

Spying

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dictive means."

Bush adamantly defended the program, first disclosed two weeks ago by The *New York Times*.

He said at a White House news conference, "I've authorized this program more than 30 times since the September 11 attacks, and I intend to do so for so long as the nation faces the continuing threat of an enemy that wants to kill our American citizens."

The revelation of the secret domestic spying program has angered both Democrats and Republicans.

Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, said he would conduct hearings on the warrant-less monitoring of international phone calls, faxes and e-mails of U.S. citizens or residents since 2002.

"There are limits to what the president can do under the Constitution," Specter said on CNN's "Late Edition." "Whether it was legal is a matter that ought to be examined."

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has asked why Bush failed to get the warrants from the court under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) of 1978, which set up an 11-member court to issue warrants to investigate U.S. suspects in national security cases. In recent years, the secret court has issued more than 4,000 warrants and denied less than a dozen requests by the administration.

"Why did the president choose not to use FISA?" McCain asked on "This Week," an ABC news show. "That's a legitimate question."

Meanwhile, a member of that court, U.S. District Judge James Robertson, resigned from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, apparently to protest Bush's decision to bypass special court.

According to the *Washington Post*, two sources familiar with his decision said that Robertson privately expressed deep concern that the warrant-less surveillance program authorized by the president in 2001 was "legally questionable and may have tainted the FISA court's work."

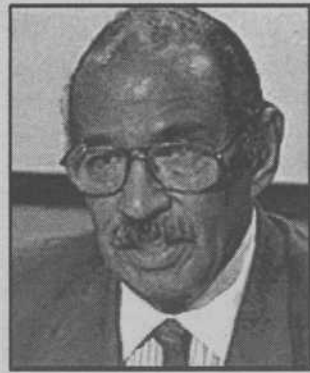
Former Nixon White House Counsel John Dean, a Republican, expressed deep concern about the revelation and has publicly described Bush as being "the first president to admit to an impeachable offense."

Dean was responding to a question from U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., the first lawmaker to bring up impeachment. She'd asked Dean and other legal scholars for their opinions of Bush's admission.

U.S. Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., ranking member of the House Judiciary Committee, has introduced legisla-

tion to form a select committee with subpoena power to investigate alleged misconduct of the Bush administration related.

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— John Conyers
U.S. Rep. D-Mich.



House Res. 635 would form the committee. But Conyers has also introduced House Res. 636 to censure the president and House Res. 637 to censure Vice President Dick Cheney for Iraqi war-related activities, which he says are also impeachable offenses.

Censure is when Congress or a governing body publicly reprimands, condemns or expresses strong disapproval of the actions of a leader. Allegations in such cases could lead to impeachment, which means the actual bringing up of formal charges.

Conyers' bills were in response to the release of a 273-page Investigative Status Report by the House Judiciary Committee Democratic Staff, a compilation of the alleged Bush administration war misconduct.

"They're all abuses of authority. There is how they connect up. This is the first report that documents all of the alleged abuses of this administration," said Conyers in an interview with the NNPA News Service. "The

thing is out of the box now. People have had as much as they can stand... He has taken for himself more authority than any other president in the 20th century. I think censure will highlight the incredible number of mistakes, manipulations of intelligence, the encouraging of torture of prisoners, the surprising amount of retaliation

that this administration has indulged in against its critics and how they determined to go to war before they had Congressional authorization. It may lead to consideration of articles of impeachment. For that reason we have formed a select committee to investigate all of these matters."

The controversy over domestic spying will no doubt become increasingly heated in various political forums in 2006 as raging debate over whether to re-enact the USA Patriot Act resumes in Congress.

Three days before Christmas, the Congress passed a short extension of the Patriot Act, just until Feb. 3. It was set to expire on Dec. 31.

With the backdrop of the domestic spying revelations, even arch Bush supporter Rep. James Sensenbrenner, R-Wis., chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, fought some Republicans who wanted a six-month extension, revealing deep divisions even among Republicans over issues of investigations and privacy. President Bush had fought for full reauthorization of the act and implied that it was a partisan issue.

Apparently smelling blood, human and civil rights activists and civil libertarians also continue to weigh into the debate.

"Law-abiding Americans deserve to know that their government will not secretly tap their phones, read their medical records, access their library accounts or otherwise invade their personal lives, with no oversight or accountability," stated Ralph Neas, president of the People for the American Way. "Law-abiding Americans also deserve to know that when law enforcement can show an impartial judge clear evidence of criminal activity or a threat to national security, swift and decisive action will be taken to protect the public. That is the balance we must achieve."

A new website, www.censureBush.org has been set up to push Conyers' censure bills. The website has been set up by the After Downing Street Coalition, a group of more than 100 peace, veteran and political activist groups formed to expose what it calls lies that launched the war.

Both Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Vice President Dick Cheney have come to the defense of Bush, saying he had the right to spy on Americans without warrants.

"The president must stop using the threat of terrorism and the tactics of fear to invade the privacy of American citizens," said Lewis.

"I look forward to further inquiry in the House and Senate on these matters. The American people deserve the truth."

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Request for Proposals (RFP) No. 009-06 will be available beginning December 22, 2005, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday at the Regional Transportation Commission's Administrative Building, Second Floor Reception Desk. Requests for RFP packages may be submitted via facsimile at (702) 676-1588 or via e-mail at www.polingl@rtcnsnv.com., and should be directed to the attention of Linda Poling, Senior Purchasing Analyst.

A pre-proposal conference and facility tour will be held at 9:00 a.m., PST, on January 9, 2006 at the RTC's Administrative Building. Proposals submitted in response to this RFP must be received on or before February 1, 2006. Proposals must be time stamped no later than 3:00 p.m., PST, on the due date. Proposals time stamped at 3:01 p.m. or after on the due date will be returned unopened. Proposals must be sent to:

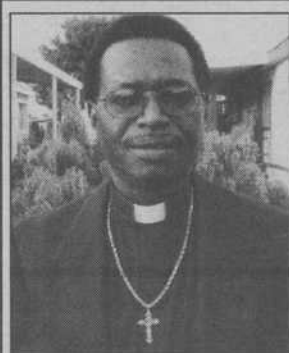
Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada
Attention: Linda Poling/Senior Purchasing Analyst
600 S. Grand Central Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89106

The successful respondent shall cooperate with the RTC in meeting its commitments and objectives with regard to ensuring non-discrimination in the award and administration of U.S. DOT assisted contracts and shall use its best efforts to ensure that barriers to participation of DBEs do not exist.

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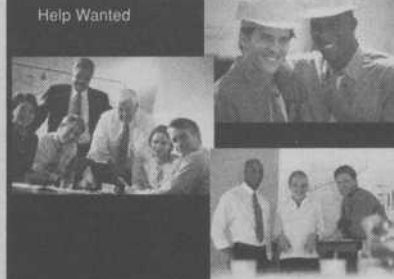
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