



Written by [C. Mitchell Shaw](#) on March 12, 2017

## It's Time for Congress to Investigate the CIA Hacking Scandal

With WikiLeaks providing hardware and software manufactures with technical details about the hacking tools the CIA developed — and lost — the manufactures are working to plug the holes. While that is happening, there may be the beginnings of a Congressional investigation into the CIA's hacking activities.



Almost as soon as [WikiLeaks published a trove of documents and files revealing the size and scope of the CIA's arsenal of cyber weapons and the fact that the CIA somehow lost control of that arsenal](#), Representative Ted Lieu (D-Calif.) released a statement saying, "I am deeply disturbed by the allegation that the CIA lost its arsenal of hacking tools." Lieu, who has a degree in computer science, added:

The ramifications could be devastating. I am calling for an immediate congressional investigation. We need to know if the CIA lost control of its hacking tools, who may have those tools, and how do we now protect the privacy of Americans.

Since such a congressional investigation would likely be headed by either the House Intelligence committee or the Senate Intelligence committee.

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Lieu is not alone in his concerns or his willingness to take action. House Intelligence Committee Chairman Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) told the assembled press at a briefing last Tuesday, "These [leaks] appear to be very, very serious." He added, "We are extremely concerned, and we are following it closely."

If a congressional investigation had bipartisan support, it could avoid the typical political obstacles that might get in the way. Such an investigation would have the potential to upset the apple-cart of the surveillance state by uncovering wrongdoing within the CIA's hacking programs.

One possibility that the CIA has dismissed is that the agency could be shown to have used its cyber weapons to hack devices belonging to American citizens living in the United States. The CIA recently released a [statement](#) saying, in part:

It is also important to note that CIA is legally prohibited from conducting electronic surveillance targeting individuals here at home, including our fellow Americans, and CIA does not do so. CIA's activities are subject to rigorous oversight to ensure that they comply fully with U.S. law and the Constitution.



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That statement notwithstanding, the reality is that the agency has been accused in the past of hacking the computers and servers of Americans, including those used by a U.S. senator. In March 2014, Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) — who was, at the time the Intelligence Committee chairwoman — accused the CIA of searching the computer she used to store files for her committee’s investigation into the CIA torture program operated under President Bush.

In her remarks — made on the floor of the Senate — Feinstein said, “I have grave concerns that the CIA’s search may well have violated the separation of powers principle embodied in the United States Constitution.” Later that day, CIA Director John Brennan denied those claims in an appearance at the New World Order oriented Council on Foreign Relations. Brennan said that the CIA “has tried to work as collaboratively as possible with the committee on its report” and that “there have been many things written, and many things said — including, I understand, this morning — about the program, some fact and some pure fiction.”

He also told the globalist group, “As far as the allegations of ... CIA hacking into ... Senate computers, nothing could be further from the truth. I mean we wouldn’t do that,” adding that doing so would be “beyond ... the scope of reason in terms of what we would do.”

One need not be a Feinstein fan to imagine that her claims were probably more truthful than Brennan’s denials. After all, a brief perusal of the documents published last week by WikiLeaks shows that the CIA developed methods for hacking computers, mobile devices, and SmartTVs to turn them into surveillance devices to be used against their owners. As this writer said in a [previous article](#):

While the CIA claims that it never uses its investigative tools on American citizens in the United States, one is reminded that the agency doesn’t exactly have a stellar reputation for being truthful. Besides, how many terrorist camps in the Middle East have SmartTVs to watch their favorite programs on? The reality is that these tools are designed to penetrate the very types of devices used by ordinary citizens in Western countries.

Given the lack of accountability, lack of honesty, and lack of integrity that are par for the course where the CIA is concerned, the statement by the agency that “CIA’s activities are subject to rigorous oversight to ensure that they comply fully with U.S. law and the Constitution” would be laughable if so much weren’t at stake.

Concerned Americans should pressure Congress to investigate the CIA’s hacking programs to determine *at least* the following:

- Were American citizens living in the United States targeted by those programs?
- How did the CIA lose control of its arsenal of hacking weapons?
- Did the CIA even have the authorization to create that arsenal in the first place?
- If so, who granted such authorization?
- What was the cost of developing and using that arsenal?
- Who had access to the documents and files that comprised that arsenal?

In the absence of such an in-depth investigation, the CIA will simply start over, rebuild its arsenal, and continue in its unaccountable ways.



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