

Report Says White House Knew CIA Spied on Senate



Washington, January 16 (RHC)-- The White House had been aware of the CIA's plan to snoop on a Senate panel investigation of the agency's torture techniques and did not stop it, according to a report on Capitol Hill.

CIA Director John Brennan gained the White House's approval before ordering his personnel to spy on a computer drive used by the Senate Intelligence Committee that was investigating the agency's torture program, showed a recent report by the CIA's Office of the Inspector General. The report was completed in July 2014 but had not been released by the agency until Wednesday.

According to the report, Brennan consulted White House chief of staff Denis McDonough before asking his employees to determine the sensitivity of internal documents gathered by the Senate investigators. In January 2014, the CIA personnel became worried about whether a set of its sensitive documents known as the Panetta Review had been obtained by the staff of the then-Senate Intelligence Committee chair Dianne Feinstein.

Feinstein's employees were conducting their investigation into CIA torture program at a secure off-site CIA facility to complete a 6,600-page report. The CIA assigned five of its staff members including two lawyers and three IT personnel to snoop on a walled-off hard drive on the Senate's side of a shared computer network.

In December, the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee released a drastically redacted summary of its report on the CIA's harsh torture methods used on the so-called terror suspects after the September 11, 2001 attacks. The torture techniques include waterboarding, sleep deprivation, mock executions and threats that the relatives of the prisoners would be sexually abused.

John Brennan has defended the torture program but admitted that some of the agents used "unauthorized, abhorrent" torture techniques against the terror suspects.

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