

U.S. may use military in domestic matters

ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON - Homeland security chief Tom Ridge says the threat of terrorism might force government planners to consider using the military for domestic law enforcement, now largely prohibited by federal law.

President Bush has called on Congress to thoroughly review the law that bans the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines from participat-

ing in arrests, searches, seizure of evidence and other police-type activity on U.S. soil. The Coast Guard and National Guard troops under the control of state governors are excluded from the Reconstruction-era law, known as the "Posse Comitatus Act."

Ridge said Sunday that it "goes against our instincts as a country to empower the military with the ability to arrest, and called the

prospect "very unlikely."

But he said the government is wise to examine the law.

"We need to be talking about military assets, in anticipation of a crisis event," Ridge said on "Fox News Sunday." "And clearly, if you're talking about using the military, then you should have a discussion about posse comitatus."

Two influential Democratic senators agreed with Bush and Ridge that the law ought to be reviewed, but expressed no interest in granting the military new powers to arrest American citizens.

Sen. Carl Levin, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said posse comitatus "has served us well for a long time."

"It's kept the military out of law enforcement, out of arresting people except in the most unusual emergency situations like a riot or after some kind of a disaster where they have to protect against looting," Levin, D-Mich., said on CNN's "Late Edition."

However, he said, "I don't fear looking at it to see whether or not our military can be more helpful in

a very supportive and assisting role even than they have been up to now - providing equipment, providing training, those kind of things which do not involve arresting people."

Sen. Joe Biden, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he favors expanding the military's role in responding to major catastrophes such as an attack by a weapon of mass destruction.

The law "has to be amended, but we're not talking about general police power," Biden, D-Del., said on "Fox News Sunday."

Air Force Gen. Ralph E. Eberhart, who heads the new military command charged with defending American territory, told The New York Times he favors changing the law to grant greater domestic powers to the military to protect against terror attacks. He offered no specific changes he favored.

Congress is racing to approve legislation by the end of its session this fall that would make Bush's proposed Department of Homeland Security a reality.

In the Senate, a version of the

measure by Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., tracks closely with Bush's plan. It also would augment the agency's ability to gather and analyze intelligence from the FBI, CIA, and others.

That bill is to be considered by the Senate committee Wednesday.

House Majority Leader Dick Armey said on NBC's "Meet the Press" there was a strong possibility Congress will resolve its differences and send Bush a bill enacting the sweeping government reorganization by Sept. 11.

Some lawmakers have expressed concern about rushing decisions on far-reaching changes in the bureaucracy, but Armey said: "It's time to move forward with this. The president's got a good plan."

Bush planned to give a speech Monday about his proposed new department and view demonstrations of high-technology devices for combatting terrorism that are being developed at the Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois.

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College student gets 'F' in truth

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEWARK, Del. - A university student broke into her school's computer system and gave herself passing grades in three courses, police said.

Darielle Insler, 22, allegedly changed her grades in a math and a science class from Fs to As. She also is accused of changing an incomplete grade to a passing one in an education class.

According to an affidavit filed by Officer Charles J. Wilson, Insler

called human resources employees at the school and requested a new password for each instructor, then logged into the system.

Insler also gained access to the system by guessing another teacher's password, according to court documents.

Insler is charged with multiple counts of identity theft, criminal impersonation, unauthorized access of a computer system and misuse of information on a computer system.

She is free on \$5,500 bail awaiting trial in Delaware Superior Court.

Insler, a third-year student from Leonia, New Jersey, declined to comment Monday.

Cynthia Cummings, an associate vice president at the school, said security measures are being reviewed.

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