

*Hi!*

*Simple truths can change the world.*

*Two years ago today, in a Hong Kong hotel room, three journalists and I waited nervously to see how the world would react to the revelation that the US National Security Agency (NSA) had been collecting records of millions of people around the world.*

*Though we have come a long way, the right to privacy remains under attack.*

*Last month, the NSA's invasive call-tracking program was declared unlawful by the US courts and it was disowned by Congress. And, after a White House investigation found that the program never stopped a single terrorist attack, even President Obama ordered it terminated.*

*This is because of you. This is the power of an informed public around the world.*

*Ending mass surveillance of private phone calls under the Patriot Act is a historic victory for the rights of US citizens. Yet while we have reformed this one program, many more remain in the US and other countries.*

*We need to push back and challenge the lawmakers who defend these programs. We need to make it clear that a vote in favor of mass surveillance is a vote in favor of illegal and ineffective violations of the right to privacy for all.*

*As I said at an Amnesty event in London this week, arguing that you don't care about the right to privacy because you have nothing to hide is no different than saying you don't care about free speech because you have nothing to say.*

*We can't take the right to privacy for granted, just like we can't take the right to free speech for granted. We can't let these invasions of our rights stand.*

*While we worked away in that hotel room in Hong Kong, there were moments when we worried we might have put our lives at risk for nothing – that the public would react with apathy to the publication of evidence that revealed that democratic governments had been collecting and storing billions of intimate records of innocent people.*

*Never have I been so grateful to have been so wrong.*

*Edward Snowden, for Amnesty International*

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