead of night and leave no forwarding address."

Feinstein called for a "major review into all intelligence collection programs."

"It is abundantly clear that a total review of all intelligence programs is necessary so that members of the Senate Intelligence Committee are fully informed as to what is actually being carried out by the intelligence community," Feinstein said. "Unlike NSA's collection of phone records under a court order, it is clear to me that certain surveillance activities have been in effect for more than a decade and that the Senate Intelligence Committee was not satisfactorily informed."

She added that "Congress needs to know exactly what our intelligence community is doing."

Feinstein is not alone. Arizona Sen. John McCain is calling for a select committee to review the U.S. spy program.

"We have always eavesdropped on people around the world," McCain [said Monday](#). "But the advance of technology has given us enormous capabilities, and I think you might make an argument that some of this capability has been very offensive both to us and to our allies."

Meanwhile, stronger opponents of the surveillance program in the House are expected to unveil the "USA Freedom Act," a bipartisan bill that would limit the NSA's bulk data collection. A similar bill is expected to be introduced by Vermont Democrat Patrick Leahy in the Senate.

Feinstein [had been working on a competing bill](#) that, according to the San Francisco Chronicle, "would grant the agency explicit authority to gather records listing the numbers, duration and time of all U.S. telephone calls, but not their content."

<http://news.yahoo.com/nsa-really-screwed-now-132859079.html>