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Thread: [Snowden Claims NSA Knocked All of Syrias Internet Offline](#)

well then - August 13, 2014, 9:48 pm

<http://time.com/3107684/snowden-nsa-syria-cybersecurity/>

Quote:Former NSA contractor also says the U.S. was working on an automated cyberattack response system in WIRED interview

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National Security Agency leaker Edward Snowden has claimed a team of NSA hackers was responsible for effectively knocking the entire country of Syria offline two years ago during a period of intense fighting in its still-ongoing civil war.

Snowden's claim is significant because many observers believed one of several other parties to be responsible for the outage, including Syrian President Bashar Assad's government, hackers aligned with but perhaps not a part of Assad's government, or Israel.

Snowden's story, as revealed in an interview with Snowden published Wednesday in WIRED, goes like this: The NSA team essentially tried to get access to a primary component of Syria's main Internet Service Provider. Syria only has one big ISP, making it a particularly inviting target for electronic snooping; setting up that backdoor would have given the U.S. unparalleled access to nearly all digital communications within Syria, a major intelligence advantage.

But the plan backfired as the NSA team accidentally fried the very equipment it was trying to tap. The hardware was so vital to Syria's Internet infrastructure that its loss essentially plunged the country into digital darkness — ironic, because other parts of the U.S. government were trying to keep Syria connected. Writer James Bamford describes Snowden's claim:

"One day an intelligence officer told him that TAO—a division of NSA hackers—had attempted in 2012 to remotely install an exploit in one of the core routers at a major Internet service provider in Syria, which was in the midst of a prolonged civil war. This would have given the NSA access to email and other Internet traffic from much of the country. But something went wrong, and the router was bricked instead—rendered totally inoperable. The failure of this router caused Syria to suddenly lose all connection to the Internet—although the public didn't know that the U.S. government was responsible."

WIRED's Snowden story has another cybersecurity scoop: The former NSA contractor claims for the first time that the U.S. government was (or still is) working on a cybersecurity response program that automatically detects and blocks incoming cyberattacks. However, the program — dubbed

“MonsterMind” — isn’t just defensive: Once it blocks an attack, it then automatically carries out a counter-attack against what it thinks was the source, Snowden says.

That could be an issue, says Snowden, as good hackers can — and typically do — make their online attacks look like they’re coming from somewhere else. “You could have someone sitting in China, for example, making it appear that one of these attacks is originating in Russia. And then we end up shooting back at a Russian hospital,” he explains.

The NSA did not comment to WIRED on Snowden’s claims about Syria’s Internet outage or MonsterMind, but it’s possible that MonsterMind or programs like it would be designed to circumvent such spoofing by detecting a rerouted address and either standing down or switching targets.

[WIRED]

If true, that's crazy!

I guess we better keep our tinfoil hats on and wait it out.

Great Prosperity - August 14, 2014, 1:16 am

See this is the kind of shit Edward Snowden needs to keep a secret. Why would the American people care about this? And Why would we want the people in Syria to know that we are tampering or disconnecting their internet? I say disconnect the internet for all middle eastern countries except for Israel until the Iraq and Gaza crises is resolved. Then they won't be able to recruit other terrorists. etc.

Fairy tail - August 14, 2014, 2:44 am

(Aug 14, 2014 01:16 AM)Rise To The Top Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) See this is the kind of shit Edward Snowden needs to keep a secret. Why would the American people care about this? And Why would we want the people in Syria to know that we are tampering or disconnecting their internet? I say disconnect the internet for all middle eastern countries except for Israel until the Iraq and Gaza crises is resolved. Then they won't be able to recruit other terrorists. etc.

Your stupidity supprises me everyday.

I think the only extremist here is you.

kent0o - August 14, 2014, 4:34 am

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logging*machine - August 14, 2014, 9:20 am

Why doesn't the US just bug everyone's internet? ... OH WAIT.

webdev77 - August 14, 2014, 9:23 am

(Aug 14, 2014 09:20 AM)Sunlight Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Why doesn't the US just bug everyone's internet? ...

OH WAIT.

Well considering something like 90% of the world's internet traffic goes through the United States, it's not that hard to do. Only 10% of the internet would be left functioning. Imagine what would happen if the US forced Google to null route traffic.

Sergeant Dude - August 14, 2014, 9:33 am

At what point do we stop listening to everything this guy says? Unless there is real evidence for anything, I refuse to believe it. IMO he is trying to keep himself relevant by "releasing" something every couple months. Wouldn't it be a lot more effective to just release everything he has, all at once?

Emily Brontë - August 14, 2014, 9:37 am

Unless he has real evidence to back up his claims I will not believe this fully. Its good he's trying to inform the people, but why not just say it all at once? It feels like he's trying to remain relevant for as long as possible. Correct if I'm wrong but isn't he in Russia? So by now he's told them all he knows, why else would Putin give him asylum.

Great Prosperity - August 14, 2014, 1:34 pm

(Aug 14, 2014 02:44 AM)Fairy tail Wrote: [\[CITE\]](#) Your stupidity supprises me everyday.

I think the only extremist here is you.

Lol, your response doesn't surprise me, considering you are a racist Muslim.

Neither you or the other guy even bothered to counter my argument.

Do you know how many terrorists are communicating on the internet in Syria and elsewhere? Tapping their internet communications is one of the most important missions of the NSA.

This is something that needs to be a secret. All the previous leaks were not as critical for counter-terrorism.

Who cares about the privacy of Syrians, etc. People in middle eastern countries have more important things to worry about than privacy. Like: how to avoid starving to death, how to escape the violence. At least let the NSA do their job and find out what ISIS is doing.

? Maxie? - August 14, 2014, 1:42 pm

This shit here is completely outrageous the nsa is trying to put a cork on anything tech related. But I'm really tired of this piece of shit group they have TAO guarantee i will be doing my own personal research on them bitches!!!