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The New Dossiers

To the Editor:

On Aug. 1, a new Federal policy under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act (passed in January) goes into effect. The guidelines include not only a punitive provision by which a mother is denied welfare assistance if she refuses to identify and help locate the father of her child but also a provision with frightening implications for all Americans.

Under the guidelines, a Social Security number for each member—each child, even newborn—of the dependent family will be required. This in effect establishes a tracking system of an individual from birth onward. The stigmata of welfare dependence and/or illegitimacy follow these new Social Security registrants, but the implications go far beyond this segment of our citizenry and can ultimately affect the right to privacy and basic civil rights of all Americans.

Recent events have shown how Federal and local government agencies and departments have clearly and systematically violated the civil rights of Americans through the illegal maintenance of dossiers and the use of information in them in an attempt to destroy the credibility of hundreds of people for political purposes.

Beginning in August, Title IV-D will in essence legitimate government maintenance of dossiers on Americans from birth onward.

FRAN DYM

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