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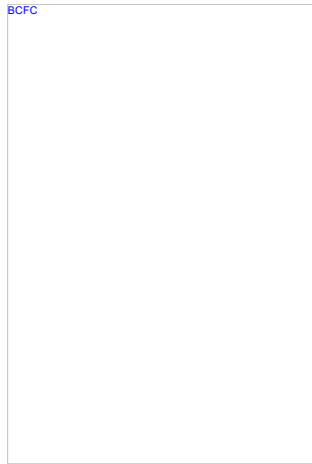
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Says GOOGLE is one big false front for Obama Campaign

The EyeOpener- Exposing "In-Q –Tel": The CIA's Own Venture Capital Firm Sibel Edmonds | October 5, 2011 Leave a Comment Google, Facebook, the IT Sector and the CIA In-Q-Tel was formed by the CIA in 1999 as a private, not-for-profit venture capital firm with the specific task of delivering technology to America's intelligence community. Publicly, In-Q-Tel markets itself as an innovative way to leverage the power of the private sector by identifying key emerging technologies and providing companies with the funding to bring those technologies to market. In reality, however, what In-Q-Tel represents is a dangerous blurring of the lines between the public and private sectors in a way that makes it difficult to tell where the American intelligence community ends and the IT sector begins. In-Q-Tel has generated a number of stories since its inception based on what can only be described as the "creepiness" factor of its investments in overly Orwellian technologies. This is our EyeOpener Report by James Corbett presenting documented facts and cases on the CIA's privately owned venture capital firm In-Q-Tel, in which well-connected board members drawn from the private sector profit from the investments made with CIA funds that come from the taxpayer.

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TRANSCRIPT AND SOURCES:

[Salspan Corporation](#) manufactures low power Wi-Fi semiconductors that form the heart of modern remote sensing, monitoring and control technologies.

[Recorded Future Inc.](#) is a Massachusetts web startup that monitors the web in real time and claims its media analytics search engine can be used to predict the future.

[Keyhole Corp.](#) created the 3D earth visualization technology that [became the core](#) of Google Earth.

The common denominator? All of these companies, and hundreds more cutting edge technology and software startups, have received seed money and investment funding from In-Q-Tel, the CIA's own venture capital firm.

Welcome, this is James Corbett of The Corbett Report with your Eyeopener Report for [BoilingFrogsPost.com](#)

For decades, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA, has been the American governmental body tasked with conducting high-risk, high-payoff research into cutting edge science and technology. Responsible most famously for developing the world's first operational packet switching network that eventually became [the core of the Internet](#), DARPA tends to [garner headlines](#) these days for some of its more [outlandish](#) research proposals and is generally looked upon as a [blue-sky research](#) agency whose endeavours only occasionally bear fruit.

In the post-9/11 consolidation of the American intelligence community, IARPA, or the Intelligence Advanced Research Projects Agency, was created to serve as the spy-master's equivalent of DARPA's defense research.

In contrast to this, [In-Q-Tel](#) was formed by the CIA in 1999 as a private, not-for-profit venture capital firm with the specific task of delivering technology to America's intelligence community.

Publicly, In-Q-Tel [markets itself](#) as an innovative way to leverage the power of the private sector by identifying key emerging technologies and providing companies with the funding to bring those technologies to market.

In reality, however, what In-Q-Tel represents is a dangerous blurring of the lines between the public and private sectors in a way that makes it difficult to tell where the American intelligence community ends and the IT sector begins.

In-Q-Tel has generated a number of stories since its inception based on what can only be described as the "creepiness" factor of its investments in overly Orwellian technologies.

In 2004, KMWorld published [an interview](#) with Greg Pepus, then In-Q-Tel's senior director of federal and intelligence community strategy, about some of their investments. Pepus was especially proud of the CIA's investment in [Inqubit](#), a company that offered software for data mining unstructured data sources like blogs and websites with analytical processing.

In 2006 [it was revealed](#) that AT&T had provided NSA eavesdroppers full access to its customer's internet traffic, and that the American intelligence community was illegally scooping up reams of internet data wholesale. The [data mining equipment](#) installed in the NSA back door, a Narus STA 6400, was developed by a company whose partners were [funded by In-Q-Tel](#).

Also in 2006, News21 [reported](#) on an In-Q-Tel [investment in CallMiner](#), a company developing technology for turning recorded telephone conversations into searchable databases. In late 2005 [it was revealed](#) that the NSA had been engaged in an illegal warrantless wiretapping program since at least the time of the 9/11 attacks, monitoring the private domestic phone calls of American citizens in breach of their fourth amendment rights.

In 2009, the Telegraph [reported](#) on In-Q-Tel's [investment in Visible Technologies](#), a company specializing in software that monitors what people are saying on social media websites like YouTube, Twitter, Flickr and Amazon. The software is capable of real-time communications tracking, trend monitoring, and even sentiment analysis that categorizes blog posts and comments as positive, negative or neutral. Just last month, the Federal Reserve tendered a [Request For Proposal](#) for just this type of software so the privately owned central bank could monitor what people are saying about it online.

Two of the names that come up most often in connection with In-Q-Tel, however, need no introduction: Google and Facebook.

The publicly available record on the Facebook/In-Q-Tel connection is tenuous. Facebook [received](#) \$12.7 million in venture capital from Accel, whose manager, [James Brewer](#), now sits on their board. He was formerly the chairman of the National Venture Capital Association, whose board included [Gilman Louie](#), then the CEO of In-Q-Tel. The connection is indirect, but the suggestion of CIA involvement with Facebook, however tangential, is disturbing in the light of Facebook's [history of violating the privacy of its users](#).

Google's connection to In-Q-Tel is more straightforward, if officially denied. In 2006, ex-CIA officer Robert David Steele [told Homeland Security Today](#) that Google "has been taking money and direction for elements of the US Intelligence Community, including the Office of Research and Development at the Central Intelligence Agency, In-Q-Tel, and in all probability, both the National Security Agency (NSA) and the Army's Intelligence and Security Command." Later that year, a blogger [claimed](#) that an official Google spokesman had denied the claims, but no official press statement was released.

Steele's accusation is not the only suggestion of American intelligence involvement with Google, however.

In 2005, In-Q-Tel [sold over 5,000 shares](#) of Google stock. The shares are widely presumed to have come from In-Q-Tel's investment in Keyhole Inc., which was subsequently bought out by Google, but this is uncertain.

In 2010, it was [announced](#) that Google was working directly with the National Security Agency to secure its electronic assets.

Also in 2010, Wired [reported](#) that In-Q-Tel and Google had jointly provided venture capital funding to Recorded Future Inc., a temporal analytics search engine company that analyzes tens of thousands of web sources to predict trends and events.

But as potentially alarming as In-Q-Tel's connections to internet giants like Facebook and Google are, and as disturbing as its interest in data mining technologies may be, the CIA's venture capital arm is interested in more than just web traffic monitoring.

The In-Q-Tel website currently lists two "practice areas," ["Information and Communication Technologies"](#) and ["Physical and Biological Technologies"](#). The latter field consists of "capabilities of interest" such as "The on-site determination of individual human traits for IC purposes" and "Tracking and/or authentication of both individuals and objects." In-Q-Tel also lists two areas that are "on its radar" when it comes to biotech: [Nano-bio Convergence](#) and [Physiological Intelligence](#). Detailed breakdowns of each area explain that the intelligence community is interested in, amongst other things, self-assembling batteries, single molecule detectors, targeted drug delivery platforms, and sensors that can tell where a person has been and what substances he has been handling from "biomarkers" like trace compounds in the breath or samples of skin.

In the years since its formation, many have been led to speculate about In-Q-Tel and its investments, but what requires no speculation is an understanding that a privately owned venture capital firm, created by and for the CIA, in which well-connected board members drawn from the private sector can then [profit from the investments](#) made with CIA funds that itself come from the taxpayer represent an erosion of the barrier between the public and private spheres that should give even the most credulous pause for thought.

What does it mean that emerging technology companies are becoming wedded to the CIA as soon as their technology shows promise?

What can be the public benefit in fostering and encouraging technologies which can be deployed for spying on all internet users, including American citizens, in direct contravention of the CIA's own prohibitions against operating domestically?

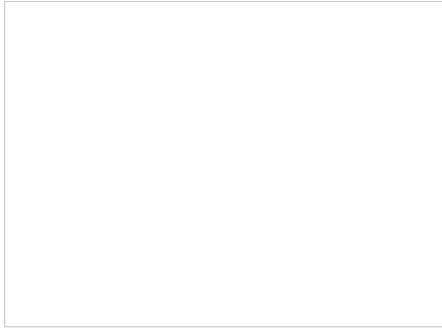
If new software and technology is being brought to market by companies with In-Q-Tel advisors on their boards, what faith can anyone purchasing American technologies have that their software and hardware is not designed with CIA backdoors to help the American intelligence community achieve its vision of "Total Information Awareness"?

Rather than scrutinizing each individual investment that In-Q-Tel makes, perhaps an institutional approach is required.

At this point, the American people have to ask themselves whether they want the CIA, an agency that has [participated in the overthrow](#) of foreign, democratically-elected governments, an agency that has [implanted fake stories](#) in the news media to justify American war interests, an agency that at this very moment is [engaged in offensive drone strikes](#), killing suspected "insurgents" and civilians alike in numerous theaters around the world, should be entrusted with developing such close relationships with the IT sector, or whether In-Q-Tel should be scrapped for good.

Exclusive: Google, CIA Invest in 'Future' of Web Monitoring

- By [Noah Stachtman](#)



The investment arms of the CIA and Google are both backing a company that monitors the web in real time — and says it uses that information to predict the future.

The company is called Recorded Future, and it scours tens of thousands of websites, blogs and Twitter accounts to find the relationships between people, organizations, actions and incidents — both present and still-to-come. In a white paper, the company says its temporal analytics engine "[goes beyond search](#)" by "looking at the 'invisible links' between documents that talk about the same, or related, entities and events."

The idea is to figure out for each incident who was involved, where it happened and when it might go down. Recorded Future then plots that chatter, showing online "momentum" for any given event.

"The cool thing is, you can actually predict the curve, in many cases," says company CEO Christopher Ahlberg, a former Swedish Army Ranger with a PhD in computer science.

Which naturally makes the 16-person Cambridge, Massachusetts, firm attractive to Google Ventures, the search giant's investment division, and to [In-Q-Tel](#), which handles similar duties for the CIA and the wider intelligence community.

It's not the very first time Google has done business with America's spy agencies. Long before it reportedly [enlisted the help of the National Security Agency](#) to secure its networks, Google sold [equipment to the secret signals-intelligence group](#). In-Q-Tel backed the mapping firm Keyhole, which was bought by Google in 2004 — and then became the backbone for Google Earth.

This appears to be the first time, however, that the intelligence community and Google have funded the same startup, at the same time. No one is accusing Google of directly collaborating with the CIA. But the investments are bound to be fodder for critics of Google, who already see the search giant as overly cozy with the U.S. government, and worry that the company is starting to forget its "don't be evil" mantra.

America's spy services have become increasingly interested in mining "open source intelligence" — information that's publicly available, but often hidden in the daily avalanche of TV shows, newspaper articles, blog posts, online videos and radio reports.

"[Secret information isn't always the brass ring](#) in our profession," then CIA-director General Michael Hayden told a conference in 2008. "In fact, there's a real satisfaction in solving a problem or answering a tough question with information that someone was dumb enough to leave out in the open."

U.S. spy agencies, through In-Q-Tel, have invested in a number of firms to help them better find that information. Visible Technologies [crawls over half a million web 2.0 sites a day](#), scraping more than a million posts and conversations taking place on blogs, YouTube, Twitter and Amazon. Attensity applies the rules of grammar to the so-called "unstructured text" of the web to make it more [easily digestible by government databases](#). Keyhole (now Google Earth) is a staple of the targeting cells in military-intelligence units.

Recorded Future strips from web pages the people, places and activities they mention. The company examines when and where these events happened ("spatial and temporal analysis") and the tone of the document ("sentiment analysis"). Then it applies some artificial-intelligence algorithms to tease out connections between the players. Recorded Future maintains an index with more than 100 million events, hosted on Amazon.com servers. The analysis, however, is on the living web.

"We're right there as it happens," Ahlberg told Danger Room as he clicked through a demonstration. "We can assemble actual real-time dossiers on people."

Recorded Future certainly has the potential to spot events and trends early. Take the case of Hezbollah's long-range missiles. On March 21, Israeli President Shimon Peres leveled the allegation that the terror group had Scud-like weapons. Scouring Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah's past statements, Recorded Future found corroborating evidence from a month prior that appeared to back up Peres' accusations.

That's one of several hypothetical cases Recorded Future runs in its [blog devoted to intelligence analysis](#). But it's safe to assume that the company already has at least one spy agency's attention. In-Q-Tel doesn't make investments in firms without an "end customer" ready to test out that company's products.

Both Google Ventures and In-Q-Tel made their investments in 2009, shortly after the company was founded. The exact amounts weren't disclosed, but were under \$10 million each. Google's [investment came to light earlier this year](#) online. In-Q-Tel, which often announces its new holdings in press releases, quietly uploaded a [brief mention of its investment](#) a few weeks ago.

Both In-Q-Tel and Google Ventures have seats on Recorded Future's board. Ahlberg says those board members have been "very helpful," providing business and technology advice, as well as introducing him to potential customers. Both organizations, it's safe to say, will profit handsomely if Recorded Future is ever sold or taken public. Ahlberg's last company, the corporate intelligence firm Spotfire, was acquired in 2007 for \$195 million in cash.

Google Ventures did not return requests to comment for this article. In-Q-Tel Chief of Staff Lisbeth Poulos e-mailed a one-line statement: "We are pleased that Recorded Future is now part of IQT's portfolio of innovative startup companies who support the mission of the U.S. Intelligence Community."

Just because Google and In-Q-Tel have both invested in Recorded Future doesn't mean Google is suddenly in bed with the government. Of course, to Google's critics — including [conservative legal groups](#), and [Republican congressmen](#) — the Obama Administration and the Mountain View, California, company slipped between the sheets a long time ago.

Google CEO Eric Schmidt hosted a town hall at company headquarters in the early days of Obama's presidential campaign. Senior White House officials like economic chief Larry Summers give speeches at the New America Foundation, the [left-of-center think tank chaired by Schmidt](#). Former Google public policy chief Andrew McLaughlin is now the White House's deputy CTO, and was publicly (if mildly) reprimanded by the administration for continuing to hash out issues with his former colleagues.

In some corners, the scrutiny of the company's political ties have dovetailed with concerns about how Google collects and uses its enormous storehouse of search data, e-mail, maps and online documents. Google, as we all know, keeps a titanic amount of information about every aspect of our online lives. Customers largely have trusted the company so far, because of the quality of their products, and because of Google's pledges not to misuse the information still ring true to many.

But unease has been growing. Thirty seven [state Attorneys General are demanding answers](#) from the company after Google hoovered up [600 gigabytes of data from open Wi-Fi networks](#) as it snapped pictures for its Street View project. (The company swears the incident was an accident.)

"Assurances from the likes of Google that the company can be trusted to respect consumers' privacy because its corporate motto is 'don't be evil' have been shown by recent [events such as the 'Wi-Spy' debacle to be unwarranted](#)," long-time corporate gadfly John M. Simpson told a Congressional hearing in a prepared statement. Any business dealings with the CIA's investment arm are unlikely to make critics like him more comfortable.

But [Steven Aftergood](#), a critical observer of the intelligence community from his perch at the Federation of American Scientists, isn't worried about the Recorded Future deal. Yet.

"To me, whether this is troublesome or not depends on the degree of transparency involved. If everything is aboveboard — from contracts to deliverables — I don't see a problem with it," he told Danger Room by e-mail. "But if there are blank spots in the record, then they will be filled with public skepticism or worse, both here and abroad, and not without reason."

Photo: AP/Charles Dharapak

See Also:

- [Exclusive: U.S. Spies Buy Stake in Firm That Monitors Blogs, Tweets](#)
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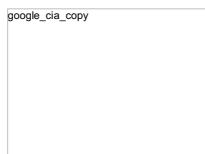
Google Bankrolled By The CIA?

May

2012

03

posted by [Jon King](#) on [big brother, cia, conspiracy, ebay, facebook, google, internet, jon king, new world politics, paypal, peter thiel, robert steele, youtube](#)



Google, Facebook, eBay, PayPal — Evidence is mounting that these internet giants could all be CIA fronts funded by the spy agency's Silicon Valley venture capital arm...

Google Bankrolled By The CIA

By Jon King

The All-Seeing Eye

Ever wondered who is behind the internet's all-seeing eye, Google? Who put the 'face' in Facebook? Who's 'pal' you've become when you send or receive through PayPal?

Ever thought *Big Brother* might be logging every sale and purchase you make on its virtual auction website, eBay?

No? Well if you think the above notions are little more than paranoid conspiracy fears, you'd best think again. Evidence that the CIA, directly or by proxy, bankrolled at least some of these internet giants, is now beyond doubt.

Which means the world's most powerful intelligence agency has more control over the internet than even the hardest conspiracy theorist may wish to believe.

Back in 2006 former CIA case officer, Robert Steele (left), made headline news when he revealed that Google was 'in bed with the CIA', confirming fears that the internet's all-seeing eye is more a US government spy tool than a user-friendly search engine.

Further rummaging at the murky end of venture capital investment deals seems to suggest Steele knew exactly what he was talking about, as we shall see.

Google Bankrolled By The CIA

The PayPal Mafia

In 1999, PayPal became the world's first virtual banking system, making it possible for surfers everywhere to send and receive money via the internet. The idea was conceived, and the website founded, by US futurist, entrepreneur, and 2009 Bilderberg attendee, Peter Thiel.

These days Thiel is recognized as the godfather of what was recently dubbed by *Fortune Magazine* the "PayPal Mafia", a group of super-wealthy Silicon Valley venture capitalists with alleged business ties to the CIA.

Indeed, according to some reports, it is largely via Silicon Valley's venture capital boardrooms that the spy agency has taken control of the internet.

"The CIA is throwing caution (and several tens of millions of dollars) to the wind, joining the dot.com frenzy and investing in Silicon Valley," wrote Andrew Gumbel in [The Independent](#) way back in April 2000. "It is not looking for the next cool way to swap musical downloads, or place orders for organic groceries. What it wants is a super-smart search engine to marshal all the information on the internet – in secret if possible."

As the evidence reveals, that "super-smart search engine" would manifest itself in the form of Google. But first, the seemingly ubiquitous Peter Thiel...

For the record, PayPal was not Thiel's only internet success. He is also the 'face' behind Facebook.

While ostensibly true that Facebook is headed up by Harvard graduate Mark Zuckerberg, what is not so well publicized is that the internet's phattest social networking empire was effectively the brainchild of Thiel and his entrepreneurial VC syndicate.

And that, via this syndicate, Facebook was early on picked up and deployed by the CIA as a social networking experiment.

"Facebook is a deliberate experiment in global manipulation," wrote Tom Hodgkinson in the [Guardian](#). "The creators of the site need do very little but fiddle with the programme. In the main, they simply sit back and watch as millions of Facebook addicts voluntarily upload their ID details, photographs and lists of their favourite consumer objects. Once in receipt of this vast database of human beings, Facebook then simply has to sell the information back to advertisers, or, as Zuckerberg puts it in a recent blog post, 'to try to help people share information with their friends about things they do on the web.'"

The *Guardian* article goes on to reveal Facebook's surprisingly open connections to the CIA.

Aside from Thiel, major investors in Facebook include Silicon Valley's Accel Partners (also major investors in eBay) and Greyclock Venture Capital, both of whom, together with NVCA (National Venture Capital Association), share boardroom execs with an altogether more notorious outfit called In-Q-Tel.

And guess what? In-Q-Tel is the official venture capital wing of the CIA – check out the [In-Q-Tel website](#).

Google Bankrolled By The CIA

A CIA Bed Partner

About the same time as Peter Thiel was busy setting up PayPal, just across the street the CIA was busy setting up In-Q-Tel, ostensibly an investment capital firm for the development of cutting-edge IT and communications technologies.

With the almost overnight global reach of the internet, the US intelligence community realized it was time to gain a length on this new electronic information highway, and in many ways PayPal was seen as an early social experiment in this regard.

As well as providing the means to unwittingly utilize the internet-connected public for intelligence gathering, it would also serve to shift vast sums of money around the globe regardless of national borders or currencies.

The experiment worked well enough. Thiel pocketed a handsome \$55 million from the sale of PayPal to eBay in 2002, while the CIA went on to learn new ways of cyber-laundering vast sums of cash worldwide. Ingenious.

But the experiment did not end there. The CIA may have bought its way into PayPal and eBay. But it wanted more, and already had its sights on further, potential acquisitions – one in particular: Google.

What was to become the internet's most successful "super-smart search engine", Google, was founded in 1998 by two Stanford University students, Sergey Brin and Larry Page, with seed funding from Sun Microsystems founder, Andy Bechtolsheim.

By the end of that same year the innovative search engine was already the web's most visited domain, sufficient in itself to make America's defence and intelligence community sit up and take note.

Indeed, just a few short months later, Google received a further \$25 million development funding, primarily from Sequoia Capital (investors in Apple, Atari, eBay, PayPal, and now Google) and Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers, who just happened to be bed partners with In-Q-Tel. From that point on Google and the CIA became lovers.

"Even while Google presents a public image of vigorously protecting its users' privacy," wrote Michael Hampton for [Homeland Stupidity](#), "it has quietly provided assistance to several U.S. intelligence agencies, such as the Central Intelligence Agency and Defense Intelligence Agency... In addition, Google may be providing assistance to the National Security Agency."

In 2004 Google further expanded its cyber-empire by acquiring a company called Keyhole Inc... until then a strategic CIA-front satellite imaging firm funded by In-Q-Tel.

Within a year Keyhole's cutting-edge 'virtual satellite imaging' software had become Google Earth, and In-Q-Tel's Director of Technology Assessment, Rob Painter, had crossed the street and joined the Google board, becoming the internet spy firm's Senior Federal Manager. Fail accompil.

The more recent addition of Google Street View and future plans to develop the 360-degree spy-cam service into a live-feed CCTV webcam service streaming directly back to CIA HQ, Virginia, is evidence enough that Orwellian Earth has finally arrived.

Big Brother is watching. His lens is Google. His name is the CIA...

Google Bankrolled By The CIA

The Birth Of Facebook

While Google was busy setting up the CIA's public domain satellite spy-cam service, three Harvard University students were unwittingly preparing to present the CIA with yet another social experiment.

Indeed, they were already catching the eye of the CIA and its Silicon Valley business fronts.

In June 2004, Mark Zuckerberg, Chris Hughes and Dustin Moskowitz met with PayPal founder Peter Thiel in San Francisco, who invested an initial \$500,000 in their fledgling "Facebook" idea. The following April (2005), Thiel's investment was boosted by a staggering \$12.7 million investment stumped up by Thiel's buddy and former Chairman of NVCA, Jim Breyer.

It is NVCA remember, which shares company execs with the CIA's In-Q-Tel. And Breyer himself shares CIA associations via his business relationships with Gilman Louie, former CEO of In-Q-Tel and NVCA board member.

Another former Chairman of NVCA, Howard Cox, would later head up a further investment in Facebook of some \$27.5 million, this time on behalf of investment firm Greyclock Venture Capital. As we have already noted, Greyclock and the CIA are conjoined in their business ambitions via shared boardroom interests with In-Q-Tel.

Howard Cox, for one, senior partner in Greyclock, is also on the board of the CIA's In-Q-Tel.

Google Bankrolled By The CIA

An Unprecedented Success

Which brings us full circle. The CIA, via In-Q-Tel and other spy-front investment firms, effectively bankrolled many of the internet's biggest success stories – no doubt the reason behind their unprecedented successes.

And speaking of unprecedented successes...

In October 2006, Google purchased YouTube for a staggering \$1.65 billion. Not bad for a video-sharing website founded eighteen months earlier by three computer nerds with nothing better to do.

Indeed, given what we now know about the internet's most omnipresent search engine, the question must surely be asked: who really bought YouTube – Google, or the CIA?

The PR story circulated at the time was that the nerds in question (YouTube's founders) were former PayPal employees, itself sufficient to set sirens wailing.

But it's the way the story is told that makes it sound so cosy and innocent, deflecting as it does all attention from the incestuous financial links now known to exist between PayPal, Google, Facebook, eBay, the US intelligence community... Oh, and YouTube.

So there we have it. Each in their own unique way, eBay, PayPal, YouTube, Facebook – not forgetting the trusty Google and a small host of others, including the web's biggest online privacy protection firm, TRUSTe – would appear to be virtual eyes and data collectors for the world's biggest and most powerful intelligence agency, the CIA.

<http://www.infowars.com/is-glen-greenwalds-alternative-media-network-another-cia-mockingbird-operation/>

Even Yahoo is suspected of being used by the CIA, as well as the NSA and other US intelligence agencies.

So the next time you log on to Facebook, or YouTube, or make a search via Google, or Yahoo; or a transaction via PayPal for something you just bought on eBay, take comfort in the knowledge that Big Brother has footprinted your every move.

And that those tracking cookies you've just picked up are hotwired back to Central Computer, Langley, Virginia – home of the CIA.

NPR RADIO:

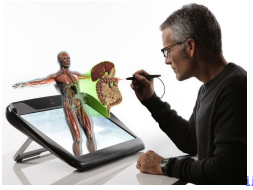
In-Q-Tel: The CIA's Tax-Funded Player In Silicon Valley

by Steve Henn

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Infinite Z, a tech company funded by the CIA's venture capital fund In-Q-Tel, has developed 3-D imaging technology that allows users to interact with holographic images. **Courtesy of Infinite Z hide caption**

toggle caption Courtesy of Infinite Z

Infinite Z, a tech company funded by the CIA's venture capital fund In-Q-Tel, has developed 3-D imaging technology that allows users to interact with holographic images.

Courtesy of Infinite Z

For more than a decade the CIA has run its own venture capital fund called [In-Q-Tel](#). It was founded in the late 1990s when the CIA was drowning in data and didn't have the tools to connect the dots. Today, In-Q-Tel has become one of the most unusual investors in Silicon Valley.

Jeffrey Smith, the former general counsel of the CIA, was one of a small group of intelligence community insiders who helped set up In-Q-Tel more than a decade ago. At the time, the idea of a government-funded venture capital firm was completely new. Even though this company would be part of the intelligence community, Smith and the others knew it would need to attract entrepreneurs' attention, beginning with its name.

"We really needed something that also had appeal to a wider audience and, frankly, had some sex to it," Smith says.

So they named In-Q-Tel after Q, the fictional character who makes gadgets for James Bond.

The Funder Behind The Curtain

Whether you have realized it or not, over the past 13 years In-Q-Tel has changed your life.

"Much of the touch-screen technology used now in iPads and other things came out of various companies that In-Q-Tel identified," Smith says.

In-Q-Tel was also an early investor in a company that stitched together satellite images and maps. That company was later bought up by Google and became Google Earth.

Other data-crunching startups backed by In-Q-Tel have been bought by IBM and Hewlett-Packard. Today, the CIA's venture capital fund has more than \$170 million in assets. And up and down Silicon Valley, it's investing millions of taxpayers' dollars in dozens of new startups

Mouth Radios And Hologram Screens

A number of today's cutting-edge tech companies might not exist without the backing of In-Q-Tel and, indirectly, the help of the CIA.

YouTubeConsultant Tony Duchi demonstrates Sonitus Medical's two-way mouth radio.

Peter Hadrovic says an investment from In-Q-Tel helped his company, [Sonitus Medical](#), turn a novel hearing aid into a two-way radio you can hide in your mouth. It conducts sound through the bones in your head and gives people wearing it "the ability to receive incoming wireless sound literally without using your ears," Hadrovic explains. Instead of wearing headphones or earplugs, users attach the device to their teeth. Hadrovic says the device could even be shaped like a tooth.

YouTubeUsers of Infinite Z's zSpace can move holograms with a laser pointer.

Another In-Q-Tel-backed company, [Infinite Z](#), makes holographic displays. Users put on 3-D glasses and use a small laser pointer to manipulate holograms that seem to pop off of a computer monitor. You can imagine hundreds of uses for a display like this — from computer-aided design to three-dimensional satellite mapping to medical imaging.

In-Q-Tel has also invested in [Silver Tail Systems](#), a security firm that identifies suspicious behavior online. Silver Tail co-founder [Laura Mather](#), a former research analyst for the National Security Agency, says In-Q-Tel gives her company the CIA's seal of approval and helps her sell to federal customers.

Taxpayer-Funded Technology

Smith, the former general counsel for the CIA, says In-Q-Tel was created to bring technologies like Silver Tail's into the intelligence community quickly.

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Back when it was created, the original idea was that In-Q-Tel would not be supported by taxpayers forever. It was set up as a nonprofit that would reinvest its earnings in its mission — and pay private-sector salaries. Today, its CEO, [Christopher Darby](#), earns roughly \$1 million a year.

"The salaries in the high-tech community among successful people are really quite extraordinary," Smith says. "My father used to say you tend to get what you pay for, and I think that's true."

In-Q-Tel only invests in projects that create technology with commercial applications outside of government, because a successful commercial product is more likely to be supported and developed.

But In-Q-Tel has never become self-sufficient. It still receives more than \$56 million a year in government support, according to its most recent tax return. Smith says, though, that In-Q-Tel's primary goal was never financial independence, or even to make money. Its purpose was to help the CIA catch up with technology, and he says it's done that.

"If you go now to the desk of an analyst at the agency who's working on any given problem — let's take nuclear proliferation [for example] — what they have available to them today is breathtaking," Smith says.

And Smith says In-Q-Tel deserves much of the credit.

ROGUE GROUPS WITHIN SPY AGENCIES ABUSING SPY AGENCIES FOR PERSONAL POLITICAL AND PROFITEERING AGENDAS:

THE WASHINGTON POST

[National Security](#)

Probe of silencers leads to web of Pentagon secrets



This December 26, 2011, file photo shows the Pentagon in Arlington County, Va. (AFP/GETTY IMAGES)

By [Craig Whitlock](#), October 12

The mysterious workings of a Pentagon office that oversees clandestine operations are unraveling in federal court, where a criminal investigation has exposed a secret weapons program entwined with allegations of a sweetheart contract, fake badges and trails of destroyed evidence. Capping an investigation that began almost two years ago, separate trials are scheduled this month in U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Va., for a civilian Navy intelligence official and a hot-rod auto mechanic from California who prosecutors allege conspired to manufacture an untraceable batch of automatic-rifle silencers. The exact purpose of the silencers remains hazy, but [court filings](#) and [pretrial testimony](#) suggest they were part of a top-secret operation that would help arm guerrillas or commandos overseas. The silencers — 349 of them — were ordered by a little-known Navy intelligence office at the Pentagon known as the Directorate for Plans, Policy, Oversight and Integration, according to charging documents. The directorate is composed of fewer than 10 civilian employees, most of them retired military personnel. Court records filed by prosecutors allege that the Navy paid the auto mechanic — the brother of the directorate's boss — \$1.6 million for the silencers, even though they cost only \$10,000 in parts and labor to manufacture. Much of the documentation in the investigation has been filed under seal on national security grounds. According to the records that have been made public, the crux of the case is whether the silencers were properly purchased for an authorized secret mission or were assembled for a rogue operation. A former senior Navy official familiar with the investigation described directorate officials as "wannabe spook-cops." Speaking on the condition of anonymity because the case is still unfolding, he added, "I know it sounds goofy, but it was like they were building their own mini law enforcement and intelligence agency." The directorate is a civilian-run office that is supposed to provide back-office support and oversight for Navy and Marine intelligence operations. But some of its activities have fallen into a gray area, crossing into more active involvement with secret missions, according to a former senior Defense Department official familiar with the directorate's work. "By design, that office is supposed to do a little more than policy and programmatic oversight," the former defense official said, speaking on the condition of anonymity because much of the directorate's work is classified. "But something happened and it lost its way. It became a case of the fox guarding the henhouse, and I suspect deeper issues might be in play." Navy officials declined to comment, citing the ongoing investigation and prosecution. "The Department of the Navy has fully cooperated with law enforcement since this investigation was initiated ... and will continue to fully cooperate," Cmdr. Ryan Perry, a Navy spokesman at the Pentagon, said.

Missing evidence

Prosecutors have said that the silencers were acquired for a "special access program," or a highly secretive military operation. A contracting document filed with the court stated that the silencers were needed to support a program code-named UPSTAIRS but gave no other details.

According to court papers filed by prosecutors, one directorate official told an unnamed witness that the silencers were intended for Navy SEAL Team 6, the elite commando unit that killed Osama bin Laden.

But representatives for SEAL Team 6 told federal investigators they had not ordered the silencers and did not know anything about them, according to the court papers.

Sorting out the truth has been made more difficult by the elimination of potential evidence.

At one pretrial hearing, a defense attorney for the auto mechanic, Mark S. Landersman of Temecula, Calif., accused the Navy of impeding the investigation by destroying a secret stash of automatic rifles that the silencers were designed to fit. Prosecutors immediately objected to further discussion in open court, calling it a classified matter.

The destroyed weapons were part of a stockpile of about 1,600 AK-47-style rifles that the U.S. military had collected overseas and stored in a warehouse in Pennsylvania, according to a source familiar with the investigation.

If the foreign-made weapons were equipped with unmarked silencers, the source said, the weapons could have been used by U.S. or foreign forces for special operations in other countries without any risk that they would be traced back to the United States.

A different source, a current senior Navy official, confirmed that an arsenal of AK-47-style rifles in a warehouse in Mechanicsburg, Pa., had been destroyed within the past year. But that official suggested the issue was a smokescreen, saying the weapons were being kept for a different purpose and that no program had existed to equip them with silencers.

In a separate move that eliminated more potential evidence, Navy security officers incinerated documents last year that they had seized from the directorate's offices in the Pentagon, according to court records and testimony.

Two Navy security officers have testified that they stuffed the papers into burn bags and destroyed them on Nov. 15, 2013 — three days after The Washington Post [published a front-page article](#) about the unfolding federal investigation into the silencers.

One of the security officers said it did not occur to her that the documents should be preserved, despite Navy policies prohibiting the destruction of records that could be relevant to lawsuits or criminal investigations.

The officer, Francine Cox, acknowledged that she was aware the Navy directorate was under scrutiny and that she had read the Post article shortly before burning the documents. But she said she did not think the papers were important.

"I didn't think the information we had was pertinent," Cox testified at a pretrial hearing in July. "If you don't tell me to hold onto something, I don't have to hold onto it."

[Leo M. Hall, a Navy intelligence official](#) who is charged with illegally purchasing the silencers and whose trial is scheduled to begin this month, argued that the burned material was crucial to his defense. He said the documents included handwritten notes and other papers showing the undersecretary of the Navy at the time had authorized the project.

"My notes would show I acted in good faith," Hall testified at the July hearing.

Stuart Sears, an attorney for Hall, declined to comment.

District Court Judge Leonie M. Brinkema rejected a bid by Hall's attorneys to dismiss the charges against him but was incredulous that the Navy had destroyed the documents.

"I don't find any nefarious evidence, or evidence of bad intent, but it sure does look to the court like negligence," she said.

On other occasions over the past year, Brinkema has questioned whether prosecutors were fully aware of what the Navy directorate was up to and whether they really wanted to expose its activities by taking the case to trial.

"We're getting deeper and deeper into a morass," she said at a hearing in March. "One of the things the government always has to think about is the cost-benefit analysis. At the end of the day, is this particular criminal prosecution worth the risk of having to disclose or reveal very sensitive information?"

An investigation snowballs

Suspicion about the Navy directorate surfaced in January 2013 when one of its officials appeared at a Defense Intelligence Agency office in Arlington and asked for a badge that would allow him to carry weapons on military property, according to statements made by prosecutors during pretrial hearings.

The directorate official, [Tedd Shellenbarger](#), flashed a set of credentials stamped with the letters LEO — an acronym for "law enforcement officer" — even though his office dealt primarily with policy matters and lacked law enforcement powers, the former senior Navy official said.

Shellenbarger's request prompted the Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) to obtain a warrant to search the directorate's offices at the Pentagon. Agents found badge materials and other documentation that led them to broaden their investigation, according to the former senior Navy official.

Shellenbarger and three other directorate officials were placed on leave, according to court records. Shellenbarger has not been charged and has since returned to work for the Navy. His attorney, David Deitch, indicated he might be called as a witness at Hall's trial.

"Mr. Shellenbarger has cooperated fully in providing truthful information to the government about his conduct, which was undertaken at the direction of his supervisors," Deitch said.

The badge inquiry led NCIS to discover e-mails and a paper trail pertaining to the \$1.6 million contract to buy the silencers from Landersman, the California mechanic. Court papers describe him as a struggling small businessman who raced hot-rods and had declared bankruptcy in July 2012.

He is the brother of David W. Landersman, the senior director for intelligence in the Navy directorate.

Prosecutors have referred to David Landersman in court papers as a conspirator in the case, but he has not been charged. He is a combat-decorated retired Marine officer. His attorney has said he did nothing wrong.

Mark Landersman has been charged with manufacturing, selling and shipping the unmarked silencers without a federal firearms license. His trial is scheduled to begin Oct. 27. One of his attorneys, Cary Citronberg, declined to comment.

Ordinarily, a clandestine weapons program requires reams of paperwork and legal review. No documentation has surfaced in court to indicate that Navy officials formally signed off on the silencer project, although many pretrial motions have been filed under seal.

Hall, the directorate official charged with illegally purchasing the silencers, has asserted that he received verbal approval for the secret program from Robert C. Martinege, a former acting undersecretary of the Navy, according to statements made during pretrial hearings.

Martinege was [forced to resign in January](#) after investigators looking into the silencer deal found evidence that he had engaged in personal misconduct, according to Navy officials. The officials said the misconduct was unrelated to the silencer contract.

Martinege is expected to be a key witness at Hall's trial. He declined to comment, saying, "I have been advised not to discuss any aspect of that matter while the case is pending."

Craig Whitlock covers the Pentagon and national security. He has reported for The Washington Post since 1998.

NEWSWEEK

Assange: Google Is Not What It Seems

By [Julian Assange](#)

Filed: 10/23/14 at 12:47 PM | Updated: 10/24/14 at 5:38 PM



"When Google Met Wikileaks" by Julian Assange published by OR Books. Reuters; OR Books

Filed Under: [World](#), [WikiLeaks](#), [Julian Assange](#), [Google](#), [Eric Schmidt](#)

In June 2011, Julian Assange received an unusual visitor: the chairman of Google, Eric Schmidt, arrived from America at Ellingham Hall, the country house in Norfolk, England where Assange was living under house arrest.

For several hours the besieged leader of the world's most famous insurgent publishing organization and the billionaire head of the world's largest information empire locked horns. The two men debated the political problems faced by society, and the technological solutions engendered by the global network—from the Arab Spring to Bitcoin.

They outlined radically opposing perspectives: for Assange, the liberating power of the Internet is based on its freedom and statelessness. For Schmidt, emancipation is at one with U.S. foreign policy objectives and is driven by connecting non-Western countries to Western companies and markets. These differences embodied a tug-of-war over the Internet's future that has only gathered force subsequently.

[Newsweek Magazine is Back In Print](#)

In this extract from [When Google Met WikiLeaks](#) Assange describes his encounter with Schmidt and how he came to conclude that it was far from an innocent exchange of views.

Eric Schmidt is an influential figure, even among the parade of powerful characters with whom I have had to cross paths since I founded WikiLeaks. In mid-May 2011 I was under house arrest in rural Norfolk, England, about three hours' drive northeast of London. The crackdown against our work was in full swing and every wasted moment seemed like an eternity. It was hard to get my attention.

But when my colleague Joseph Farrell told me the executive chairman of Google wanted to make an appointment with me, I was listening.

In some ways the higher echelons of Google seemed more distant and obscure to me than the halls of Washington. We had been locking horns with senior U.S. officials for years by that point. The mystique had worn off. But the power centers growing up in Silicon Valley were still opaque and I was suddenly conscious of an opportunity to understand and influence what was becoming the most influential company on earth. Schmidt had taken over as CEO of Google in 2001 and built it into an empire.

I was intrigued that the mountain would come to Muhammad. But it was not until well after Schmidt and his companions had been and gone that I came to understand who had really visited me.

The stated reason for the visit was a book. Schmidt was penning a treatise with Jared Cohen, the director of Google Ideas, an outfit that describes itself as Google's in-house "think/do tank."

I knew little else about Cohen at the time. In fact, Cohen had moved to Google from the U.S. State Department in 2010. He had been a fast-talking "Generation Y" ideas man at State under two U.S. administrations, a courtier from the world of policy think tanks and institutes, poached in his early twenties.

He became a senior advisor for Secretaries of State Rice and Clinton. At State, on the Policy Planning Staff, Cohen was soon christened "Condi's party-starter," channeling buzzwords from Silicon Valley into U.S. policy circles and producing delightful rhetorical concoctions such as "Public Diplomacy 2.0." On his Council on Foreign Relations [adjunct staff page](#) he listed his expertise as "terrorism; radicalization; impact of connection technologies on 21st century statecraft; Iran."

It was Cohen who, while he was still at the Department of State, was said to have emailed Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey to delay scheduled maintenance in order to assist the aborted 2009 uprising in Iran. His documented love affair with Google began the same year when he befriended Eric Schmidt as they together surveyed the post-occupation wreckage of Baghdad. Just months later, Schmidt re-created Cohen's natural habitat within Google itself by engineering a "think/do tank" based in New York and appointing Cohen as its head. Google Ideas was born.

Later that year two [co-wrote a policy piece](#) for the Council on Foreign Relations' journal Foreign Affairs, praising the reformative potential of Silicon Valley technologies as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy. Describing what they called "coalitions of the connected," Schmidt and Cohen claimed that:

Democratic states that have built coalitions of their militaries have the capacity to do the same with their connection technologies....

They offer a new way to exercise the **duty to protect** citizens around the world [emphasis added].

Schmidt and Cohen said they wanted to interview me. I agreed. A date was set for June.



Executive Chairman of Google Eric Schmidt and Jared Cohen, director of Google Ideas Olivia Harris/Reuters

...

By the time June came around there was already a lot to talk about. That summer WikiLeaks was still grinding through the release of U.S. diplomatic cables, publishing thousands of them every week. When, seven months earlier, we had first started releasing the cables, Hillary Clinton [had denounced the publication](#) as "an attack on the international community" that would "tear at the fabric" of government.

It was into this ferment that Google projected itself that June, touching down at a London airport and making the long drive up into East Anglia to Norfolk and Beccles.

Schmidt arrived first, accompanied by his then partner, Lisa Shields. When he introduced her as a vice president of the Council on Foreign Relations—a U.S. foreign-policy think tank with close ties to the State Department—I thought little more of it. Shields herself was straight out of Camelot, having been spotted by John Kennedy Jr.'s side back in the early 1990s.

They sat with me and we exchanged pleasantries. They said they had forgotten their Dictaphone, so we used mine. We made an agreement that I would forward them the recording and in exchange they would forward me the transcript, to be corrected for accuracy and clarity. We began. Schmidt plunged in at the deep end, straightaway quizzing me on the organizational and technological underpinnings of WikiLeaks.

...

Some time later Jared Cohen arrived. With him was Scott Malcomson, introduced as the book's editor. Three months after the meeting Malcomson would enter the State Department as the lead speechwriter and principal advisor to Susan Rice (then U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, now national security advisor).

At this point, the delegation was one part Google, three parts U.S. foreign-policy establishment, but I was still none the wiser. Handshakes out of the way, we got down to business.

Schmidt was a good foil. A late-fiftysomething, squint-eyed behind owl spectacles, managerially dressed—Schmidt's dour appearance concealed a machinelike analyticity. His questions often skipped to the heart of the matter, betraying a powerful nonverbal structural intelligence.

It was the same intellect that had abstracted software-engineering principles to scale Google into a megacorp, ensuring that the corporate infrastructure always met the rate of growth. This was a person who understood how to build and maintain systems: systems of information and systems of people. My world was new to him, but it was also a world of unfolding human processes, scale and information flows.

For a man of systematic intelligence, Schmidt's politics—such as I could hear from our discussion—were surprisingly conventional, even banal. He grasped structural relationships quickly, but struggled to verbalize many of them, often shoe-horning geopolitical subtleties into Silicon Valley marketese or the ossified State Department micro-language of his companions. He was at his best when he was speaking (perhaps without realizing it) as an engineer, breaking down complexities into their orthogonal components.

I found Cohen a good listener, but a less interesting thinker, possessed of that relentless conviviality that routinely afflicts career generalists and Rhodes Scholars. As you would expect from his foreign-policy background, Cohen had a knowledge of international flash points and conflicts and moved rapidly between them, detailing different scenarios to test my assertions. But it sometimes felt as if he was riffing on orthodoxies in a way that was designed to impress his former colleagues in official Washington.

Malcomson, older, was more pensive, his input thoughtful and generous. Shields was quiet for much of the conversation, taking notes, humoring the bigger egos around the table while she got on with the real work.

As the interviewee, I was expected to do most of the talking. I sought to guide them into my worldview. To their credit, I consider the interview perhaps the best I have given. I was out of my comfort zone and I liked it.

We ate and then took a walk in the grounds, all the while on the record. I asked Eric Schmidt to leak U.S. government information requests to WikiLeaks, and he refused, suddenly nervous, citing the illegality of disclosing Patriot Act requests. And then, as the evening came on, it was done and they were gone, back to the unreal, remote halls of information empire, and I was left to get back to my work.

That was the end of it, or so I thought.

...

Two months later, WikiLeaks' release of State Department cables was coming to an abrupt end. For three-quarters of a year we had painstakingly managed the publication, pulling in over a hundred global media partners, distributing documents in their regions of influence and overseeing a worldwide, systematic publication and redaction system, fighting for maximum impact for our sources.

But *The Guardian* newspaper—our former partner—had published the confidential decryption password to all 251,000 cables in a chapter heading in its book, [pushed out hastily](#) in February 2011.

By mid-August we discovered that a former German employee—whom I had suspended in 2010—was cultivating business relationships with a variety of organizations and individuals by shopping around the location of the encrypted file, paired with the password's whereabouts in the book. At the rate the information was spreading, we estimated that within two weeks most intelligence agencies, contractors and middlemen would have all the cables, but the public would not.

I decided it was necessary to bring forward our publication schedule by four months and contact the State Department to get it on record that we had given them advance warning. The situation would then be harder to spin into another legal or political assault.

Unable to raise Louis Susman, then U.S. ambassador to the U.K., we tried the front door. WikiLeaks investigations editor Sarah Harrison called the State Department front desk and informed the operator that "Julian Assange" wanted to have a conversation with Hillary Clinton. Predictably, this statement was initially greeted with bureaucratic disbelief.

We soon found ourselves in a reenactment of that scene in *Dr. Strangelove*, where Peter Sellers cold-calls the White House to warn of an impending nuclear war and is immediately put on hold. As in the film, we climbed the hierarchy, speaking to incrementally more superior officials until we reached Clinton's senior legal advisor. He told us he would call us back. We hung up, and waited.

When the phone rang half an hour later, it was not the State Department on the other end of the line. Instead, it was Joseph Farrell, the WikiLeaks staffer who had set up the meeting with Google. He had just received an email from Lisa Shields seeking to confirm that it was indeed WikiLeaks calling the State Department.

It was at this point that I realized Eric Schmidt might not have been an emissary of Google alone. Whether officially or not, he had been keeping some company that placed him very close to Washington, D.C., including a well-documented relationship with President Obama. Not only had Hillary Clinton's people known that Eric Schmidt's partner had visited me, but they had also elected to use her as a back channel.

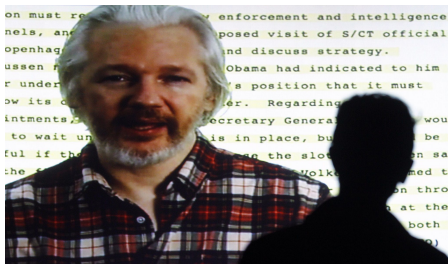
While WikiLeaks had been deeply involved in publishing the inner archive of the U.S. State Department, the U.S. State Department had, in effect, snuck into the WikiLeaks command center and hit me up for a free lunch. Two years later, in the wake of his early 2013 visits to China, North Korea and Burma, it would come to be appreciated that the chairman of Google might be conducting, in one way or another, "back-channel diplomacy" for Washington. But at the time [it was a novel thought](#).

I put it aside until February 2012, when WikiLeaks—along with over thirty of our international media partners—began publishing the Global Intelligence Files: the internal email spool from the Texas-based private intelligence firm Stratfor. One of our stronger investigative partners—the Beirut-based newspaper *Al Akhbar*—[scoured the emails for intelligence](#) on Jared Cohen.

The people at Stratfor, who liked to think of themselves as a sort of corporate CIA, were acutely conscious of other ventures that they perceived as making inroads into their sector. Google had turned up on their radar. In a series of colorful emails they discussed a pattern of activity conducted by Cohen under the Google Ideas aegis, suggesting what the "do" in "think/do tank" actually means.

Cohen's directorate appeared to cross over from public relations and "corporate responsibility" work into active corporate intervention in foreign affairs at a level that is normally reserved for states. Jared Cohen could be wryly named Google's "director of regime change."

According to the emails, he was trying to plant his fingerprints on some of the major historical events in the contemporary Middle East. He could be placed in Egypt during the revolution, meeting with Wael Ghorini, the Google employee whose arrest and imprisonment hours later would make him a PR-friendly symbol of the uprising in the Western press. Meetings had been planned in Palestine and Turkey, both of which—claimed Stratfor emails—were killed by the senior Google leadership as too risky.



October 22, 2014. Quique Garcia/AFP/Getty Founder of Wikileaks Julian Assange speaking from the Ecuadorean embassy in London appears on a screen as he gives a video conference to open the Human Rights Film Festival in Barcelona on

Only a few months before he met with me, Cohen was planning a trip to the edge of Iran in Azerbaijan to "engage the Iranian communities closer to the border," as part of a Google Ideas' project on "repressive societies." In internal emails Stratfor's vice president for intelligence, Fred Burton (himself a former State Department security official), [wrote](#):

Google is getting WH [White House] and State Dept support and air cover. In reality they are doing things the CIA cannot do...

[Cohen] is going to get himself kidnapped or killed. Might be the best thing to happen to expose Google's covert role in foaming up risings, to be blunt. The US Gov't can then disavow knowledge and Google is left holding the shit-bag.

In [further internal communication](#), Burton said his sources on Cohen's activities were Marty Lev—Google's director of security and safety—and Eric Schmidt himself.

Looking for something more concrete, I began to search in WikiLeaks' archive for information on Cohen. [State Department cables](#) released as part of Cablegate reveal that Cohen had been in Afghanistan in 2009, trying to convince the four major Afghan mobile phone companies to move their antennas onto U.S. military bases. In Lebanon, he quietly [worked to establish](#) an intellectual and clerical rival to Hezbollah, the "Higher Shia League." And in London [he offered Bollywood movie executives](#) funds to insert anti-extremist content into their films, and promised to connect them to related networks in Hollywood.

Three days after he visited me at Ellingham Hall, Jared Cohen flew to Ireland to direct the "[Save Summit](#)," an event co-sponsored by Google Ideas and the Council on Foreign Relations. Gathering former inner-city gang members, right-wing militants, violent nationalists and "religious extremists" from all over the world together in one place, the event aimed to workshop technological solutions to the problem of "violent extremism." What could go wrong?

Cohen's world seems to be one event like this after another: endless soirées for the cross-fertilization of influence between elites and their vassals, under the pious rubric of "civil society." The received wisdom in advanced capitalist societies is that there still exists an organic "civil society sector" in which institutions form autonomously and come together to manifest the interests and will of citizens. The fable has it that the boundaries of this sector are respected by actors from government and the "private sector," leaving a safe space for NGOs and nonprofits to advocate for things like human rights, free speech and accountable government.

This sounds like a great idea. But if it was ever true, it has not been for decades. Since at least the 1970s, authentic actors like unions and churches have folded under a sustained assault by free-market statism, transforming "civil society" into a buyer's market for political factions and corporate interests looking to exert influence at arm's length. The last forty years have seen a huge proliferation of think tanks and political NGOs whose purpose, beneath all the verbiage, is to execute political agendas by proxy.

It is not just obvious neocon front groups like Foreign Policy Initiative. It also includes fatuous Western NGOs like Freedom House, where naïve but well-meaning career nonprofit workers are twisted in knots by political funding streams, denouncing non-Western human rights violations while keeping local abuses firmly in their blind spots.

The civil society conference circuit—which flies developing-world activists across the globe hundreds of times a year to bless the unholy union between "government and private stakeholders" at geopoliticized events like the "Stockholm Internet Forum"—simply could not exist if it were not blasted with millions of dollars in political funding annually.

Scan the memberships of the biggest U.S. think tanks and institutes and the same names keep cropping up. Cohen's Save Summit went on to seed AVE, or Against/Violent Extremism.org, a long-term project whose principal backer besides Google Ideas is the Gen Next Foundation. This [foundation's website](#) says it is an "exclusive membership organization and platform for successful individuals" that aims to bring about "social change" driven by venture capital funding. Gen Next's "private sector and non-profit foundation support avoids some of the potential perceived conflicts of interest faced by initiatives funded by governments." Jared Cohen is an executive member.

Gen Next also backs [an NGO](#), launched by Cohen toward the end of his State Department tenure, for bringing Internet-based global "pro-democracy activists" into the U.S. foreign relations patronage network. The group originated as the "Alliance of Youth Movements" with an inaugural summit in New York City in 2008 funded by the State Department and encrusted with the logos of [corporate sponsors](#). The summit flew in carefully selected [social media activists](#) from "problem areas" like Venezuela and Cuba to watch speeches by the Obama campaign's new-media team and the State

Department's James Glassman, and to network with public relations consultants, "philanthropists," and U.S. media personalities.

The outfit held two more invite-only summits in London and Mexico City where the delegates were [directly addressed via video link](#) by Hillary Clinton:

You are the vanguard of a rising generation of citizen activists....

And that makes you the kind of leaders we need.

In 2011, the Alliance of Youth Movements rebranded as "Movements.org." In 2012 Movements.org became a division of "Advancing Human Rights," a [new NGO](#) set up by Robert L. Bernstein after he resigned from Human Rights Watch (which he had originally founded) because he felt it should not cover Israeli and U.S. human rights abuses. Advancing Human Rights aims to right Human Rights Watch's wrong by [focusing exclusively](#) on "dictatorships."

Cohen stated that the merger of his Movements.org outfit with Advancing Human Rights was "irresistible," pointing to the latter's "phenomenal network of cyber-activists in the Middle East and North Africa." He then joined the [Advancing Human Rights board](#), which also includes Richard Kemp, the former commander of British forces in occupied Afghanistan. In its present guise, Movements.org continues to receive funding from Gen Next, as well as from Google, MSNBC and PR giant Edelman, which represents General Electric, Boeing, and Shell, among others.

Google Ideas is bigger, but it follows the same game plan. Glance down the speaker lists of its annual invite-only get-togethers, such as "Crisis in a Connected World" in October 2013. Social network theorists and activists give the event a veneer of authenticity, but in truth it boasts a toxic profeta of attendees: U.S. officials, telecom magnates, security consultants, finance capitalists and foreign-policy tech vultures like Alec Ross (Cohen's twin at the State Department).

At the hard core are the arms contractors and career military: active U.S. Cyber Command chieftains, and even the admiral responsible for all U.S. military operations in Latin America from 2006 to 2009. [Tying up the package](#) are Jared Cohen and the chairman of Google, Eric Schmidt.

I began to think of Schmidt as a brilliant but politically hapless Californian tech billionaire who had been exploited by the very U.S. foreign-policy types he had collected to act as translators between himself and official Washington—a West Coast–East Coast illustration of the principal-agent dilemma.

I was wrong.

...

Eric Schmidt was born in Washington, D.C., where his father had worked as a professor and economist for the Nixon Treasury. He attended high school in Arlington, Virginia, before graduating with a degree in engineering from Princeton.

In 1979, Schmidt headed out West to Berkeley, where he received his Ph.D. before joining Stanford/ Berkeley spin-off Sun Microsystems in 1983. By the time he left Sun, sixteen years later, he had become part of its executive leadership.

Sun had significant contracts with the U.S. government, but it was not until he was in Utah as CEO of Novell that records show Schmidt strategically engaging Washington's overt political class. Federal campaign finance records show that on January 6, 1999, Schmidt donated two lots of \$1,000 to the Republican senator for Utah, Orrin Hatch. On the same day Schmidt's wife, Wendy, is also listed giving two lots of \$1,000 to Senator Hatch.

By the start of 2001, over a dozen other politicians and PACs, including Al Gore, George W. Bush, Dianne Feinstein, and Hillary Clinton, were on the Schmidts' payroll, in one case for \$100,000.

By 2013, Eric Schmidt—who had become publicly over-associated with the Obama White House—was more politic. Eight Republicans and eight Democrats were directly funded, as were two PACs. That April, \$32,300 went to the National Republican Senatorial Committee. A month later the same amount, \$32,300, headed off to the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. Why Schmidt was donating exactly the [same amount of money to both parties](#) is a \$64,600 question.

It was also in 1999 that Schmidt joined the board of a Washington, D.C.–based group: the New America Foundation, a merger of well-connected centrist forces (in D.C. terms). The foundation and its 100 staff serve as an influence mill, using its network of approved national security, foreign policy and technology pundits to place hundreds of articles and op-eds per year.

By 2008, Schmidt had become chairman of its board of directors. As of 2013 the [New America Foundation's principal funders](#) (each contributing over \$1 million) were listed as Eric and Wendy Schmidt, the U.S. State Department and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Secondary funders include Google, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Radio Free Asia.

Schmidt's involvement in the New America Foundation places him firmly in the Washington establishment nexus. The foundation's [other board members](#), seven of whom also list themselves as members of the Council on Foreign Relations, include Francis Fukuyama, one of the intellectual fathers of the neoconservative movement; Rita Hauser, who served on the President's Intelligence Advisory Board under both Bush and Obama; Jonathan Soros, the son of George Soros; Walter Russell Mead, a U.S. security strategist and editor of the American Interest; Helene Gayle, who sits on the boards of Coca-Cola, Colgate-Palmolive, the Rockefeller Foundation, the State Department's Foreign Affairs Policy Unit, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the White House Fellows program and Bono's ONE Campaign; and Daniel Yergin, oil geo-strategist, former chair of the U.S. Department of Energy's Task Force.



Google Executive Chairman Eric Schmidt Petar Kujundzic/Reuters

The chief executive of the foundation, appointed in 2013, is Jared Cohen's former boss at the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, [Arne-Marie Slaughter](#), a Princeton law and international relations work with an eye for revolving doors. She is everywhere, [issuing calls](#) for Obama to respond to the Ukraine crisis not only by deploying covert U.S. forces into the country but also by dropping bombs on Syria—on the basis that this will send a message to Russia and China. Along with Schmidt, she is a 2013 attendee of the Bilderberg conference and sits on the State Department's [Foreign Affairs Policy Board](#).

There was nothing politically hapless about Eric Schmidt. I had been too eager to see a politically unambitious Silicon Valley engineer, a relic of the good old days of computer science graduate culture on the West Coast. But that is not the sort of person who [attends the Bilderberg conference](#) four years running, who pays regular visits to the White House, or who delivers "fireside chats" at the World Economic Forum in Davos.

Schmidt's emergence as Google's "foreign minister"—making pomp and ceremony state visits across geopolitical fault lines—had not come out of nowhere; it had been presaged by years of assimilation within U.S. establishment networks of reputation and influence.

On a personal level, Schmidt and Cohen are perfectly likable people. But Google's chairman is a classic "head of industry" player, with all of the [ideological baggage](#) that comes with that role. Schmidt fits exactly where he is: the point where the centrist, liberal and imperialist tendencies meet in American political life.

By all appearances, Google's bosses genuinely believe in the civilizing power of enlightened multinational corporations, and they see this mission as continuous with the shaping of the world according to the better judgment of the "benevolent superpower." They will tell you that open-mindedness is a virtue, but all perspectives that challenge the exceptionalist drive at the heart of American foreign policy will remain invisible to them. This is the impenetrable banality of "don't be evil." They believe that they are doing good. And that is a problem.

...

Google is different. Google is visionary. Google is the future. Google is more than just a company. Google gives back to the community. Google is a force for good.

Even when Google [airs its corporate ambivalence publicly](#), it does little to dislodge these items of faith. The company's reputation is seemingly unassailable. Google's colorful, playful logo is imprinted on human retinas just [under 6 billion times each day](#), 2.1 trillion times a year—an opportunity for respondent conditioning enjoyed by no other company in history.

Caught red-handed last year making petabytes of personal data available to the U.S. intelligence community through the PRISM program, Google nevertheless continues to coast on the goodwill generated by its "don't be evil" doublespeak. A few symbolic open letters to the White House later and it seems all is forgiven. Even anti-surveillance campaigners cannot help themselves, at once condemning government spying but trying to alter Google's invasive surveillance practices using appeasement strategies.

Nobody wants to acknowledge that Google has grown big and bad. But it has. Schmidt's tenure as CEO saw Google integrate with the shadiest of U.S. power structures as it expanded into a geographically invasive megacorporation. But Google has always been comfortable with this proximity. Long before company founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin hired Schmidt in 2001, their initial research upon which Google was based [had been partly funded](#) by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA). And even as Schmidt's Google developed an image as the overly friendly giant of global tech, it was building a close relationship with the intelligence community.

In 2003, the U.S. National Security Agency (NSA) had already started systematically violating the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) under its director General Michael Hayden. These were the days of the "Total Information Awareness" program. Before PRISM was ever dreamed of, under orders from the Bush White House the NSA was already aiming to "collect it all, sniff it all, know it all, process it all, exploit it all."

During the same period, Google—whose publicly declared [corporate mission](#) is to collect and "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful"—[was accepting NSA money](#) to the tune of \$2 million to provide the agency with search tools for its rapidly accreting hoard of stolen knowledge.

In 2004, after taking over Keyhole, a mapping tech startup co-funded by the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) and the CIA, Google developed the technology into Google Maps, an enterprise version of which it has since shopped to the Pentagon and associated federal and state agencies on multimillion-dollar [contracts](#).

In 2008, Google helped launch an NGA spy satellite, the GeoEye-1, into space. Google shares the photographs from the satellite with the U.S. military and intelligence communities. In 2010, NGA awarded Google a [\\$27 million contract](#) for "geospatial visualization services."

In 2010, after the Chinese government was accused of hacking Google, the company entered into a "formal information-sharing" relationship with the NSA, which was said to [allow NSA analysts](#) to "evaluate vulnerabilities" in Google's hardware and software. Although the exact contours of the deal have never been disclosed, the NSA brought in other government agencies to help, including the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security.

Around the same time, Google was becoming involved in a program known as the "Enduring Security Framework" (ESF), which entailed the sharing of information between Silicon Valley tech companies and Pentagon-affiliated agencies "at network speed." Emails obtained in 2014 under Freedom of Information requests show Schmidt and his fellow Googler Sergey Brin corresponding on first-name terms with NSA chief General Keith Alexander about ESF.

Reportage on the emails focused on the familiarity in the correspondence: "General Keith...so great to see you...!" Schmidt wrote. But most reports over-looked a crucial detail. "Your insights as a key member of the Defense Industrial Base," Alexander wrote to Brin, "are valuable to ensure ESF's efforts have measurable impact."

The Department of Homeland Security [defines the Defense Industrial Base](#) as "the worldwide industrial complex that enables research and development, as well as design, production, delivery, and maintenance of military weapons systems, subsystems, and components or parts, to meet **U.S. military requirements** [emphasis added]." The Defense Industrial Base provides "products and services that are essential to mobilize, deploy, and sustain military operations."

Does it include regular commercial services purchased by the U.S. military? No. The definition specifically excludes the purchase of regular commercial services. Whatever makes Google a "key member of the Defense Industrial Base," it is not recruitment campaigns pushed out through Google AdWords or soldiers checking their Gmail.

In 2012, Google arrived on the [list of top-spending Washington, D.C. lobbyists](#)—a list typically stalked exclusively by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, military contractors, and the petro-carbon leviathans. Google entered the rankings above military aerospace giant Lockheed Martin, with a total of \$18.2 million spent in 2012 to Lockheed's \$15.3 million. Boeing, the military contractor that absorbed McDonnell Douglas in 1997, also came below Google, at \$15.6 million spent, as did Northrop Grumman at \$17.5 million.

In autumn 2013 the Obama administration was trying to drum up support for U.S. airstrikes against Syria. Despite setbacks, the administration [continued to press for military action](#) well into September with speeches and public announcements by both President Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry. On September 10, Google lent its front page—the most popular on the Internet—to the war effort, [inserting a line below the search box](#) reading "Live! Secretary Kerry answers questions on Syria. Today via Hangout at 2pm ET."

As the self-described "radical centrist" *New York Times* columnist Tom Friedman [wrote in 1999](#), sometimes it is not enough to leave the global dominance of American tech corporations to something as mercurial as "the free market":

The hidden hand of the market will never work without a hidden fist. McDonald's cannot flourish without McDonnell Douglas, the designer of the F-15. And the hidden fist that keeps the world safe for Silicon Valley's technologies to flourish is called the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

If anything has changed since those words were written, it is that Silicon Valley has grown restless with that passive role, aspiring instead to adorn the hidden fist like a velvet glove. Writing in 2013, Schmidt and Cohen stated,

What Lockheed Martin was to the twentieth century, technology and cyber-security companies will be to the twenty-first.

One way of looking at it is that it's just business. For an American Internet services monopoly to ensure global market dominance, it cannot simply keep doing what it is doing and let politics take care of itself. American strategic and economic hegemony becomes a vital pillar of its market dominance. What's a megacorp to do? If it wants to straddle the world, it must become part of the original "don't be evil" empire.

But part of the resilient image of Google as "more than just a company" comes from the perception that it does not act like a big, bad corporation. Its penchant for luring people into its services trap with gigabytes of "free storage" produces the perception that Google is giving it away for free, acting directly contrary to the corporate profit motive.

Google is perceived as an essentially philanthropic enterprise—a magical engine presided over by otherworldly visionaries—for creating a [utopian future](#). The company has at times appeared anxious to cultivate this image, pouring funding into "corporate responsibility" initiatives to produce "social change"—exemplified by Google Ideas.

But as Google Ideas shows, the company's "philanthropic" efforts, too, bring it uncomfortably close to the imperial side of U.S. influence. If Blackwater/Xe Services/Academi was running a program like Google Ideas, it would draw intense critical scrutiny. But somehow Google gets a free pass.

Whether it is being just a company or "more than just a company," Google's geopolitical aspirations are firmly enmeshed within the foreign-policy agenda of the world's largest superpower. As Google's search and Internet service monopoly grows, and as it enlarges its industrial surveillance cone to cover the majority of the world's population, [rapidly dominating the mobile phone market and racing to extend Internet access in the global south](#), Google is steadily becoming the Internet for many people. Its influence on the choices and behavior of the totality of individual human beings translates to real power to influence the course of history.

If the future of the Internet is to be Google, that should be of serious concern to people all over the world—in Latin America, East and Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, the former Soviet Union and [even in Europe](#)—for whom the Internet embodies the promise of an alternative to U.S. cultural, economic, and strategic hegemony.

A "don't be evil" empire is still an empire.

Extracted from [When Google Met Wikileaks by Julian Assange](#) published by [QR Books](#). Newsweek readers can obtain a 20 percent discount on the cover price when ordering from the [QR Books website](#) and including the offer code word NEWSWEEK.

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In addition, **In-Q-Tel** and **Google Ventures** both have seats on the board Recorded Future and have been "very helpful," providing advice to the Cambridge, ... **In-Q-Tel** also had provided backing to Keyhole before **Google** acquired the mapping company to use in its technology in **Google Earth**.

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[CIA sells Google shares | Niall Kennedy](#)

In-Q-Tel, the venture capital of the CIA, recently announced a planned sale of 5,636 shares of **Google** stock worth over \$2.2 million. The stock was most likely a result of **In-Q-Tel's** investment in Keyhole, a earth visualization software company acquired by **Google** in October 2004.

niallkennedy.com/blog/2005/11/cia-sells-google.html

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