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White House Takes 2 Years to Reply to Snowden Pardon Petition

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President Obama's administration will not pardon whistleblower Edward Snowden, in spite of the 167,954 signatures gathered.

The White House has finally replied to a petition demanding the pardoning of whistleblower Edward Snowden, which has been circulating for more than two years when he left the United States. In spite of the 167,954 signatures, U.S. authorities posted a wholly negative response.

In 2013, the former NSA contractor leaked documents about the U.S. government's mass surveillance programs.

In addition, he revealed that Washington has been collecting the phone records of millions of U.S. and foreign nationals, as well as political leaders from around the world.

Snowden now lives in Moscow, having been granted political asylum by Russia.

U.S. presidential advisor on homeland security and counterterrorism, Lisa Monaco, dismissed the petition's demand this week for Snowden to be "issued a full, free, and absolute pardon," saying, "He should come home to the United States, and be judged by a jury of his peers."

"Instead of constructively addressing these issues, Mr. Snowden's dangerous decision to steal and disclose classified information had severe consequences for the security of our country and the people who work day in and day out to protect it," reads the reply.

"If he felt his actions were consistent with civil disobedience, then he should do what those who have taken issue with their own government do: Challenge it, speak out, engage in a constructive act of protest, and – importantly – accept the consequences of his actions."

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U.S. federal prosecutors have accused Snowden of espionage. He fled his country, and Russia granted him political asylum, where he currently resides in Moscow. Last month, the White House said Snowden must still face prosecution, despite the expiration of the surveillance program under the Patriot Act.

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