



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on June 11, 2012

## Republicans Accuse White House of Using Leaks to Help Obama Campaign

Representative Peter King (R-N.Y., pictured) and other Republicans in Congress have [accused](#) President Obama of using security leaks that detail the counter-terror programs of his administration to “build his reputation” before the November elections.

“He’s trying to be like George Patton or John Wayne,” contended King, Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, adding:



This is the most shameful cascade of leaks I’ve ever heard [of] or seen in government. It’s clear from those stories this came right from the White House, came right from the National Security Council, came right from the Situation Room. ... It has to lead to people very high up in the administration in his White House.

I give him credit for a lot that he’s done on overseas terrorism. There’s no need, though, to put the nation’s security at risk by trying to build up his reputation for the presidential election in November.

The *International Business Times* observed, “Thanks to the upcoming election, the controversy has also launched a partisan debate about whether or not a Washington insider is leaking information to help Obama beat Republican candidate Mitt Romney in the fall.” It added that the White House and Congress “are furious over the possibility of unauthorized disclosures of top secret information.”

Last week, Attorney General Eric Holder [assigned](#) two prosecutors to investigate the leaks of classified documents that detail the Obama administration’s approach to counter-terrorism including the “Kill List” related to the use of drones.

U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Ronald Machen Jr. and U.S. Attorney for the District of Maryland Rod Rosenstein will lead separate [FBI](#) investigations into who may have given reporters top secret information about national security operations.

“I have every confidence in their abilities to doggedly follow the facts and the evidence in the pursuit of justice wherever it leads,” Holder averred.

The Huffington Post reports that a group of Congressmen, including Senator John McCain (R-Ariz.), has condemned the leaks and launched an investigation into the source last Wednesday.

“It is difficult to escape the conclusion that these recent leaks of highly classified information, all of which have the effect of making the president look strong and decisive on national security in the middle of his re-election campaign, have a deeper political motivation,” said McCain, who sits on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) agreed, observing, “I don’t think you have to be Sherlock Holmes to figure out what is going on here. You’ve had three leaks of intelligence that paint the president as a strong leader.”



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Ironically, not everyone believes that an aggressive use of drones against mere suspects makes a strong leader or a decisive champion of national security.

Addressing some of the information about the kill lists revealed in the leaks, Judge Andrew Napolitano [commented](#):

Obama has argued that his careful consideration of each person he orders killed and the narrow use of deadly force are an adequate and constitutional substitute for due process. The Constitution provides for no such thing. He has also argued that the use of drones to do his killing is humane since they are “surgical” and only kill their targets. We know that is incorrect. And he has argued that these killings are consistent with our values. What is he talking about? The essence of our values is the rule of law, not the rule of presidents.

“This needs to be fair. It shouldn’t be a partisan thing. This should really be about catching the folks who are leaking some very damaging national security information,” Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Mich.), chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said on CBS’s *Face the Nation*. He added, “If it goes to the NSC or [Department of Defense] or FBI, then they have to go there.”

President Obama has denied that either he or his aides leaked the information. “The notion that my [White House](#) would purposefully release classified national security information is offensive, it’s wrong,” Obama said in a press briefing on Friday.

Both Press Secretary Jay Carney and David Axelrod, a top advisor to Obama, have come to the President’s defense.

“The president feels very strongly that we must prevent leaks of classified or sensitive information that could risk ongoing counter-terrorism or intelligence operations,” Carney said Thursday. He called Senator McCain’s charge “grossly irresponsible.”

On ABC’s *This Week*, David Axelrod commented: “I can’t say that there weren’t leaks. There were obvious leaks, but they weren’t from the White House.” He added that the President understands that “when he commits people to missions, that their lives are at stake, and the safety of Americans are at stake — and the last thing that he would countenance or anybody around him would countenance are leaks that would jeopardize the security of Americans on these secret missions, and the success of those missions.”

Likewise, Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) has also defended the White House, asserting that she does not believe it leaked information, and expressing her hope that the investigation will “get to a relatively quick disposition.”

But a number of Republican lawmakers have already raised questions on whether the investigators can act independently of the Obama administration. King is an outspoken skeptic, questioning just how the attorneys would distribute justice if they discover that the leaks did in fact come from the White House.

Meanwhile, some analysts have noticed a major disparity in how these leaks are being handled in comparison with the WikiLeaks cases and the aggressive measures taken against Pfc. Bradley Manning, the low-level Army intelligence analyst who is facing a court martial for having passed over 700,000 classified documents and video clips to WikiLeaks.

“There is a discernible pattern of selective prosecution,” affirmed Steven Aftergood, who tracks classified information policy for the Federation of American Scientists. “There has never been an agency head or an assistant secretary or senior agency official who has been prosecuted the way the



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mid-level and lower individuals have.”

McCain ripped into the administration for the inconsistent application of policy. “The fact that this administration would aggressively pursue leaks perpetrated by a 22-year-old Army private in the ‘Wikileaks’ matter and former CIA employees in other leaks cases, but apparently sanction leaks made by senior administration officials for political purposes, is simply unacceptable,” he said.



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