

# Clinton on Edward Snowden: Who are the real criminals?

Patrick Martin  
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Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Friday that whistleblower Edward Snowden should return to the United States and stand trial for his actions in leaking top-secret documents that exposed illegal and unconstitutional spying by the National Security Agency.

“If he wishes to return knowing he would be held accountable and also able to present a defence, that is his decision to make,” Clinton said in a video interview with the *Guardian* newspaper. The interview came during a brief visit to Great Britain to promote the flagging sales of her latest biography—and preview of a likely 2016 presidential campaign—*Hard Choices*.

Clinton’s remarks compressed all the standard lies about Snowden into a few sentences. She claimed that Snowden had “broke our laws”, thus presuming his guilt before any trial. She claimed he could have raised his objections to illegal NSA spying internally or to Congress, although others who did so were fired or framed up on false charges.

Clinton claimed he “sought the protection of Vladimir Putin,” although Snowden only ended up exiled in Russia because the Obama administration withdrew his passport to block his planned travel to South America, and threatened any countries that considered giving him asylum. She even claimed that there was an ongoing debate about domestic spying (which she described obscenely as “how to better balance security and liberty”) before Snowden’s revelations. This was followed by the preposterous assertion that Clinton did not know what charges had been filed against Snowden.

Clinton is only the latest of a string of representatives of the US political and national-security establishment to call for Snowden to return to the US and face charges. Some have suggested that the proper treatment

for Snowden in that case would be detention at Guantanamo and trial by military tribunal, where the prisoner is effectively gagged.

The *World Socialist Web Site* would certainly like to see Edward Snowden return to the United States. This return should be organized as part of a criminal trial—but not his own.

Snowden would be a major prosecution witness in a war crimes trial in which top officials in the Bush and Obama administrations would be defendants. And we should add to the list the chiefs of the NSA, CIA, and the various military services. In returning to the United States under these circumstances, Snowden would be provided legal immunity for the crucial information that he would provide.

It is not Snowden, but the political representatives of the US financial aristocracy and its military-intelligence apparatus are guilty of violations of the constitution and domestic and international law. In addition to systematic spying on the population without a warrant, they have waged illegal wars either directly or by proxy against the people of Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Mali and many, many other countries.

Moreover, it was during Clinton’s tenure at the State Department that the White House gave a blanket amnesty to CIA torture and all the other crimes of the Bush administration, and embarked on its own crimes: assassinating American citizens overseas, global mass surveillance of Internet messaging and telecommunications, illegal drone warfare in a dozen countries.

Clinton declares that Snowden must return to the United States. We hope that day will come, and that the courageous whistleblower will be greeted with a hero’s welcome and, perhaps, a ticker tape parade. As for the

trial, it won't be Snowden on the dock, but his accusers.



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