

THE GRAY LADY'S GRAY AREA

Byron Calame pretends to come clean today, forcing the NYT to admit that it knew about the NSA domestic spying story before the 2004 elections. Come clean, you say? Then he must have revealed precisely when Risen first had the story, right?

Not really.

Calame comes closest to revealing precisely when the NYT had the NSA story when he says,

Holding a fresh draft of the story just days before the election also was an issue of fairness, Mr. Keller said. I agree that candidates affected by a negative article deserve to have time "several days to a week" to get their response disseminated before voters head to the polls. [my emphasis]

So we're to assume, I guess, that the decision to hold the story was made closer than "several days" or "a week" to the election, but before the election, just days before.