DATA-MINING

I've been arguing for two years that the secret that Bush was hiding about the illegal domestic wiretap program is that they were using crappy data mining programs to pick their targets for wiretaps. In tomorrow's NYT, they're almost done filling out that picture.

> A 2004 dispute over the National Security Agency's secret surveillance program that led top Justice Department officialsto threaten resignation involved computer searches through massiveelectronic databases, according to current and former officials briefedon the program.

Though Shane and Johnston don't seem to have a sense of how using data-mining to pick targets might introduce problems into the entire concept of probable cause.

> It is not known precisely why searching thedatabases, or data mining, raised such a furious legal debate. But suchdatabases contain records of the phone calls and e-mail messages ofmillions of Americans, and their examination by the government wouldraise privacy issues.