

CORRELATIONS ON FACEBOOK PROBABLY KEY TO ISIS CLAIM IN SAN BERNARDINO

Authorities investigating the San Bernardino killing just told all the press that they found a posting from the wife in the attack, Tashfeen Malik, pledging allegiance to ISIS's Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. CNN's report included the following interesting details:

Investigators think that as the San Bernardino, California, attack was happening, female shooter Tashfeen Malik posted a pledge of allegiance to ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi on Facebook, three U.S. officials familiar with the investigation told CNN.

Malik's post was made on an account with a different name, one U.S. official said. The officials did not explain how they knew Malik made the post.

What this implies is that the FBI found this pledge by correlating the name under which she made it with her known identity as Tashfeen Malik.

At first, I assumed they did with this IP addresses (and that's definitely possible).

But given the way they haven't been releasing as many pictures of her, I wonder whether it wasn't, instead, done via Facebook's facial recognition technology, working first off her face and then backwards to her devices?

In any case, I have little reason to doubt this is a sound correlation. What I do find interesting is, after gagging Nicholas Merrill for 11 years to avoid revealing how they use such requests to correlate all of a person's identities, they've hinted at that ability here

almost immediately, presumably because there's such a demand for answers (and, in reality, for some way to tag this as Islamic terrorism).

Update: On reflection, I think it virtually impossible Facebook correlated these accounts using facial recognition, because there are almost no public pictures of Malik (I've seen thus far reported).