

In recent months, some of our nation's most highly classified intelligence has found its way onto the pages of major newspapers. Most of the information involved covert operations against suspected foreign terrorists and purported international efforts to damage the computer networks operating Iran's nuclear weapons program. Congressional defense and intelligence leaders from both parties immediately denounced the leaks, noting that they threaten the safety of U.S. military and intelligence personnel and harm our national security. The Justice Department subsequently pledged to find out who was behind the leaks and hold them accountable.

This week Senator Dianne Feinstein, Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, made a startling observation about the source of these dangerous leaks. She declared her belief that some came "from the ranks" of the White House. While she does not believe President Obama personally leaked the information, it is extremely disturbing that any White House official may be responsible for disclosing highly classified information.

I share the concern that these leaks could endanger American lives, undermine ongoing covert operations, and aid our enemies. Those responsible for these reckless leaks have violated the national trust and should be brought to justice. Only the President has the authority under U.S. law to declassify the type of intelligence disclosed in these circumstances. Assuming that President Obama was not involved (either by personally speaking to the reporters or authorizing his staff to do so), he should make it clear that any and every White House aide responsible for these leaks will be fired and referred to the Justice Department for prosecution.