

LINKS, JULY 15, 2011

In an effort to keep track of breaking stories without necessarily doing a post on all of them, I'm going to start doing a post of links every day. I'll explain more on what I'm trying to achieve with this next week. And I expect most days the post will be longer than this. But in case you were looking for reading material over the weekend...

Thomas Drake: Drake was sentenced to a year of probation today for exceeding the authorized use of a computer. I guess the only revenge Michael Hayden gets on Drake for whistleblowing about SAIC's waste is the knowledge that he's ruined Drake's career. That, and that this case further institutionalizes the government's efforts to treat leaks as espionage.

Debt Limit Distractions: The geniuses in DC are still squabbling over how much worse to make the recession by cutting government spending while money is practically free. Obama's solution for jobs continues to be sending them overseas. Meanwhile, at a house party near, you, real people will be talking about jobs. And remember how David Plouffe claimed that Americans were feeling better about their own economic situations? They're not.

More Bank Bailouts and Austerity in Europe: Meanwhile, country after country in Europe faces big lending costs because the banksters haven't taken their share of losses from the crash, with Ireland leading the way. And Italy pushed through its own austerity measures today, continuing the push among most developed nations to alter the social contract to help the banks.

Murdoch Scandal: Several big developments today: Both Rebekah Brooks and Les Hinton resigned today. Of note, Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, the Saudi who owns a big chunk of News Corp, had called for Brooks' resignation. Meanwhile, in the US, DOJ has announced it is investigating News Corp, though the investigation may be

limited to whether or not the company hacked into the phones of 9/11 victims. And News Corp has hired Brendan Sullivan Jr (lawyer to both Ted Stevens and Ollie North, from Williams & Connolly).

Libya: The US and a slew of other nations have recognized Libyan rebels as the legitimate government of Libya. While the WaPo explains the US' earlier hesitation stemmed from concerns about governance, Harold Koh had also said—in response to a question from Senator Webb—that the US was sustaining its recognition of Qaddafi because it made it easier to hold him responsible for his actions. I guess now we can assassinate him without violating our bans on such things? It will also give the US and other nations the ability to unfreeze assets.

The War on Terrorism our Constitution:

Yesterday, DOJ indicted someone for linking to bomb-making instructions. Marty Lederman assesses the indictment in light of historical precedent and suggests there may be problems with both charges. Today, the DC Circuit Court ruled that TSA could continue to use naked scanners.

Corporate Torture: There have been two circuit decisions in the last week finding that corporations can held liable for torture. bmaz or I will have more comment on these in the near future. But the short version is—this question is definitely headed for SCOTUS.