

I'M SHOCKED, SHOCKED, TO FIND THAT LYING IS GOING ON IN THE SENATE

As I noted here, given the content of the radical bill Richard Burr introduced on Friday, it appears likely that his claim Section 215 supported an IP dragnet was no misstatement, as he claimed when I called him on it. But that – and the misstatements Mitch McConnell made on Friday about the bill – are not the only lies the authoritarians have been telling.

Just after USA F-ReDux failed in the Senate Friday night and Barbara Boxer tried to call it back up for a vote, Mitch McConnell falsely claimed that Dianne Feinstein was involved in Burr's radical bill. Senator Feinstein actually had to interrupt and point out that not only doesn't she think Burr's bill is the way to go, but that pushing for it might put all the expiring provisions at risk. (h/t Steven Aftergood for pulling Congressional Research Service records)

McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senate has demonstrated that the House-passed bill lacks the support of 60 Senators. I would urge a "yes" vote on the 2-month extension. Senator Burr, the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, and Senator Feinstein, the ranking member, as we all know, have been working on a proposal that they think would improve the version that the Senate has not accepted that the House sent over. It would allow the committee to work on this bill, refine it, and bring it before us for consideration. So the 2-month extension, it strikes me, would be in the best interest of getting an outcome that is acceptable to both the Senate and the House and hopefully the President.

[snip]

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, if I may
a point of personal privilege. Mr.
President, I would like to correct the
majority leader, regretfully. I did not
support the Burr bill. I do not believe
that is the way to go. I have taken a
good look at this. For those who want
reform and want to prevent the
government from holding the data, the
FREEDOM Act is the only way to do it.
The House has passed it. The President
wants it. All of the intelligence
personnel have agreed to it, and I think
not to pass that bill is really to throw
the whole program—that whole section 215
as well as the whole business records,
the “lone wolf,” the roving
wiretaps—into serious legal jeopardy.

That is, of course, precisely what has
happened. In his bid to ram through Burr’s
expanded dragnet, Mitch has now made it
increasingly likely that all the expiring
provisions will lapse on June 1.