

HOUSE INTELLIGENCE PARROT: THESE PROGRAMS ARE NOT SECRET...

... but it's a grave danger for you to know about them.

Bob Minehart, a staffer for Democrats (presumably Dutch Ruppersberger) on the House Intelligence Committee, has put together a pair of talking point documents for members of the House to talk about the programs revealed by the Guardian last week. (I found out Minehart is the author by checking the documents' metadata.) The talking points largely track what James Clapper released, though with a few differences that may come from Mike Rogers which I may return to.

The talking points claim the reporting on the programs have inaccuracies.

The articles referenced above contain numerous inaccuracies that imply the United States Government is spying on Americans. That is just plain false.

But the documents include a number of claims that are meaningless, given the underlying standards involved.

The FISA Court authorizes intelligence collection only after the Intelligence Community has proven its case, based on underlying facts and investigations.

The most pathetic part of these talking points, however, is the claim that these are not secret programs. Not the Section 215 dragnet of every Americans' call data.

There is no secret program involved here – it is strictly authorized by a U.S. statute.

And not the direct access to Internet companies data with just a 51% certainty that the data collected is foreign.

There is no secret program involved – it is strictly authorized by a U.S. statute.

But in spite of this claim that massive dragnets deceitfully denied in Congressional hearings are not secret, the PRISM-related set still warns about what grave danger the leak of the information created.

The unauthorized disclosure of information about this critical legal tool puts our national security in grave danger, puts Americans at risk of terrorist and cyber attacks, and puts our military intelligence resources in danger of being revealed to our adversaries.

These are not secret programs, Dutch Ruppertsberger wants you to know. But revealing them will kill us all.