

NSA urged officials to justify surveillance by mentioning 9/11

by Travis Gettys via quill - Raw Story *Thursday, Oct 31 2013, 11:19am*

international / prose / post

The National Security Agency apparently ripped a page from Rudy Giuliani's campaign [playbook](#) and told its officials to cite the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks as justification for mass surveillance activities.



[Al Jazeera](#) obtained a document through a Freedom of Information Act request that showed talking points and suggested statements for NSA officials as the existence and scope of the programs were reported after revelations made by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden.

Under the subhead, "Sound Bites That Resonate," the [29-page document](#) suggested that officials say they'd "much prefer to be here today explaining these programs, than explaining another 9/11 event that we were not able to prevent."

Gen. Keith Alexander, the NSA chief, used a variation of that phrase when he testified June 18 before Congress shortly after the data collection activities were revealed.

"It is much more important for this country that we defend this nation and take the beatings than it is to give up a program that would result in this nation being attacked," Alexander told lawmakers.

An NSA representative referred Al Jazeera to Alexander's statement when a reporter asked for comment on the document.

The document was prepared for agency officials facing questions about the mass spying program, whose scope continues to be revealed using documents leaked by Snowden to journalists Glenn Greenwald, Barton Gellman and others.

Documents used by the agency to prepare the talking points have not yet been turned over to Al Jazeera, which filed a request for them June 13, because NSA officials say they require additional review before they can be released.

The 9/11 attacks are also referenced in a 13-point "Media Leaks One Card" to explain the rationale behind the surveillance programs, including the bullet-pointed "First responsibility is to defend the nation" and "NSA and its partners must make sure we connect the dots so that the nation is never attacked again like it was on 9/11."

The talking points list also encourages officials to frequently mention the word, "lawful," say that,

“post-9/11 we made several changes and added a number of capabilities to enable us to connect the dots.”

The document urges officials to claim that U.S. “allies have benefited ... just as we have.”

Officials are encouraged to say that there had not been any “willful violations” of civil liberties if the question was raised and claim the NSA was committed to “upholding the privacy and civil liberties of the American people.”

© 2013 AFP

<http://tinyurl.com/n5f8zo7>

Jungle Drum Prose/Poetry. <http://jungledrum.lingama.net/news/story-872.html>