



The National Security Agency is telling its story like never before. Never mind whether that story is, well, true.

On Sunday night, CBS's 60 Minutes ran a remarkable piece that provided NSA officials, from director Keith Alexander to junior analysts, with a long, televised forum to push back against criticism of the powerful spy agency. It's an opening salvo in an unprecedented push from the agency to win public confidence at a time when both White House reviews and pending legislation would restrict the NSA's powers.

But mixed in among the dramatic footage of Alexander receiving threat briefings and junior analysts solving Rubik's cubes in 90 seconds were a number of dubious claims: from the extent of surveillance to collecting on Google and Yahoo data centers to an online "kill-switch" for the global financial system developed by China.

Reporter John Miller, a former official with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and an ex-FBI spokesman, allowed these claims to go unchallenged. The Guardian, not so much. Here's our take:

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