

The logo for Larouche PAC is a rectangular box divided into two sections. The left section is blue with the word "LAROUCHE" in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. The right section is red with the word "PAC" in white, all-caps, sans-serif font.

NY Times Confirms: Obama's NSA Collecting and Analyzing Social Connections, as Poindexter's TIA Planned

September 30th, 2013 • 9:34 AM

The [September 29 New York Times reports](#) [1] that, at least for the past three years, the NSA has been using a plethora of data—including not only communications data, but bank and tax records, travel information, insurance data, GPS location information, and Facebook profiles—to create graphs of some Americans' social connections, locations, travelling companions, and other personal information. Although some foreign intelligence interest is required to start the "contact chain," once that very vague connection is established, the NSA can freely start building its charts and graphs on any American who is somehow linked to the original subject.

Although the Times article—by James Risen and Laura Poitras—doesn't mention it, the program it exposes is precisely the one that was begun under what was loosely called "Able Danger" in the late 1990s, which was supposedly shut down, but instead morphed into John Poindexter's Total Information Awareness (TIA) in 2002, and which Congress thought it shut down in 2003.

Instead, as Executive Intelligence Review and others have reported, it was shifted into the Pentagon's "black budget" and farmed out to private contractors such as Booz Allen Hamilton. (See EIR's "[A Chronology: How Obama Expanded and Consolidated the Bush-Cheney Domestic Spy Dagnet](#) [2]" in the June 14, 2003 issue.)

Current NSA Director Keith Alexander has been in the middle of this for well over a decade. Before coming to the NSA, he ran the Army's Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM). His role there was recently in the news for his "Star Trek" command center in INSCOM's Information Dominance Center. This is where the data-mining procedures of "link analysis" were being developed under "Able Danger" and related programs; clearly, it never really went away, but Alexander just brought it and TIA into the NSA when he took it over in 2006.

According to the Times, there are indications that the "contact chaining" was used under the Bush-Cheney warrantless surveillance program, which was exposed in late 2005. A few months later, in 2006, the NSA asked the Justice Department for legal authorization to carry out this type of analysis on Americans' phone and email data. In 2008, the Bush Administration gave its approval. A pilot project on social network graphing was then conducted for 1 1/2 years, and in 2011, under Obama, NSA analysts were told they

could trace the social contacts of Americans so long as they cited some kind of foreign intelligence justification.

As the Times notes: "Phone and e-mail logs, for example, allow analysts to identify people's friends and associates, detect where they were at a certain time, acquire clues to religious or political affiliations, and pick up sensitive information like regular calls to a psychiatrist's office, late-night messages to an extramarital partner, or exchanges with a fellow plotter."

The Times quotes Orin Kerr, a GWU law professor, as saying: "Metadata can be very revealing... Knowing things like the number someone just dialed or the location of the person's cellphone is going to allow them to assemble a picture of what someone is up to. It's the digital equivalent of tailing a suspect."

Links:

[1] http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/29/us/nsa-examines-social-networks-of-us-citizens.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0

[2] http://larouchepub.com/eiw/public/2013/eirv40n24-20130614/13-18_4024.pdf

W W W . L A R O U C H E P A C . C O M

Paid for by the Lyndon LaRouche Political Action Committee
P.O. Box 6157, Leesburg, VA 20178, www.larouhepac.com
and Not Authorized by Any Candidate or Candidate's Committee