

CIA director reverses himself on Senate spying

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This March 11, 2014 file photo shows CIA Director John O. Brennan speaking in Washington. The CIA's insistence that it did not spy on its Senate overseers collapsed July 31 with the release of a stark report by the agency's internal watchdog documenting improper computer surveillance and obstructionist behavior by CIA officers. Those internal conclusions prompted Brennan to abandon months of defiance and defense of the agency and apologize to Senate intelligence committee leaders. (AP Photo/Carolyn Kaster, File)

For months, CIA Director John Brennan had stood firm in his insistence that the CIA had little to be ashamed of after searching the computers of the Senate Intelligence Committee. His defiant posture quickly collapsed after a devastating report by his own inspector general sided against the CIA on each key point of the dispute with the Senate.

According to an unclassified summary of the report released Thursday, five agency employees improperly accessed Intelligence Committee computers earlier this year during a disagreement over interrogation documents.

Then, despite Brennan ordering a halt to that operation, the CIA's office of security began an unauthorized investigation that led it to review the emails of Senate staffers.

Those conclusions and others prompted Brennan to abandon his defensive posture and apologize to Intelligence Committee leaders.



In this March 13, 2014, file photo, Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee speaks on Capitol Hill in Washington. The CIA's insistence that it did not spy on its Senate overseers collapsed July 31 with the release of a stark report by the agency's internal watchdog documenting improper computer surveillance and obstructionist behavior by CIA officers. Feinstein said in a statement: "The investigation confirmed what I said on the Senate floor in March—CIA personnel inappropriately searched Senate intelligence committee computers in violation of an agreement we had reached, and I believe in violation of the constitutional separation of powers." (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File)

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