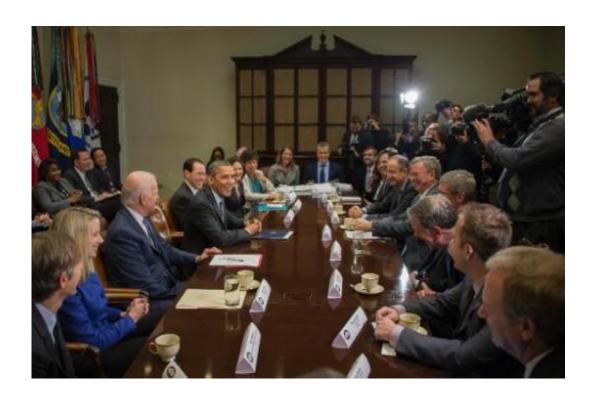# Obama meets Internet bosses on surveillance (Update)

March 21 2014

US President Barack Obama (4th L) and Vice President Joe Biden (3rd L) meet with executives from leading tech companies at the White House in Washington, December 17, 2013

US President Barack Obama met bosses from Facebook, Google and other Internet giants Friday to discuss plans to overhaul US spy agency surveillance practices which have infuriated the industry.

Obama sat down with company chiefs including Google executive

chairman Eric Schmidt and Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg, who said last week he had called the president personally to express frustration with the vast online intelligence dragnets.

The president "reiterated his administration's commitment to taking steps that can give people greater confidence that their rights are being protected while preserving important tools that keep us safe," a White House statement said.

Officials said other Internet executives at the meeting included Reed Hastings of Netflix, Drew Houston of Dropbox, Alexander Karp of Palantir and Aaron Levie of Box.

None of the executives spoke to waiting reporters when they left the White House after about two hours inside.

The scope of the National Security Agency spying network, revealed in leaks to the media by fugitive intelligence contractor Edward Snowden, has sparked tensions between the administration and Silicon Valley.

Recent reports have spurred the concern, including allegations that the NSA imitated a Facebook server to inject malware into computers to expand its intelligence collection capacity.

The report by former Guardian reporter Glenn Greenwald said the NSA malware could collect data automatically from millions of computers worldwide.

Some Snowden documents suggest the NSA had access to servers of Facebook, Google and Yahoo.

The firms have strongly denied giving any access except under a legal requirement, and have said more transparency about the programs could

reassure their customers.

Zuckerberg said in a Facebook post after speaking to Obama that he had expressed "frustration over the damage the government is creating for all of our future."

"Unfortunately, it seems like it will take a very long time for true full reform."

Obama introduced new guidelines for NSA programs in January but many of the proposed reforms are yet to be formulated by the agency itself and Congress.

Obama proposed ending the NSA's hoarding of bulk telephone metadata. Although he said the program must go on in some form, he was less specific about reforms on Internet surveillance.

The NSA and its supporters say the surveillance programs, which critics charge infringe civil liberties and the US constitution, are vital for tracing terror networks across the globe and thwarting attacks.

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