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DHS Finalizing Spy Satellite Program To Watch Americans Without Congressional Oversight

Plans also include "cyber-security strategy" to "protect" domestic computer networks

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Infowars.net
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The Department of Homeland security is forging ahead and finalizing plans to use a network of spy satellites for domestic surveillance despite the fact that the Congressional committee supposedly overseeing the program has had no update on it for over three months.



A report in today's **Wall Street Journal** suggests that Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff is in the process of finalizing a charter for the program this week, regardless of the fact that it is supposed to be suspended.

The DHS had declared that the program was "on hold" after its existence was made public in August, prompting an outcry amongst civil libertarians and lawmakers.

Demands to justify the congressional legality of the satellites, which were originally mandated for foreign surveillance, followed the revelation that a new department branch called the *National Applications Office* would oversee the program and be responsible for providing images from the satellites to non military law enforcement agencies.

Critics have called for cuts to DHS funding, stressing that the program is in direct violation of the Posse Comitatus act, which prevents the use of military for domestic law enforcement. It also violates the fourth amendment as the satellites are capable of seeing through the walls of people's homes.

(Article continues below)

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Domestic intelligence and security agencies are now **receiving more funding** for spy satellites than the military.

"We still haven't seen the legal framework we requested or the standard operation procedures on how the NAO will actually be run," House Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson told the WSJ.

In addition to the satellites, the surveillance program also includes new forms of internet monitoring:

Mr. Chertoff also plans soon to unveil a cyber-security strategy, part of an estimated \$15 billion, multiyear program designed to protect the nation's Internet infrastructure. The program has been shrouded in secrecy for months and has also prompted privacy concerns on Capitol Hill because it involves government protection of domestic computer

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networks.

Essentially the program would allow the DHS to regulate and control access to the internet in the name of "protecting" national security.

The news comes on the back of **separate revelations** that another military spy agency, the NSA has increasing control over SSL, now called Transport Layer Security, the cryptographic protocol that provides secure communications on the internet for web browsing, e-mail, instant messaging, and other data transfers.

In other words the agency is capable of intercepting and reading your emails and instant messages in real time.

We also learned this week that the **lawyer for an AT&T engineer has alleged** that "within two weeks of taking office, the Bush administration was planning a comprehensive effort of spying on Americans' phone usage." That is BEFORE 9/11, before the nation was embroiled in the freedom stripping exercise commonly known as the "war on terror" had even begun.

We shouldn't be surprised obviously, **Government surveillance programs** targeting Americans are legion and have been in place for decades.

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