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Inside Dialog, Peter Thiel's Secretive Network of Power

June 17, 2026 ⌚ 11 Mins Read



For nearly two decades, a private organization founded by billionaire investor Peter Thiel operated largely out of public view.

Known simply as Dialog, the invitation-only network brought together influential figures from technology, politics, finance, [intelligence](#) and academia for off-the-record retreats.

Membership lists were never published.

Conversations were not meant to leave the room. Participants were encouraged to avoid “status signaling” and discussions operated under strict rules of confidentiality.

That secrecy abruptly ended after a trove of internal records was accidentally exposed

online.

The leak revealed far more than the existence of the organization itself.

It offered a rare look at a private community connecting Silicon Valley executives, [Trump](#) administration officials, military commanders, senators, economists and leaders from some of the most powerful institutions in the Western world.

The result has drawn comparisons to Bilderberg, the decades-old gathering of political and business elites.

Only this version was built in Silicon Valley.

Peter Thiel's Private Society

Dialog was founded in 2006 by Peter Thiel and investor Auren Hoffman.

Unlike the World Economic Forum or Davos, Dialog maintained almost no public profile. Retreats were deliberately kept off the record and membership remained hidden from outsiders.

According to reports, past gatherings were held in Arizona and Venice, while future plans include a campus in the Washington area.



Pictured: Peter Thiel.

The organization's executive director is Raffi Grinberg, author of *How to Be a Grown-Up*.

Internal documents show that participants were regularly reminded that discussions should remain private and that comments should be “non obvious.”

Moderators were encouraged to keep introductions brief despite the fact that many attendees included senators, billionaires and senior military officials.

A Cybersecurity Failure Exposed Everything

Ironically, a group dedicated to privacy and discretion was undone by basic security mistakes.

The leak was first identified by Swiss hacktivist maia arson crimew, who discovered directories embedded within the group’s website code.

The records contained information relating to 222 registrants for the 2026 gathering near Dublin, Ireland.

According to the report, the exposed data included attendance histories, biographies, home cities, membership status and private access tokens used for logging into the group’s systems.

Forms also collected political leanings and even information connected to an internal matchmaking program.

The leak transformed one of Silicon Valley’s most secretive networks into one of its most public stories.

The Names Inside the Network

The membership list revealed an extraordinary mix of people.

Among them were Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, Senator Ted Cruz, Representative Jim Himes, Army Secretary Dan Driscoll and NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe General Alexis Grynkewich.

The leak also identified Joe Lonsdale, one of Palantir’s cofounders, alongside Dialog chairman Auren Hoffman, founder of SafeGraph and LiveRamp.

Other names included Jonathan Greenblatt, chief executive of the Anti-Defamation

League, Peter Goettler of the Cato Institute, Ryan Stowers of the Charles Koch Foundation and Nobel Prize-winning economist Roger Myerson.

Google and DeepMind executives appeared on the list, including Tom Lue, who oversees global affairs for Google's frontier AI division.

National security journalist Souad Mekhennet of *The Washington Post* was also listed among participants.

According to the report, six members of the so-called PayPal **Mafia** were identified within the network. The society also included hedge fund billionaires, diplomats, intelligence figures, actors, authors and religious leaders.

Names (from above) include:

- **Scott Bessent** (U.S. Treasury Secretary)
- **Ted Cruz** (U.S. Senator from Texas)
- **Jim Himes** (U.S. Representative from Connecticut)
- **Dan Driscoll** (U.S. Army Secretary)
- **Alexus Grynke** (NATO Supreme Allied Commander Europe)
- **Joe Lonsdale** (Palantir cofounder and venture capitalist)
- **Auren Hoffman** (Dialog chairman, founder of SafeGraph and LiveRamp)
- **Jonathan Greenblatt** (Chief Executive Officer of the Anti-Defamation League)
- **Peter Goettler** (President and CEO of the Cato Institute)
- **Ryan Stowers** (Executive at the Charles Koch Foundation)
- **Roger Myerson** (Nobel Prize-winning economist and University of Chicago professor)
- **Tom Lue** (Head of Global Affairs for Google's frontier AI division)
- **Souad Mekhennet** (National security journalist at *The Washington Post*)

Preparing for AI, War and the Future

What united many members was a common fascination with the future.

Internal schedules revealed discussions with titles including:

- “Navigating WWII”
- “Battlefield Technologies”
- “Bring Back Nuclear”
- “Money (Does?) Buy Happiness”
- “Build-a-Cult”
- “How’s Your Sex Life?”

Many attendees reportedly predicted that artificial intelligence would dramatically reshape society over the next decade.

Some foresaw mass unemployment and a renewed role for unions and government programs. Others predicted an AI winter, domestic terrorism targeting data centers or a broader religious revival driven by technological upheaval.

One participant reportedly warned that “societal degeneration” would continue to accelerate.

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The topics ranged from geopolitics and longevity research to relationships and philosophy.

The result was something that looked less like a business conference and more like a private laboratory for ideas among people who wield enormous influence.

A Matchmaking Service for Exceptional People

One of the stranger revelations involved romance.

Documents showed that Dialog maintained a separate service designed to help

members form relationships.

A dedicated site offered “meaningful connections for exceptional people,” while registration forms asked participants whether they were searching for love.

Options included “Single Man,” “Single Woman” and “Other.”

The same forms collected sensitive information that members had been assured would never be shared.

Ironically, that information became part of the leak.

The Bigger Question

Secretive gatherings among powerful people are nothing new.

From Bilderberg to Bohemian Grove, elite networks have existed for generations. Supporters argue that private conversations encourage honesty and intellectual exchange.

Critics see them as examples of influence operating beyond public scrutiny.

Dialog appears to sit somewhere between those worlds.

Its members include regulators and executives, military commanders and contractors, intelligence figures and technology leaders.

In some cases, individuals responsible for overseeing industries appeared alongside executives whose companies depend on government contracts or regulation.

Whether one views that as networking or something more significant depends largely on perspective.

What the leak unquestionably revealed is that one of the most secretive communities in modern American power circles was far larger and more interconnected than outsiders previously understood.

Full list of Attendees

- Immad Akhund – Founder & CEO, Mercury.
- Turki Al Faisal Al Saud – Founder, King Faisal Foundation. Fmr. Minister of Intelligence, Saudi Arabia.
- Reema Al-Saud – Ambassador of Saudi Arabia to the U.S.
- John Arnold – Co-Chair, Arnold Ventures. Fmr. Founder, Centaurus Advisors.
- Susan Athey – Professor, Stanford Graduate School of Business. Fmr. Chief Economist, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Peter Attia – Physician, Attia Medical. Author, Outlive.
- Scott Belsky – Partner, A24 Films. Fmr. Chief Strategy Officer & Chief Product Officer, Adobe. Founder, Behance.
- Nicolas Berggruen – Founder & President, Berggruen Holdings.
- Scott Bessent – Secretary, U.S. Treasury.
- Preet Bharara – Fmr. U.S. Attorney, [New York](#) Southern District.
- Elizabeth Blackburn – Fmr. President, Salk Institute for Biomedical Studies. Nobel Prize winner.
- Sarah Bond – President of Xbox, Microsoft.
- Cory Booker – Senator (New Jersey), U.S. Senate.
- Rachel Brand – Chief Legal Officer & Corporate Secretary, Walmart. Fmr. Associate Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Scooter Braun – CEO, Hybe [America](#). Founder, Ithaca Holdings.
- Pete Briger – Principal & Chairman of the Board, Fortress Investment Group.
- Greg Brockman – Co-Founder & President, OpenAI. Fmr. CTO, Stripe.
- Manuel Bronstein – Chief Product Officer, Roblox.
- Peter Brown – CEO, Renaissance Technologies.
- Thasunda Brown Duckett – President & CEO, TIAA.
- Sophia Bush – Actress, One Tree Hill.
- Mike Cannon-Brookes – Co-Founder & Co-CEO, Atlassian.
- Cesar Carvalho – Co-Founder & CEO, Wellhub.
- Wences Casares – Founder & Fmr. CEO, Xapo Bank. Founder: Wanako Games, Banco Lemon, Lemon Wallet.
- Julian Castro – Fmr. Secretary, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

Development.

- Bob Cialdini – Author, Influence.
- Matt Clifford – Prime Minister’s Advisor on AI Opportunities, U.K. Government. Co-Founder, Entrepreneur First.
- Caroline Cochran – Co-Founder & COO, Oklo.
- Matt Cohler – Fmr. General Partner, Benchmark.
- Scott Cook – Co-Founder & Chairman, Intuit.
- Tyler Cowen – Professor of Economics & Director, Mercatus Center, George Mason University.
- Ted Cruz – Senator (Texas), U.S. Senate.
- Adam D’Angelo – Co-Founder & CEO, Quora. Fmr. CTO, Facebook.
- Mitch Daniels – Fmr. Governor, State of Indiana. Fmr. President, Purdue University.
- Dan Driscoll – Secretary, U.S. Army.
- Charles Duhigg – Author: The Power of Habit, Supercommunicators.
- Steve Ells – Founder & Fmr. CEO, Chipotle.
- Tim Ferriss – Author: The 4-Hour Workweek, The 4-Hour [Body](#), The 4-Hour Chef. Host, The Tim Ferriss Show.
- Marcos Galperin – Co-Founder & CEO, MercadoLibre.
- Atul Gawande – Author: Being Mortal, The Checklist Manifesto. Fmr. Assistant Administrator for Global Health, USAID.
- Tom Goldstein – Partner, Goldstein & Russell. Founder & Fmr. Publisher, SCOTUSblog.com.
- Joseph Gordon-Levitt – Actor, 500 Days of Summer, Inception, Looper, Snowden.
- Adam Grant – Organizational Psychologist, Wharton School of Management. Author: Think Again, Originals, Give and Take.
- Severin Hacker – Co-Founder & CTO, Duolingo.
- Jonathan Haidt – Professor, Stern School of Business, NYU. Author: The Anxious Generation, The Righteous Mind, The Coddling of the American Mind.
- Peggy Hamburg – Fmr. Commissioner, U.S. Food & Drug Administration.
- Sam Harris – Podcast Host, Making Sense. Author: Free Will, Lying, Waking Up.
- Jim Himes – Congressman (Connecticut), U.S. House of Representatives.

- Auren Hoffman – CEO, NQB8. Chairman & Fmr. CEO, SafeGraph. Founder & Fmr. CEO, LiveRamp. Chairman, Dialog.
- Reid Hoffman – Partner, Greylock Partners. Co-Founder & Fmr. Executive Chairman, LinkedIn.
- Rob Hur – Fmr. Special Counsel, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Bob Jain – CIO, Millennium Management. Founder, Jain Family Institute.
- Bryan [Johnson](#) – Founder & CEO: Kernel, Blueprint.
- Kaja Kallas – Vice President, European Commission. Fmr. Prime Minister, Estonia.
- Gaurva Kapadia – Founder & CEO, XN.
- Karen Karniol-Tambour – Co-CIO, Bridgewater Associates.
- Garry Kasparov – Fmr. Member, [Russian](#) Opposition Movement’s Coordinating Council. Fmr. World Chess champion.
- Neal Katyal – Partner, Milbank. Fmr. Partner & Supreme Court Practice Leader, Hogan Lovells.
- Shahid Khaqan Abbasi – Fmr. Prime Minister, Pakistan. Founder, Airblue.
- Ezra Klein – Opinion Columnist, The New York Times. Founder & Fmr. Editor-in-chief, Vox. Host, The Ezra Klein Show.
- Taro Kono – Digital Minister, Japan. Fmr. Minister of Defense, Japan.
- Henry Kravis – Co-Founder, Co-Chairman & Co-CEO, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co.
- Jared Kushner – Founder, Affinity Partners.
- Jason Kwon – Chief Strategy Officer, OpenAI.
- Leonard Leo – Co-Chairman & Fmr. Executive Vice President, Federalist Society.
- Jon Levin – President, Stanford University.
- Howie Liu – Founder & CEO, Airtable.
- Joe Lonsdale – Founding Partner, 8VC. Co-Founder: Palantir, Addepar.
- Micky Malka – Founder & Managing Partner, Ribbit Capital.
- Stan McChrystal – Founder & CEO, McChrystal Group. Fmr. General, U.S. Army.
- Neal Mohan – CEO, YouTube.
- Lisa Monaco – Fmr. Deputy Attorney General, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Wes Moore – Governor, State of Maryland.

- Elon Musk – Founder & CEO, SpaceX. Co-Founder & CEO, Tesla Motors.
- Demet Mutlu – Founder & CEO, Trendyol Group.
- Vas Narasimhan – CEO, Novartis.
- Grover Norquist – President, Americans for Tax Reform.
- Mike Novogratz – CEO, Galaxy Digital. Fmr. CIO, Fortress Investment Group.
- Jim O’Neill – Nominee for Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Co-Founder, Thiel Fellowship.
- Chamath Palihapitiya – Founder & CEO, Social Capital LP. Co-Owner, Golden State Warriors.
- Benj Pasek – Songwriter & Producer: La La Land, The Greatest Showman, Dear Evan Hansen. Emmy, Grammy, Oscar, Tony winner.
- Daniel Pink – Author: Drive, To Sell is Human, The Power of Regret. Fmr. Chief Speechwriter for Vice President Al Gore.
- Steven Pinker – Professor, Harvard University. Author: Enlightenment Now, The Better Angels of Our Nature.
- Jared Polis – Governor, State of Colorado.
- Jonathan Ross – Founder & CEO, Groq.
- Robert Rubin – Fmr. Secretary, U.S. Treasury. Fmr. Co-Chairman, Goldman Sachs.
- Gretchen Rubin – Host, Happier with Gretchen Rubin. Author: The Happiness Project, Better Than Before, The Four Tendencies.
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- Will Scharf – Co-Founder & CTO, Oscar Health.
- Mario Schlosser – Staff Secretary and Assistant to the President, U.S. [White House](#).
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- Astro Teller – Captain of Moonshots, X.
- Peter Thiel – Co-Founder: Founders Fund, Palantir, PayPal, Dialog.
- Nick Thompson – CEO, The Atlantic. Fmr. Editor-in-chief, Wired Magazine.
- John Townsend – Author, Boundaries.
- Tom Tugendhat – Member of Parliament, United Kingdom.
- Tim Urban – Writer & Illustrator, Wait But Why. Author, What's Our Problem?
- Rick Warren – Author, The Purpose Driven Life. Podcast Host, Pastor Rick's Daily Hope.
- Strauss Zelnick – Chairman & CEO, Take-Two Interactive Software.
- Shivon Zilis – Director, Neuralink.

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Intelligence Memo Warned a Weakening Soviet Union Could Become More Dangerous

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In November 1983, Herbert E. Meyer, Vice Chairman of the National Intelligence Council, circulated a memorandum with an unusual title: *Why Is the World So Dangerous?*

At a time when much of the world viewed the Soviet Union as an expanding superpower, Meyer advanced a different argument.

The growing instability, terrorism and violence appearing across the globe were not signs of Soviet strength, he wrote.

They were signs that Moscow was beginning to lose.

The memorandum offers a rare glimpse into how some American intelligence officials interpreted the final decade of the Cold War before the Soviet Union's collapse was widely anticipated.

Reading Global Violence Through a Cold War Lens

The memo opens with a catalogue of recent violence.

Meyer pointed to the destruction of Korean Air Lines Flight 007, the assassination of Philippine opposition leader Benigno Aquino, terrorist bombings in Lebanon, Libya's intervention in Chad and political turmoil in Grenada.

Rather than viewing these events as isolated crises, he argued they shared a common cause.

According to Meyer, the Soviet Union had recognized that American policy had shifted in a direction unfavorable to Soviet interests and was seeking ways to reverse that trend.

A Different View From Moscow

One of the memorandum's most interesting sections imagines how Soviet leaders might have viewed world events only a few years earlier compared to late 1983.

Meyer argued that Moscow once believed the balance of power was steadily moving in its favor.

He cited Soviet influence in the developing world, [technology](#) transfers from the West and perceptions that communist power was advancing internationally.

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By 1983, he argued, those assumptions were breaking down.

The U.S. economy was recovering. American defense spending was increasing.

Technology transfers were becoming more difficult.

NATO's military position in Europe was improving and Soviet-backed movements were facing unexpected resistance in places such as Afghanistan.

The implication was that Soviet leaders were increasingly confronting a reality they had not expected.

The Danger of a Declining Superpower

The memo's central warning was not that the Soviet Union was growing stronger.

It was that Soviet leaders might become more dangerous if they concluded time was no longer on their side.

Meyer argued that leaders facing strategic decline often become more willing to take risks.

He compared the phenomenon to political campaigns, business careers and personal decisions, suggesting that individuals who believe opportunities are disappearing frequently embrace actions they would previously have rejected.

Applied to the Cold War, the concern was that Soviet officials might attempt dramatic moves to alter what they saw as an unfavorable trajectory.

Predicting the Soviet Union's Internal Crisis

Perhaps the most remarkable section of the document concerns the future of the Soviet

Union itself.

Years before the collapse of the USSR, Meyer argued that the Soviet system faced severe structural problems.

He pointed to economic stagnation, demographic challenges, ethnic tensions, growing burdens associated with maintaining control over Eastern Europe and what he described as an inability to implement reforms without threatening the Communist Party's grip on power.

The memorandum repeatedly emphasizes a single theme: time was not working in Moscow's favor.

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According to Meyer, the Soviet Union was approaching a point where its leaders would have to confront problems they could no longer postpone.

Looking Beyond the Cold War

The memo concludes with an observation that appears striking in retrospect.

Meyer suggested policymakers should begin considering what a post-Soviet world might look like because the Soviet Union's long-term trajectory was becoming increasingly uncertain.

At a time when the Cold War still dominated global politics, the idea that the Soviet Union might eventually disappear remained far outside mainstream discussion.

Yet the memorandum argued that the more immediate danger was not Soviet confidence, but Soviet anxiety.

For Meyer, the violence and instability appearing across the world in 1983 were not evidence of a rising empire.

They were warning signs from a superpower that feared its best days might already be behind it.

[Original source](#)

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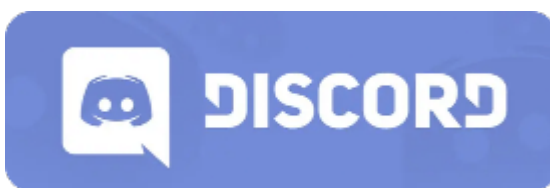
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