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US EMBASSY PICKETED

Data protection: Protestors rallied in Limpertsberg over the weekend in defence of American whistleblowers Edward Snowden and Bradley Manning.



Photo(s) : Chaos Computer Club Luxembourg/Creative Commons

More than two dozen demonstrators picketed against the treatment of two American whistleblowers across the street from the **US embassy** on Saturday morning. The protest was called by the **Freedom Not Fear Collective** to object to the “situation” faced by **Edward Snowden** and **Bradley Manning**.

Last month former US government intelligence contractor Snowden exposed a massive electronic surveillance programme operated by the American government. He has spent the last month in the international transit zone of Moscow’s Sheremetyevo airport as his political asylum request is being considered by the Russian government.

A military judge is currently deliberating the fate of Manning, a soldier in the US Army, after

he allegedly provided secret documents about the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to the **Wikileaks** website.

In addition to the release of Manning and Snowden, the demonstrators called for an end to governments' mass surveillance programmes, for the US to "stop bullying other countries and threatening them if they [do] not cooperate", and the abolition of intelligence services globally, including the Grand Duchy's **SREL**, Jan Guth of **Chaos Computer Club Luxembourg**, one of the demonstration organisers, told **Delano** on Monday.

The demonstrators launched letters in the form of paper airplanes--reminding US president Barack Obama of his human rights pledges--which they hoped would reach over the embassy walls, although most did not make it, he said.

In addition to the Chaos Computer Club, the Freedom Not Fear Collective includes **Déi Lénk**, **Déi Jonk Gréng**, **Jonk Sozialisten**, **Déi Jonk Lénk**, **UNEL**, **Attack Lëtzebuerg**, **Frënn vun der Ënn** and Luxembourg's **Pirate Party**.

Snowden and Manning showed "great courage" and whistleblowers should not be persecuted in a democracy, Pirate Party president **Sven Clement**, said in a statement on his party's website.

The protest began at 11 a.m. and Guth said the activities of protestors and the **Police Grande-Ducale** were both "peaceful". A post on **the club's Twitter feed** at 10:39 a.m. said the embassy--which is located in Limpertsberg--was guarded by "2 police cars, 2 motor bicycles and 7 police men" (photo).

A spokeswoman for the US embassy told **Delano** that she had "no information about this event".