

LINKS, 4/22/12

I was never able to keep up with my goal of doing daily link posts last year. That said, there's so much out today that I want to at least note that I can't keep up with my own posting unless I dump all these here.

Steven Aftergood notes that your elected representatives are clarmoring for more leak prosecutions.

The EU just caved to US demands for EU passenger data. With Israel dictating no fly lists to Europe and Julian Assange's lawyer being placed on an "inhibited" list with no explanation, this probably will lead to the US unilaterally dictating who can fly where in this world.

The Guardian asked pastor Terry Jones whether he bears any responsibility for the deaths he may cause if he insists on conducting another Quran burning. The Guardian doesn't appear to have asked DOD, which is trying to convince Jones not to conduct the burning, why it doesn't first take responsibility for ending the anti-Muslim abuses and the Quran burning committed by some troops.

In addition to the cooperation with Libya in exposing refugees in the UK, the documents liberated in Libya last year also describe how MI6 collaborated with Moammar Qaddafi to set up a radical mosque in some Western European country to use as bait for Islamic extremists.

Obama just issued an Executive Order basically saying that Syria and Iran should not be able to use tech to crack down on the opposition in the same way the US does.

Apparently we don't have enough spies so now DOD is rolling out a new (actually, newly renamed) Clandestine Service.

Micah Zenko addresses the stupidity behind refusing to acknowledge our Third War—the drone one—publicly.

As Jack Goldsmith notes in Charlie Savage's piece describing Obama's increasing reliance on executive orders to do the work of business, "This is what Presidents do." Congress has, with its capitulation to big money and greed, basically turned itself into a rump institution doing no more than channeling money into DC's main industry. I think Obama, with his congressional majority in 2008, might have been able to begin to reverse that if he had actually used his majority rather than pissing it away in a bid for bipartisan crap rather than effective legislation. But he didn't.

Evgeny Morozov explains why Anonymous' structure and disparate goals has led to increased surveillance rather than less. I think his analysis suffers from the classic chicken-and-egg fallacy, and fails to account for the degree to which these choices are probably being dictated by FBI-directed double agents. But it worthwhile analysis.

File this news—that half of Iran's super-tanker capacity is sitting anchored in the gulf with no place to go—in the "whatever could go wrong?" file. If we're lucky it will involve nothing more than pirates and not fully-laden tankers sunk and draining into the gulf.

Jose Padilla's mom has appealed her suit against Donald Rumsfeld for torture to SCOTUS. This case is the best set of facts—but the least empathetic plaintiff—of several suits trying to hold the government accountable for torturing American citizens.