

THE BURR FAMILY USE TO ASSASSINATE PEOPLE IN LIGHT OF DAY

At the end of a must-read article on how the people – whom it names – in charge of the CIA's drone program are the same people who were in charge of the torture program, the NYT also reveals that Richard Burr joined Mike Rogers pressuring CIA to kill American citizen Mohanad Mahmoud Al Farekh – who recently got captured and charged in the US with material support for terrorism – be drone killed.

The Republican lawmakers, Senator Richard M. Burr of North Carolina and Representative Mike Rogers of Michigan, said during the closed sessions that the administration was being timid, and urged that [Mohanad Mahmoud Al] Farekh be hunted and killed.

Burr is, as he likes to point out, a relative of Aaron Burr, who killed Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton in a duel, a detail about which Burr reminded Treasury Secretary Jack Lew last year. It appears the Burr family no longer operates with the faux honor of dueling, but instead sits inside secret closets and demands CIA conduct assassination by remotely piloted drone.

And that's why NYT's decision to name names is so notable.

The C.I.A. asked that Mr. D'Andrea's name and the names of some other top agency officials be withheld from this article, but The New York Times is publishing them because they have leadership roles in one of the government's most significant paramilitary programs and their roles

are known to foreign governments and many others.

The article names D'Andrea – the long-time head of CIA's Counterterrorism Center, whom Gawker named last month but whom the WaPo continued to refer to under the pseudonym Roger last month, it named his replacement, Chris Wood, who has served in ALEC station and oversaw operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and it named the Operations Chief, Greg Vogel, who was Kabul Station Chief before leading the CIA's paramilitary Special Activities Division.

These are the men who invite people like Rogers and Burr and Dianne Feinstein (who is a champion of D'Andrea) and their staffers to watch a monthly snuff film of drone operations and with it convince them that CIA should remain in charge of assassinations.

As the NYT notes in explaining why it was refusing to cede to John Brennan's demand that the paper hide these identities, others know who they are. It's just the public, those who pay their salaries and in whose name those assassinations are conducted, that didn't know.

That, of course, prevents anyone – the family of Warren Weinstein, for example – from holding them to legal account.

But it also prevents us from holding Feinstein accountable when she shields the same people who oversaw the torture program she claims to abhor.

Perhaps the NYT's decision to break the spell of false secrecy will demonstrate that these men's identities weren't really secrets. They were rather just a vacuum of accountability.