

DIANNE FEINSTEIN: WE NEED TO COLLECT DATA ON EVERY SINGLE AMERICAN BECAUSE WE CAN'T CONTROL OUR INFORMANTS

I will have far, far more to say about the claims about the various surveillance programs aired on the Sunday shows today.

But this is absolutely batshit crazy.

FEINSTEIN: Well, of course, balance is a difficult thing to actually identify what it is, but I can tell you this: These programs are within the law. The [Section 215] business records section is reviewed by a federal judge every 90 days. It should be noted that the document that was released that was under seal, which reauthorized the program for another 90 days, came along with a second document that placed and discussed the strictures on the program. That document was not released.

So here's what happens with that program. The program is essentially walled off within the NSA. There are limited numbers of people who have access to it. The only thing taken, as has been correctly expressed, is not content of a conversation, but the information that is generally on your telephone bill, which has been held not to be private personal property by the Supreme Court.

If there is strong suspicion that a terrorist outside of the country is trying to reach someone on the inside of the country, those numbers then can be

obtained. If you want to collect content on the American, then a court order is issued.

So, the program has been used. Two cases have been declassified. One of them is the case of David Headley, who went to Mumbai, to the Taj hotel, and scoped it out for the terrorist attack. [my emphasis]

Dianne Feinstein says that one of the two plots where Section 215 ~~prevented an attack~~ was used (the other, about Najibullah Zazi, is equally batshit crazy, but I'll return to that) is the Mumbai attack.

What's she referring to is tracking our own informant, David Headley.

And it didn't prevent any attack. The Mumbai attack was successful.

Our own informant. A successful attack. That's her celebration of success 215's use.

So her assertion is we need to collect metadata on every single American because DEA can't keep control of its informants.

Update: Technically DiFi didn't say this was a success, just that it had been used. I've edited the post accordingly.