

AN ANONYMOUS GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL DOESN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT LOCKHEED WORKS FOR NSA

✘ Tomorrow and Wednesday, the WaPo will continue its series on the Intelligence Industrial Complex. It will describe the contractors in the BWI/Fort Meade area that contribute to the NSA's surveillance programs. According to the DNI's Director of Communications, that story will describe the contractors in the vicinity, but not say explicitly that those contractors clustered around Fort Meade are working for the NSA.

The Post advises that "links" between individual contractors and specific agencies have been deleted, although the Post will still cite contractors and their locations.

Here's the WaPo's description of how it acceded to spy officials' requests not to include maps like this one—showing one of Lockheed Martin's extensive locations in the neighborhood of Fort Meade (anyone who has taken the train to BWI will pass another of these locations)—in its database.

Because of the nature of this project, we allowed government officials to see the Web site several months ago and asked them to tell us of any specific concerns. They offered none at that time. As the project evolved, we shared the Web site's revised capabilities. Again, we asked for specific concerns. One government body objected to certain data points on the site and explained why; we removed those items. Another agency objected that the entire Web site

could pose a national security risk but declined to offer specific comments.

We made other public safety judgments about how much information to show on the Web site. For instance, we used the addresses of company headquarters buildings, information which, in most cases, is available on companies' own Web sites, but we limited the degree to which readers can use the zoom function on maps to pinpoint those or other locations.

Nevertheless, an anonymous official—who sounds an awful lot like Acting Director of National Intelligence David Gompert did in his official statement—is already out bitching about the contractor database the WaPo published as part of this series.

The database the Washington Post compiled during its “Top Secret America” two year investigation is “troubling,” one administration official told me this morning, saying it could become a road map for adversaries – a charge reporter William Arkin denied on “GMA.”

“We’ve been through months now of negotiations and discussions with the government. I don’t think there is anything here that would do harm to national security,” Arkin told me. “And frankly I’m an American as well and I don’t want to do any harm to American national security.”

The official also told me that President Obama and his team are committed to intelligence reform – calling it a “central issue” – and said the system basically worked preventing another major attack and taking out 10 of the top 20 Al Qaeda leaders. But Arkin argued otherwise – saying it is important to counter what “the

government would like to put out as the good news.”

Now, this anonymous official (who sounds like David Gompert did) may have been smart enough to know that George Stephanopoulos would obediently grant him anonymity to conduct the pushback ODNI was planning even before they read the article (nice stenography, Steph!). But he apparently believes our adversaries limit their research to the DeadTree press and couldn't figure out that Lockheed Martin works for NSA (among other agencies) via other means. This anonymous official apparently believes our adversaries couldn't do what Tim Shorrock did when he established the ties between Lockheed and NSA.

NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY. Lockheed Martin has extremely close and long-standing ties with the NSA. In the mid-1950s it built the U-2 spy plane that played a key role in the Cold War and conducted some of the NSA's initial research in signals collection. “The U-2 has been the backbone of our nation's airborne intelligence collection operations for several decades and continues to provide unmatched operational capabilities in support of Operation Enduring Freedom,” Lockheed Martin states in its 2008 annual report. The U-2 “is expected to continue to provide leading-edge intelligence collection capabilities for years to come.”

The company's extensive contracts with the NSA first became public in 1997. That year, Margaret Newsham, a contract engineer working for Lockheed Space and Missile Corporation at an NSA listening post in the United Kingdom, disclosed to Congress the existence of Echelon. This global surveillance network is run by the NSA and its counterparts in Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. She made the disclosure after hearing NSA

intercepts of international calls placed by Sen. Strom Thurmond, the conservative South Carolina Republican. Her revelations sparked a spate of Congressional inquiries into whether the NSA was illegally listening in on domestic conversations. The discussions, led by a Republican civil libertarian, Rep. Bob Barr of Georgia, presaged the intense debate that would follow the 2005 revelations about President Bush's "Terrorist Surveillance Program." In July 1998 a report commissioned by the European Parliament confirmed that, through Echelon, the United States, and its closest allies had the capability to intercept most European phone calls, emails, and data communications, as well as the technology to decode almost any encrypted communication. This revelation sparked deep suspicion in European capitals that NSA was using Echelon to capture European business intelligence and trade secrets and pass them to U.S. companies.

Under a contract signed in 2005, Lockheed Martin provides an integrated electronic security system to protect NSA facilities in the Washington area. A similar system is in place at the Pentagon and dozens of U.S. military facilities abroad.

And then there are the other ways to figure this out. I first copped on to Lockheed's ties to NSA when I noted there seemed to be a closer tie between Lockheed campaign contributions and Democrats who voted in favor of retroactive immunity on the FISA Amendments Act than contributions from AT&T.

Of course, presumably this anonymous official does know that our adversaries are not as dumb as he claims.

Which suggests it's not our adversaries the

anonymous official is really worried about. God forbid the citizens of this country—the average readers of the WaPo rather than those with training in intelligence that makes such research a cinch—find out who has been analyzing all the phone data collected in the guise of counterterrorism.