

WHY ISN'T NEIL MACBRIDE INVESTIGATING THE ALLEGED UNDIEBOMB 2.0 LEAK?

I'll have more general comments about today's Senate Judiciary Committee oversight scrum and what it says about leak investigations. But I want to note a very small point Eric Holder made.

When trying to explain to the Republicans why it made sense for DC US Attorney Ronald Machen and Maryland US Attorney Rod Rosenstein, he said there parts of the matters under investigation in their districts. In other words, he assigned the US Attorneys according to jurisdiction (or, to be cynical, he just made a big show of having the people who should investigate these matters anyway investigate them).

But consider. The three alleged leaks that might be investigated are:

- UndieBomb 2.0
- StuxNet
- Drone targeting

Now, StuxNet is easy. Rosenstein's district includes NSA; StuxNet is a NSA project; therefore it's probably safe to assume he's investigating that alleged leak.

Then things get confusing. It would make sense to investigate drone targeting in DC, which is where stories portrayed the Terror Tuesday meetings occurring, and therefore to have Machen lead that investigation, and that may well be happening. Though drone targeting is the one alleged leak that public reports haven't made clear have been included in the scope of the investigations. Let's just assume that if drone

targeting is being investigated, it is being done by Machen.

I'm more confused still about who is investigating the UndieBomb 2.0 alleged leak. There seems to be little doubt that alleged leak is being investigated. But why isn't being investigated in Eastern District of VA?

CIA thwarted a plot!!! the headlines read, until it became clear that it was really a Saudi investigation and it wasn't a plot but a sting. Yet the CIA was definitely involved, at least according to all the reporting on the story. And the US Attorney from EDVA—Neil MacBride—would have a jurisdiction over CIA issues that is just as strong as the US Attorney from MD's jurisdiction over NSA investigations.

These spooky agencies like keeping their investigations close to home.

So why didn't Holder include MacBride in the dog-and-pony show last week?

There are several possibilities, all curious:

- FBI has reason to believe the main leak did come from John Brennan's conference call with Richard Clarke and Fran Fragos Townsend, which he placed from the White House
- The op wasn't run out of CIA after all, but was instead liaised with the Saudis through the NSC or State
- The story never really existed, and the Saudis just fed us the story of an UndieBomb to give an excuse to start bombing insurgents in Yemen

Maybe there's some entirely different, completely bureaucratically boring explanation. But Holder's comment about district based selection (he didn't use the word jurisdiction, though) suggests it should have been logical for MacBride to take the lead on UndieBomb 2.0. But he isn't.

Why not?