Reflective Writing Assignment

To my cybersecurity ethics course, I have met several essential themes that have changed the perspective in some ways. Three areas that have changed for me are Ethics of Surveillance, Privacy vs Security and finally, Cyber Security professionals’ responsibility. One of the earliest things I had to assess in a critical manner was the ethical issues that arose out of surveillance, particularly state surveillance. If more surveillance results in a safer society, it took time before I could consider surveillance limited to national security. However, with the help of the class discussions, case analysis, and with reference to different ethical theories such as utilitarianism and Kantian ethics my view has become more elaborate. I started noticing that surveillance can limit people’s liberties and privacy rights where there is no or little accountability. The 4th Amendment for instance at once become more important to me, because I learned how surveillance if left unabated, could stifle the exercise of free speech ad free assembly. Looking at the future I wish to be able to know how much security is worth infringing or violating one’s rights. The best thing is that there are liberties, and never should I forget that there are abuses of the surveillance powers. It is important to discern between ‘‘what is best for society,” and “what is best for particular human beings.”

Another area of which I gained more insight was the conflict between privacy and security. This issue is central in cybersecurity ethics, as it often presents a dilemma. We can ask several questions to enhance the topic, for instance, should we give up private life to gain more security? At first, I thought for myself that this idea would be perfect as the majority should always come first especially when it comes to security issues. Yet, after listening to arguments of privacy issues and analyzing case as a data leak or a mass data archiving for some purposes, I came to realize that security cannot be the reason for the loss of privacy. Out of all examples, I was more persuaded with the idea that privacy is necessary for liberty and the protection of democracy. I started paying attention to the notion of “data minimization” as I began to understand that having more data than needed is beneficial to no one. I want to remember that privacy is not the question of technology, but it is the question of morality. As for my further life decisions in cyberspace, privacy has appeared to me as a primary value, and I must wonder about the values of the tools I advise on using.

This course has questioned my everyday beliefs and has posed me to analyze the ethical perspective of cybersecurity. Specifically, I have realized key concerns more profoundly, where they are at the core of cybersecurity the concern of privacy vs. surveillance, security vs. personal freedom, and professional ethical responsibility. In the future, it would be useful to ensure that the problems resulting from considering the activity of information security unethical are eliminated, while supporting cyber progress in consideration with preserving the value of human life.