

FROM THE CHAMBERPOT: NUMBER TWO

The Chamber of Commerce has tried to craft another non-denial denial that they engaged a bunch of private spooks to spy on people like Brad Friedman.

But it's still a non-denial denial.

Once again, they emphasize that they didn't pay HBGary.

The U.S. Chamber never hired or solicited proposals from HBGary, Palantir or Berico, the security firms being talked about on the web.

[snip]

No money, for any purpose, was paid to any of those three private security firms by the Chamber, or by anyone on behalf of the Chamber, including Hunton and Williams.

But as I already pointed out, that's because they got HBGary and its partners to work for free for a month or more. Free work on the Chamber's behalf is still work on the Chamber's behalf.

But their more interesting tack in this re-nondenial-denial is in how they characterize HBGary (and Palantir and Berico's) plot to spy on Chamber's enemies. As with their last nondenial denial, they emphasize the proposal written on October 29 for Hunton & Williams rather than discussing the plot itself.

HBGary's proposal, which has been written about by ThinkProgress, was not requested by the Chamber, it was not delivered to the Chamber, and it was never discussed with anyone at the

Chamber.

Emails show the discussions with the Chamber itself happened weeks after this proposal.

Finally, like Palantir and Berico did in their apologies, the Chamber blamed it all on HBGary.

The leaked e-mails appear to show that HBGary was willing to propose questionable actions in an attempt to drum up business, but the Chamber was not aware of these proposals until HBGary's e-mails leaked.

Note how vague this is? Note how it portrays the spying HBGary (and others) planned as "willing to propose," rather than, as the emails show, "did propose?"

We shall see what the status of the proposals were when the Chamber bought off on its free pilot with these security companies.

But once again, the Chamber does not deny that it was working with HBGary to spy on anti-Chamber activists.