KEITH ALEXANDER'S ONE STEP SOLUTION

Keith Alexander is testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee, ostensibly about CyberCommand.

He has gotten a number of questions about the solutions they've offered the President to resolve the phone dragnet issue. He responded it would be possible to keep the data with the telecoms.

Then, in response to a Cyber question, Alexander said the problem is that the NSA can't share classified information about malicious code with industry, because if it does so in a non-classified setting, attackers will learn how NSA obtained the information. (There's a lot that's problematic with that claim, but just ignore all that for now.)

So we need legislation that allows NSA to share classified information back and forth with industry.

He then returned to the phone dragnet. He suggested that the industry retention solution would require legislation allowing NSA to share terrorist identifiers with industry. (Note, this premise is absolutely absurd, as DEA apparently has no problem with sharing drug target identifiers with AT&T in the Hemisphere program in an explicitly unclassified program.)

Finally, he said this legislation — allowing the NSA to share classified identifiers with industry — would serve as the precedent for the Cyber legislation he has long sought but not obtained legislatively.

In other words, on his way out the door, Keith Alexander is now sacrificing his beloved phone dragnet to get cyber legislation in the guise of something else.