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Snowden Did Not Betray U.S. Interests, Says Putin

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Marco Garcia / AP

U.S. whistleblower Edward Snowden did not betray his country's interests by releasing details on state surveillance programs, according to Russian President Vladimir Putin.

In an interview with American director Oliver Stone, Putin said that Snowden, who was granted asylum in Russia in 2013, “was not a traitor.”

“[Snowden] didn’t betray the interests of his country, nor did he transfer any information to any other country," Putin said in fragments of the interview released by Hollywood Reporter.

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The Russian president said he did not support Snowden's actions, but agreed that U.S. surveillance had "gone too far."

"Trying to spy on your allies, if you really consider them allies and not vassals, is just indecent. Because it undermines trust. And it means that in the end, it deals damage to your own national security," Putin said.

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Putin was also quick to defend his own intelligence services. "[They] always conform to the law," he said.

The full interview is set to be aired on U.S. television channel Showtime on June 12-15.

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