60 MINUTES BETTERS THEIR BENGHAZI DEBACLE: PIRATES AHOY! AND CHINESE GLOBAL SUICIDE BOMBERS

I will have more to say about tonight's 60 Minutes debacle.

But for now, let me make three points.

First, John Miller should never work in journalism again (he's reportedly prepping to run NYPD's intelligence shop, so he may not need to). There were numerous examples in tonight's 60 Minutes piece where even a mildly curious journalist would have asked follow-up questions. But given that Miller, who has an ODNI and FBI background, knows this stuff, his failure to ask obvious follow-up questions is proof this was not at all about journalism.

Of particular note that everyone is getting snookered on: Lying Keith Alexander said that NSA only listens to the phone calls of 60 US persons. When Miller sort of asked a follow-up, Alexander seemed to reiterate that this is NSA.

Of course, FBI formally owns the wiretapping of US persons in the US. So that 60 number may only be Americans we wiretap overseas. One of those follow-up questions that might have been useful.

Then there was the NSA's effort to show us what contact chaining looks like. As a threshold matter, they had subbed out all the real phone numbers with "555-1212" type numbers. Which means the computer was altered for TV.

Then, CBS showed an NSA analyst contact chaining off pirates.

Yes, pirates!

Aside from opening up NSA to the claim that we're now all 3 degrees of Captain Hook, the pirate operation of course means the claims of the analyst only apply to EO 12333 collection (cause pirates are almost never US persons).

That is, we should assume it is completely meaningless as a demonstration of what the US phone dragnet is about.

Then there's the scary BIOS plot.

I'll need to go back and review this, but the jist of the scary claim at the heart of the report is that the NSA caught China planning a BIOS plot to shut down the global economy.

To.

Shut.

Down.

The.

Global.

Economy.

Of course, if that happened, it'd mean a goodly percentage of China's 1.3 billion people would go hungry, which would lead to unbelievable chaos in China, which would mean the collapse of the state in China, the one thing the Chinese elite want to prevent more than anything.

But the NSA wants us to believe that this was actually going to happen.

That China was effectively going to set off a global suicide bomb. Strap on the economy in a cyber-suicide vest and … KABOOOOOOM!

And the NSA heroically thwarted that attack.

That's what they want us to believe and some people who call themselves reporters are reporting as fact.