The question of control and regulation of government organizations concerning spying and information gathering.

**Key terms**

Politics: The political “game” surrounding the concrete law making

Policy: The political “substance” – the concrete lawmaking

Polity: The societal structures in which policy and politics is performed

Spying: synonymous with espionage and intelligence. The official act of secretively collecting and processing information from foreign countries or organizations.

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The business of spying have changed radically through the last couple of decades. Governmental information gathering might just be more intrusive than ever and is often maneuvering in legislative no-man’s land. Within the last half-of-a-century, there have been several defining moment, or critical point in time if you may.

## Spying as a “new threat”

We can describe the business of spying and information gathering as chameleonic. It always adapt to social, political and technological changes, so when the macro-political stage changes spying changes with it. In the early 1990’s the balance of power turned from bipolarity to unipolarity with the fall of the USSR. This combined with an extraordinary technological development has brought spying to what it is today: Complex, diverse and ever changing. Complex because it is not performed in a vacuum, but highly affected by politics and current policy, public opinion and often leads to legal undefined areas; Diverse because it is performed by multiple agencies both military and civilian, through an infinite number of different means towards a vaguely defined subject; and ever changing because it is constantly redefining it’s methods and definitions as new critical points erupts. One of the most defining moments in the modern history of intelligence is the revelations of former contractor turned fugitive Edward Snowden. Due to the complex nature of spying these revelations did not only inform the public about the intrusiveness of modern intelligence, but also radically changed the public opinion, the policies and the counter-measures to be taken against this form of spying. All of which leads to a radical change in the fundamentals of spying.

# Relevant links

[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

<http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/espionage>

<http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1344.html>