

Cato Institute Briefing on Patriot Act

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Outline of Remarks by Timothy Lynch, Director of Cato's Project on Criminal Justice

1. The Liberty vs. Security Framework is Misleading
  
2. A Better Framework
  - (A) Restricting Freedom is not the only policy option
    - (1) Improve civil defense system
    - (2) Rethink cozy relationship with Saudi Arabia
    - (3) Better communication/coordination police/fire depts
  - (B) Before more power is conferred, assess how well the government has used its existing powers
    - (1) FBI and Chinese double agent; red flags not acted upon
    - (2) AZ agent/flight schools/more agents on drug cases than int'l terrorism
    - (3) 60 Minutes story about translators/incompetence
    - (4) FISA Court bars FBI agent; too many false applications
  - (C) If more power must be given, move cautiously, not hastily
  - (D) At some point, a line must be drawn, no more surrendering of liberty. The government must do its best with what it has.