THE NSA REVIEW GROUP GANDERS AT METADATA

As you've no doubt heard, the NSA Review Group recommends real limits on the government's access to metadata, preferring that it be left with the telecoms and only be retained 2 years, and also recommending a higher standard for accessing it.

Which is why I find this recommendation, to more closely watch high level security classification holders, so ironic.

> The routine PCMP review would draw in data on an ongoing basis from commercially available data sources, such as on finances, court proceedings, and driving activity of the sort that is now available to credit scoring and auto insurance companies. Government-provided information might also be added to the data base, such as publicly available information about arrests and data about foreign travel now collected by Customs and Border Patrol.
>
> Those with extremely high Access Scores might be asked to grant permission to the government for their review by a more intrusive Additional Monitoring Program, including random observation of the meta-data related to their personal, home telephone calls, e-mails, use of online social media, and web surfing. Auditing and verification of their Financial Disclosure Forms might also occur.
>
> A data analytics program would be used to sift through the information provided by the Additional Monitoring Program on an ongoing basis to determine if there are correlations that indicate the advisability of some additional review.

It rationalizes this intrusiveness by pointing out that clearance jobs are privileges, not a right.

> We recognize that such a program could be seen by some as an infringement on the privacy of federal employees and contractors who choose on a voluntary basis to work with highly sensitive information in order to defend our nation. But, employment in government jobs with access to special intelligence or special classified programs is not a right. Permission to occupy positions of great trust and responsibility is already granted with conditions, including degrees of loss of privacy.

And, apparently unlike the phone and Internet dragnet, it proposes to start with a pilot.

But I wonder if this metadata program would have the same problem the NSA's dragnets do: they haven't ever proven they work as planned.