

Bush Administration creates “Secret State Police”

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The Bush Administration is to set up a [“domestic spy service”](#), pursuant to the recommendations of a Commission led by US Circuit Judge Laurence Silberman and former Senator Charles S. Robb of Virginia, the so-called Silberman-Robb Commission.

The new “domestic intelligence department” is slated to combine FBI counterterrorism, intelligence and espionage operations into a single service. The latter operating under the auspices of the FBI will have the authority to “seize the property of people deemed to be helping the spread of WMD”.

The decision was formally announced by FBI Director Mueller and Attorney General Gonzales at a press conference at the Attorney General’s Office on the 29th, the same day as Bush’s speech broadcast live from Fort Bragg, NC. The decision to create a secret police passed virtually unnoticed. The initiative was described as a necessary step in “protecting the American public”:

“It pulls together the Counterintelligence Division, the Counterterrorism Division, and the Directorate of Intelligence, enabling it to act together to develop intelligence and then to act on that intelligence, in consultation with not only Department of Justice but also the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). We look forward to working with the DNI over the next 60 days to put in place additional steps that may be required to give full implementation to the development of this National Security Service.” (<http://www.fbi.gov/page2/june05/nss062905.htm>)

The new department –meaning essentially a Big Brother “Secret State Police”– will be able to “spy on people in America suspected of terrorism or having critical intelligence information, even if they are not suspected of committing a crime.” (NBC Tonight, 29 June 2005).

The initiative not only modifies the mandate of the FBI, it also undermines its autonomy as a civilian law enforcement bureau. Although formally operating under the FBI, the proposed centralized domestic spy unit will be controlled by the Directorate of National Intelligence headed by John Negroponte, who will set both the budget and priorities of the new FBI department.

According to Timothy Edgar, of The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU):

“The FBI is effectively being taken over by a spymaster who reports directly to the White House. ... It’s alarming that the same person who oversees foreign spying will now oversee domestic spying too.”

Overriding the independence of the FBI, Negroponte will call the shots regarding the appointment of the head of the proposed unit. (High-level appointments at the FBI are made by its director, subject to the formal approval of the Attorney General. The intrusion of the Director of National Intelligence in senior FBI appointments sets an important precedent, which contradicts the mandate and statutes of the FBI.)

Mandate

The new FBI department involves the integration of law enforcement and domestic spying. Its mandate is essentially political and is directed at curbing all forms of social and political dissent in America . It is concerned with various categories of “domestic enemies”, which “threaten the security of the Homeland”, namely which question the legitimacy of the “war on terrorism”. According to a 2004 Report of the Homeland Security Council , these domestic “conspirators” are said to be acting in coordination with “foreign terrorists”. The Report identified “domestic radical groups” and “disgruntled employees” (labor activists) as potential domestic enemies (See Michel Chossudovsky, <http://www.globalresearch.ca/index.php?context=viewArticle&code=CHO20050607&articleId=173>)

Officials have stated, however, that the new department will also include “an office of civil liberties ... created to prevent abuses”. According to US Attorney General Alberto Gonzales: “We’re going to operate in a way that best protects this country and we do so in a way that respects the privacy rights and civil liberties of every American.” (quoted in NBC Report, op cit)

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