

Russian Spy Allegations 'Absurd,' Snowden Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Snowden speaking at an awards ceremony in October 2013 [TheWikiLeaksChannel / YouTube](#)

U.S. intelligence leaker Edward Snowden denied accusations by members of Congress that he was a spy for Russia or another foreign power when he took classified U.S. documents, saying that the charge "won't stick."

"This 'Russian spy' push is absurd," Snowden, who was granted temporary asylum in Russia after leaking documents detailing a widespread U.S. surveillance program, said in an interview to *The New Yorker* published Tuesday night. The interview was conducted by encrypted means from Moscow, the report said.

Snowden said that he "clearly and unambiguously acted alone, with no assistance from anyone, much less a government."

The heads of the U.S. House and Senate intelligence committees said on Sunday that they

would investigate whether the leaker might have been cooperating with Russian security services while working as an NSA defense contractor in the U.S.

"I believe there's a reason he ended up in the hands — the loving arms — of an FSB [Federal Security Service] agent in Moscow," Representative Mike Rogers, a Republican from Michigan and head of the House Intelligence Committee, told NBC's "Meet the Press."

Snowden said that the accusation "won't stick ... Because it's clearly false, and the American people are smarter than politicians think they are." The intelligence leaker also criticized media outlets for reporting "statements that the speakers themselves admit are sheer speculation."

Rogers said that "the nature of the information that was stolen" pointed at the interest of foreign security agencies, and the technical complexity of some of the steps involved in acquiring the files — which he believes to have been beyond Snowden's own capabilities — suggested that he had outside help.

Snowden maintained in his New Yorker interview that his original plan was not to go to Russia, saying, "the State Department decided they wanted me in Moscow, and cancelled my passport."

A senior FBI official said on Sunday that the bureau's conclusion remained that Snowden acted alone, The New York Times reported.

Head of the Senate Intelligence Committee Dianne Feinstein, a Democrat from California, also did not rule out the possibility of foreign cooperation and told NBC Sunday, "We don't know at this stage."

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