



The Hill 9/11 Column on ‘ThinThread’ Is Not a Coincidence

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Patrick Eddington of the Cato Institute had an op-ed in The Hill on Sept. 11 which used FOIA releases he has obtained from the NSA to show the conscious suppression of the ThinThread electronic counterintelligence program by the NSA’s officials led by Michael Hayden (then NSA director) both before and after the 9/11 attacks. Eddington, a former CIA military imagery analyst, has worked with the authors of ThinThread—whistleblowers since Oct. 31, 2001—including former NSA Technical Director William Binney and Kirk Wiebe, who describe him as a reliable source. The Hill’s running the op-ed just as Binney and Wiebe were appearing with Col. Richard Black on LaRouchePAC’s landmark military coup warning webcast, indicates the widening impact of the national alarm set off by LaRouchePAC and those national security experts.

It is unexplained why the op-ed, “State Sanctioned Secrecy: NSA’s Criminality Shield,” does not name Binney or Wiebe, nor their collaborator Thomas Drake; this may have been an editorial decision by the publication. Eddington writes:

“Enacted at the height of the Cold War, the NSA Act gives the agency radically sweeping powers to withhold any information from public disclosure. Specifically, Section 6 of the Act states ‘...nothing in this Act or any other law...shall be construed to require the disclosure of the organization or any function of the National Security Agency, or any information with respect to the activities thereof, or of the names, titles, salaries, or number of the persons employed by such agency.’ ... NSA has used that blanket authority to try to keep secret details about its lethal 9/11 intelligence failure.”

But he adds that his more than three-year FOIA campaign has “partially punctured NSA’s veil of secrecy over the cancelled Trailblazer and ThinThread digital network exploitation (DNE) programs.”

Eddington characterized ThinThread as a “cheap, extremely effective, and Constitutionally compliant in-house DNE system.” He says that Hayden broke the law by misusing for other purposes funds which the House Intelligence Committee had specifically appropriated for ThinThread, and completely cancelled the development three weeks before 9/11, “even though ThinThread, still in prototype development, was already producing intelligence NSA couldn’t get from any of its other existing systems....”

“Hayden would squander at least \$696 million on Trailblazer between October 2001 and September 2005; the money produced exactly one failed prototype DNE system.”

“The former ThinThread team members believe to this day,” Eddington wrote, “that had their system been deployed even a few weeks before the 9/11 attacks, bin Laden’s hijackers would never have made it onto a single plane. I agree.”