VAMPIRE SQUID PISSY ABOUT RESPONSE TO DATA OCTOPUS DEMANDS

We've discussed US negotiations with Europe over the SWIFT database at length here. Basically, after the Lisbon Treaty went into effect last year, the EU Parliament balked at giving Americans free run of the SWIFT database. The EU and US put an interim agreement in place. Which the EU Parliament then overturned in February. The US then granted EU citizens privacy protections Americans don't have. But then the US started negotiating unilateral agreements with countries, using the Visa Waiver as blackmail to force individual countries into submission (and, some in Europe suggested, drumming up a terrorist threat to add to the pressure).

Alexander Alvaro, the home affairs spokesman of the Germany's Free Democratic Party (FDP) in the European Parliament, likened the US demands for data sharing to a "data octopus."

One of the cables from yesterday's WikiLeaks dump offers a window into the US perspective on the negotiation, in a cable from the US Embassy to Germany to the Secretary of State's Office. The cable speaks disparagingly of the FDP.

> Germany has become a difficult partner with regards to security-related information sharing initiatives following the September 27 national elections, which brought the FDP into the governing coalition. The FDP sees themselves as defenders of citizens' privacy rights and these views have led the FDP to oppose many of Germany's post-9/11 counterterrorism legislative proposals (see reftels). At times, the FDP's fixation on data privacy and

> protection issues looks to have come at the expense of the party forming responsible views on counterterrorism policy.
>
> [snip]
>
> The FDP returned to power after a ten-year foray in the opposition and key leaders lack experience in the practical matters of tackling real-world security issues in the Internet age. In our meetings we have made the point that countering terrorism in a globalized world, where terrorists and their supporters use open borders and information technology to quickly move people and financing, requires robust international data sharing. We need to also demonstrate that the U.S. has strong data privacy measures in place so that robust data sharing comes with robust data protections.

So Ambassador Philip Murphy's office bad mouths a party that had been in opposition for ten years to his colleague—including Hillary Clinton—who had been in opposition for eight, suggesting the Germans were too naive to understand what was good for them.

But there's one more detail that makes this disdain of those who dislike the data octopus cute.

Before Ambassador Philip Murphy was the DNC's Finance Chair for its last two years of apparently ignorant opposition, he spent 23 years at the Vampie Squid, Goldman Sachs.

So this amounts to one of the geniuses who crashed the global economy—not least with some pretty tricky international financial flows—badmouthing the Germans for not understanding the crime that can happen using those flows.