DID LYING KEITH JUST ACCUSE OBAMA OF LYING?

I noted the other day the reason the non-denial confirmation that NSA wiretapped Angela Merkel raised the stakes for what President obama told the Chancellor in June about the spying. Did he give assurances she hadn't been tapped?

If he did, anonymous leakers from the NSA's vicinity suggest, he knowingly lied.

> In Germany, Der Spiegel reported that the NSA's Special Collection Service (SCS) had listed Merkel's phone number since 2002. The number was still on the list – marked as "GE Chancellor Merkel" – weeks before Obama visited Berlin in June, raising the possibility that the German leader had been under surveillance for more than a decade. In an SCS document cited by the magazine, the agency said it had a "not legally registered spying branch" in the US embassy in Berlin, the exposure of which would lead to "grave damage for the relations of the United States to another government".
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> The White House refused to comment on that report – or others that emerged in Germany overnight, raising questions about how much Obama personally knew about the spy operation.
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> [snip]
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> The German tabloid **Bild reported that Obama was personally informed about US surveillance against Merkel by the director of the NSA, Keith Alexander, in 2010, and allowed the operation to continue**. The newspaper cited "a secret intelligence employee who is familiar with the NSA operation against Merkel".

> The Bild article also claimed that intelligence gathered by US spies based in Berlin was not channelled to NSA headquarters in Forte Meade, Maryland, but directly to the White House.
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> The newspaper Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung reported that **when Obama spoke to Merkel over the phone on Wednesday, he assured the German leader he had not previously known her phone had been monitored**. [my emphasis]

Much of this is obviously coming from Germany's own national security establishment. But the Bild leak is clearly identified as a US source. The NSA is now denying it (in language that seems desperate to deny that Alexander was Bild's source).

> NSA chief General Keith Alexander "did not discuss with President Obama in 2010 an alleged foreign intelligence operation involving German Chancellor Merkel, nor has he ever discussed alleged operations involving Chancellor Merkel,"

That said, any certainty about what Obama got briefed would move likely come from ODNI, which is likely just as tired of taking the fall for the Snowden leaks.

Nevertheless, someone at NSA and/or associated with the Embassy in Germany is trying to hang this on the President.

Obama's public line has already been that his Administration will assess whether we should be doing something, whether or not we can. I'm not all that convinced, particularly given the puffery of his Committee to Make You Love the Dragnet, he really means that. But even the hint that some at NSA want to hang this on the President might make him much more critical of what its doing.