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- STOA: An Appraisal Of The Technologies Of Political Control, Sept 1998

"The development of such advanced surveillance and data-mining techniques has raised new concerns among civil liberties groups in the United States, and Mr. Poindexter was involved in disputes about the government's role in computer security during the 1980's.

"'Mr. Poindexter was responsible for several computer policy mistakes in the computer security realm in the 1980's,' said Marc Rotenberg, a former counsel with Senate Judiciary Committee, referring to Mr. Poindexter's policies that shifted control of computer security to the military. 'It took three administrations and both political parties over a decade to correct those mistakes.'

"As national security adviser, Mr. Poindexter was involved with a Reagan administration initiative in 1984 known as National Security Decision Directive, N.S.D.D. 145, which gave intelligence agencies broad authority to examine computer databases for 'sensitive but unclassified information.'"

"Chief Takes Over New Agency to Thwart Attacks on U.S."  
by John Markoff, *New York Times*, 13 Feb 2002

The following is mirrored from its source at: [http://www.justiceonline.org/webdocs/info\\_office.html](http://www.justiceonline.org/webdocs/info_office.html)

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**John Poindexter to Head New Domestic Espionage Office:  
Is The Government Monitoring Our Every Communication Already?  
The Partnership for Civil Justice Legal Defense and Education Fund**

On February 13, 2002 the Bush Administration quietly announced that John Poindexter, previously convicted for obstructing official inquiries and lying to Congress will now head the Government's newest operation for massive domestic spying, the Information Awareness Office. Poindexter, and his partner Oliver North, got their convictions overturned by an appellate court on the grounds that their testimony before Congress was immunized.

This new office received scant coverage in the U.S. domestic press, but was highlighted in an article in the U.K.'s *Guardian* newspaper entitled, "No more Mr. Scrupulous Guy: How one of the two brains behind the Iran-Contra scandal this week became one of America's most powerful men".

The Information Awareness Office is a component of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, which some may recognize as the Agency that developed the government network backbone that became the Internet. The mission of the Information Awareness Office, according to the DARPA web site, is to achieve "**total information awareness.**"

What does total information awareness mean? The *Guardian* explains, "Think, Big Brother is Watching You. IAO will supply federal officials with 'instant' analysis on what is being written on email and said on phones all over the US. Domestic espionage."

For years, the United States' National Security Agency has maintained a satellite surveillance network called Echelon which intercepts almost all European satellite,

microwave, fax, telex, cellular, cable and fiber optic (primarily as it emerges to microwave towers) communications traffic. Echelon scans European voice and data communications against dictionaries containing all the names, places, codewords, or subjects that might be of interest. Messages acquired at any of the listening posts containing requested keywords are then automatically passed on to the intelligence organization requesting those keywords. Long suspected, the existence and capabilities of the Echelon system was publicly confirmed in a 1997 report issued by the European Parliament's committee on civil rights. For more information on Echelon, see <http://www.flash.net/~bob001/echelon.htm>

The only way for the Information Awareness Office to achieve its goal of **total information awareness** is to deploy Echelon technology to comprehensively intercept all domestic voice, Internet, fax, cellular and other communication.

We know of no legal authority that would allow the U.S. government to engage in wholesale interception and collection of domestic communications, not even the expansive USA-PATRIOT Act.

Perhaps the Ashcroft Justice Department will assert a claim of inherent national security authority, and argue that the executive branch and intelligence agencies are therefore authorized to read every e-mail and listen to every one of our telephone calls.

In being selected to head up this domestic spying operation, Mr. Poindexter joins a growing list of recycled Reagan/Bush officials who had their hands in that administration's contra scandal who are now finding a home in the George W. Bush administration, including Otto Reich, Elliott Abrams and John Negroponte.

There are many questions about this operation that the U.S. public is entitled to have answers to now. If this massive unconstitutional intrusion is allowed to proceed now with acquiescence, we will likely learn decades after-the-fact (like the Europeans) that the U.S. Government has been listening in on our every communication and spoken thought.

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### See Also:

- Part IV, Chap. 3, United States v. John M. Poindexter, from Final Report Of The Independent Counsel For Iran/Contra Matters; see also: Executive Summary and Summary of Prosecutions
- Poindexter: Overview of the Information Awareness Office, DARPA Tech 2002 Conference, 8/2/02
- Privacy International: 2002 US Big Brother Awards - **Lifetime Menace Award to Admiral John Poindexter**, for NSDD-145, "Sensitive but Unclassified" and the new Office of Information Awareness to spy on everyone just in case you are a terrorist.
- The Man From Auntie, by Jeff Elkins, *LewRockwell.com*, 11/19/02
- National Security Archive/White House E-Mail - The Top-Secret Computer Messages the Reagan/Bush White House Tried to Destroy, edited by Tom Blanton, 11/22/95
- Iran-Contra: White House e-mail, *CNN Interactive*
- Echelon: America's Secret Global Surveillance Network, by Patrick S. Poole, 2000