

BREAKING! INFORMATION “IS COLLECTED” ON MILLIONS OF AMERICANS

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Obama just gave a press conference to announce some changes to FISA. They include four things:

1. Making some changes to the dragnet program
2. Appointing a privacy officer to do for NSA what DOJ's IG has done competently in the past but isn't encouraged to do now
3. Appointing an adversary for major decisions at FISC to represent civil liberties' side
4. Having a committee review the programs technically to see if we can improve them (this was something Ron Wyden and Mark Udall pressed for last year but got shot down on)

In addition, the Administration released a pretty useless white paper on the dragnet program. I'll have more substantive comments about it later, but for now, note this sentence:

Likewise, the program does not violate the First Amendment, particularly given that the **telephony metadata is collected** to serve as an investigative tool in

authorized investigations of
international terrorism. [my emphasis]

Yeah, sure, they don't even try to offer some explanation of how an associational database of all Americans doesn't violate the Freedom of Assembly.

But at least they're finally admitting they do too "collect" data on millions of Americans.

It's well past time to fire James Clapper.

Update: Bobby Chesney offers some real analysis. Note I got the order wrong and the Privacy Officer bullet is actually a broader "more transparency."