



Intelligence Chief Threatens Leakers with Lie Detector Tests

Now that Attorney General Eric Holder has [appointed two U.S. Attorneys to investigate the alleged "leaks"](#) of classified information many suspect originated in the White House, James Clapper (pictured at desk), the [Director of National Intelligence](#), is piling on by announcing that all intelligence agents and officials may be subjected to polygraph testing if they are suspected of leaking information to the media.



The new guidelines are designed to detect and discourage leaks from occurring in the intelligence community. In a statement, Clapper outlined the goal of the new policy:

These efforts will reinforce our professional values by sending a strong message that intelligence personnel always have, and always will, hold ourselves to the highest standard of professionalism. It is my sincere hope that others across the government will follow our lead. It is the right thing to do on behalf of the American people and in the interest of our national security.

Observers believe that the new protections come as a result of the recent "leaks" concerning American efforts to disrupt Iran's nuclear weapons development program. The information allegedly "leaked" was first published in the *New York Times* and provided specific descriptions of several operations initiated by President Obama in the "war on terror." Among the revelations included in the *New York Times* piece were details of drone strikes and the deployment of the Stuxnet virus, the computer attack aimed at Iran's nuclear infrastructure.

Given the President's obvious pride in his remote control killing program and the apparent success of the cyber-attack on Iran, there is rampant speculation that the information that was given to the *New York Times* was less a leak and more an example of the White House blowing its own horn.

Some stories related to the leaks report that it would have been impossible for information so classified and so detailed to have been obtained without either the knowledge or the cooperation of the Obama administration.

While the President has designated himself (or his underlings) the decider in cases of suspected unauthorized disclosures of sensitive information by members of his own executive branch, he has also set himself up as the prosecutor-in-chief of all those who deign to disclose information that could trip him up in his quest to create the world's largest and most efficient surveillance state.

As the [New York Times reports](#), "the Obama Administration has already prosecuted six leak-related cases...." Indeed it has.

Take the deplorable treatment of Thomas Drake. Drake was a senior executive at the National Security Agency who made the mistake of revealing to the *Baltimore Sun* that the NSA's Trailblazer Project, a project intended to analyze data carried on in the United States and elsewhere through the Internet, cell phones, and emails, not only violated the Fourth Amendment's proscription against unwarranted



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searches and seizures, but it was a “billion-dollar computer boondoggle.”

In April 2010, Drake was indicted by a federal grand jury of several crimes, including violation of the Espionage Act. If convicted of the charges against him, Drake faced up to 35 years in federal prison.

Early in the summer of 2011, after several exposés ran in newspapers and on television, the Obama administration dropped all the charges against Drake in return for Drake’s guilty plea to a misdemeanor of misusing NSA computers. Drake was sentenced to one year of probation and community service.

And there is the equally indefensible treatment of Army Private Bradley Manning, who is currently being court-martialed for allegedly passing classified data while deployed in Afghanistan.

In what is described as “the biggest leak of classified information in U.S. history,” Manning is accused of passing over 700,000 documents and video clips to WikiLeaks, the widely known website devoted to exposing government corruption throughout the world.

If convicted of the charge of giving aid to the enemy, Manning could face life imprisonment. The maximum penalty for the other charges he faces is 150 years combined.

[In his statement](#), Clapper lays out the President’s two-pronged plan for catching these leaks before they drip into the mainstream media.

First, the government will add a question related to unauthorized disclosure of classified information to the counterintelligence lie detector test taken by all those who apply to work within the intelligence community (CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the Department of Energy, the FBI, the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, the National Reconnaissance Office, and the National Security Agency).

Second, Clapper asks that the the Intelligence Community Inspector General conduct independent investigations of selected unauthorized disclosure cases “when prosecution is declined by the Department of Justice.” To accomplish this goal, the Intelligence Community Inspector General will create a task force that will investigate these cases.

Congressmen from both sides of the aisle congratulated Clapper on his announcement.

“We will need to investigate further steps to stop unauthorized disclosures and bring those responsible to justice,” said [Representative Adam B. Schiff](#) (D-Calif.), a member of the House Intelligence Committee. “While the new steps announced by Clapper only apply to the intelligence community, we have to examine new methods of stopping others with access to sensitive and classified information from leaking it as well.”

As [quoted in the New York Times](#), the Republican Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee echoed his colleague’s sentiment. Mike Rogers (R-Mich.) praised Clapper’s announcement as “a good first step,” but did not take off the table the possibility of congressional consideration of legislation aimed at eliminating the leaks.

“The leaking of classified national security information is intolerable at any level, but the parade of recent leaks requires action. We must break this culture of unauthorized disclosures,” Rogers said in a statement.

The culture is not one of too many leaks, rather it is one where authorized unauthorized leaks are encouraged if the White House believes that they will improve their image. Whereas, if anyone in government service dares speak out about government actions that are not only unconstitutional but possibly illegal, [President Obama’s retribution will be swift and severe](#).



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Naturally, a spokesman for the White House rejected this assertion, saying, “I am telling you that this administration—well, that it’s our view, as it is the view of everybody who handles classified information, that information is classified for a reason; that it is kept secret, it is intended not to be publicized because publicizing it would pose a threat to our national security.”

President Obama spoke similarly recently when confronted at a press conference with the idea that he or someone in his administration was purposefully providing classified information to reporters in order to highlight “successes” in his foreign policy.

“The notion that my White House would purposely release classified national security information is offensive,” the president. “It is wrong, and people, I think, need to have a better sense of how I approach this office and how the people around me here approach this office.”

“We are dealing with issues that can touch on the safety and security of the American people, our families, or our military personnel or our allies. And so we don’t play with that.”

Many aren’t so sure. Amy Bennett, assistant director at OpenTheGovernment.org, said that Monday’s announcement showed that despite the president’s claim that more weapons are required to defeat the threat that leaks pose to our national security, the administration already has an effective anti-leak arsenal.

“We’re really concerned that in Congress’s zeal to crack down on leakers, it’s going to hastily pass legislation that really undercuts people’s right to know what their government is doing,” Bennett said [in a statement quoted by *The Hill*](#).

All Americans should be concerned that the president has now granted himself the power to decide which leaks will remain open and which will be closed. This usurpation places the president and the entire federal government behind a one-way mirror that allows the government to keep citizens under close surveillance while keeping its own actions hidden in darkness.



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