

# **The Homeland Security Bill**

by Hilmar von Campe

The Homeland Security Bill raises a number of misgivings for me. It reminds me of the years in the thirties when we were told in Germany, that we should not worry about politics but leave that to the national leadership in Berlin, which knows better how to handle political matters it. Everybody knows what happened then. According to the news published in the last months regarding the many failures in spoiling the September 11 attack before it happened - the problem was in Washington, mainly at the helm of FBI and CIA, where the top did not listen to the many warnings, which came from the field and also from other countries. The people in the field were on the right track. Washington was not.

Why then on earth should a top heavy organization with 150,000 employees be more suitable in preventing terrorist attacks and defending the American people than the local police officers, national guards and militias? I cannot help but feel that the formation of this monster bureaucracy, strengthening the top and not empowering the base, is totally un-American. Especially when there are furthermore the ceaseless efforts to disarm the citizens. Are we getting to the center oriented European way of doing things that went from authoritarian to totalitarian regimes? It is not the American way. The success of the police in catching the Washington snipers with the help of the FBI in a relatively short time demonstrates that it is the grass roots where the strength of America lies and not in government organizations.

It is worthwhile to read what Congressman Ron Paul has to say about the matter:

**The Homeland Security Monstrosity, by Rep. Ron Paul, MD**

Congress spent just a few short hours last week voting to create the biggest new federal bureaucracy since World War II, not that the media or even most members of Congress paid much attention to the process. Yet our most basic freedoms as Americans - privacy in our homes, persons, and possessions; confidentiality in our financial and medical affairs; openness in our conversations, telephone, and Internet use; unfettered travel; indeed the basic freedom not to be monitored as we go through our daily lives - have been dramatically changed.

The last time Congress attempted a similarly ambitious reorganization of the government was with the creation of the Department of Defense in 1947. Back then, congressional hearings on the matter lasted two years before President

Truman finally signed legislation. Even after this lengthy deliberation, however, organizational problems with the new department lasted more than 40 years! What do we expect from a huge bureaucracy conceived virtually overnight, by a Congress that didn't even read the bill that creates it? Surely more deliberation was appropriate before establishing a giant new federal agency with 170,000 employees!

**When the Homeland Security department first was conceived, some congressional leaders and administration officials outrageously told a credulous rank-and-file Congress that the new department would be "budget neutral." The agency simply would be a reorganization of existing federal employees, we were told, and would not increase the federal budget. In fact, the agency was touted as increasing efficiency, rather than expanding federal power. Of course the original 32-page proposal sent over by the White House quickly grew to 282 pages in House committees, ending up at more than 500 pages in the final version voted on last week - with a \$3 billion price tag just for starters. The sheer magnitude of the bill, and the technical complexity of it, makes it impossible for anyone to understand completely. Rest assured that the new department represents a huge increase in the size and scope of the federal government that will mostly serve to spy on the American people. Can anyone, even the most partisan Republican, honestly say with a straight face that the Department of Homeland Security does not expand the federal government?**

**The list of dangerous and unconstitutional powers granted to the new Homeland Security department is lengthy. Warrantless searches, forced vaccinations of whole communities, federal neighborhood snitch programs, federal information databases, and a sinister new "Information Awareness Office" at the Pentagon that uses military intelligence to spy on domestic citizens are just a few of the troubling aspects of the new legislation. To better understand the potential damage to our liberties, I strongly recommend a November 14th New York Times op-ed piece by William Safire entitled "You Are A Suspect." The article provides a devastating critique of the new Homeland Security bureaucracy and a chilling warning of what the agency could become.**

**November 19, 2002, Dr. Ron Paul is a Republican member of Congress from Texas.**

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