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INDEPENDENT NEWS FROM RUSSIA

Snowden Calls For Protest in 'Alternative' Christmas Message

By The Moscow Times

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Snowden's "alternative Christmas message" warns against the encroachment of government surveillance on the lives of individuals. **See-ming Lee □□□ SML**

Fugitive security leaker Edward Snowden has recorded an "alternative Christmas message" for Britain's Channel 4 television, saying that people need to stand up against massive government surveillance programs to preserve their privacy.

The broadcast, continues the channel's 20-year history of providing a spot for celebrated, infamous, comic or tragic figures of the year as an alternative to the Queen's Christmas message aired by other British broadcasters.

Past guests included a survivor of the 9/11 terrorist attack, characters from The Simpsons animated sitcom, former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and a chef who campaigned against processed foods.

In his message, recorded in Russia, Snowden said that George Orwell "warned us" of the danger of massive government surveillance in the dystopian novel "1984," newspaper the Guardian reported.

"A child born today will grow up with no conception of privacy at all. They'll never know what it means to have a private moment to themselves, an unrecorded, unanalyzed thought," Snowden said in the broadcast.

"And that's a problem because privacy matters; privacy is what allows us to determine who we are and who we want to be."

Snowden also lauded the political changes that have taken place since he released National Security Agency documents about U.S. government surveillance programs to journalists after fleeing to Hong Kong. He noted a recent White House panel recommendation to strip the NSA of its powers to collect virtually all Americans' phone records, and a federal judge's ruling that this kind of surveillance eroded the freedoms granted by the U.S. Constitution.

The Christmas message was the second time Snowden broke his silence this week. In an interview to the Washington Post, published on Tuesday, Snowden said he had "already won" and he considered his "mission..accomplished."

"As soon as the journalists were able to work, everything that I had been trying to do was validated," he said. "Because, remember, I didn't want to change society. I wanted to give society a chance to determine if it should change itself."

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