

OBAMA APPROVES RELEASING CLASSIFIED INFORMATION TO ATTACK SNOWDEN FOR LEAKING CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Kudos to Shane Harris who, unlike a number of other reporters, brought the appropriate skepticism to Mike Rogers and Dutch Ruppensberger's attempt to fearmonger Edward Snowden's leaks. Not only did Harris use the correct verb tense – "could" as opposed to "has" – to describe documents describing the activities of the Armed Services that have not yet been released (and note, implicitly Rogers and Rupp are saying the risk is to forces in the field but not within the domestic US). But he repeatedly noted Rogers and Rupp's complete failure to provide any evidence:

But the lawmakers – who are working in coordination with the Obama administration and are trying to counter the narrative that Snowden is a heroic whistleblower – offered no specific examples to substantiate their claims.

[snip]

The lawmakers cited no articles or specific documents to support that claim.

[snip]

But the spokesman did not say what, if any, conclusions the task force had reached about actual damage caused by documents Snowden took, regardless of whether they've been disclosed or not.

My favorite part of Harris' piece, however, is

the way he makes clear that Rogers and Rupp are selectively releasing classified information – with the Administration’s approval – to complain about Snowden releasing classified information.

A congressional staffer who is familiar with the report’s findings said that the lawmakers chose to make some of its contents public in order to counter what they see as a false impression of Snowden as a principled whistleblower who disclosed abuses of power.

“Snowden has been made out by some people to be a hero. What we need to do is really look at the effect of his leaks and see that what he’s done is really harm our country and put citizens at risk. The purpose [of releasing some findings] is to clear the record and show that he’s not a hero,” the staffer told Foreign Policy.

The staffer said that the administration approved the information that the lawmakers disclosed in advance.

Because some leaky pigs are more equal than other leaky pigs.