

REALITY WINNER CLAIMS NSA'S COLLECTION ON RUSSIANS HAD ALREADY BEEN COMPROMISED

I guess today is Reality Winner day.

As Trevor Timm describes, Winner is trying to get comments she made in an interview with the FBI thrown out, arguing she was for legal purposes in custody yet did not receive a Miranda warning. In support of that argument, she submitted a declaration describing what happened to her that day – basically how 10 male FBI agents showed up to search her house, with two taking her to a back room to interrogate her.

In addition to all the details about how many male FBI agents there were and how they had her stand in the fenced yard when they were done interrogating her, she describes how she answered when they asked whether she believed she had compromised sources and methods.

16. Law enforcement specifically asked me whether I believed the disclosure of the document compromised the “sources and methods” contained in the document, to which I advised that it was likely those “sources and methods” had already been compromised.

17. I specifically told law enforcement that, “whatever we were using had already been compromised, and that this report was just going to be like a one drop in the bucket.”

Critics will argue that this wasn't Winner's operational judgment to make, though it does reveal that even in this interview, she attested

that she didn't think her leak would damage intelligence.

But I'm interested in her claim that these collection points were already burned.

While many people complain that the IC has withheld too much information about the Russian hack, there are some details that have been released that are downright surprising. Sure, we don't know who leaked the Steele dossier, but it may have led to the exposure (and possible execution) of his sources. We do know, however, that DOJ itself revealed (in the Yahoo indictment) that it collected email conversations of FSB officers among themselves. We've heard vague reporting, too, that Russians figured out they were tapped and went silent accordingly. One early report I got about Russia's involvement in the DNC hack explained that the suspected hackers rolled up a good deal of their infrastructure after it was exposed.

But Winner (who's an analyst, remember, not a technical person) claims, that "whatever we were using had already been compromised" with apparent confidence.

Which raises questions whether that's based on actual knowledge of how Russians were responding to our spying.