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News In America, TV watches you: CIA to spy on people through household items

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With a growing number of 'smart gadgets,' spying on homes may start to become much easier. In fact, CIA Chief David Petraeus admitted that Americans were effectively bugging themselves and making it easy for spy agencies to peek in on their lives.

Speaking at a summit for In-Q-Tel, the CIA's venture capital firm, Petraeus noted that new devices that link 'dumb' home appliances such as refrigerators, ovens and lighting systems to the Internet could "change our notion of secrecy."

"Transformational' is an overused word, but I do believe it properly applies to these technologies, particularly to their effect on clandestine tradecraft," Petraeus noted.

*"Items of interest will be located, identified, monitored, and remotely controlled through technologies such as radio-frequency identification, sensor networks, tiny embedded servers, and energy harvesters — all connected to the next-generation Internet using abundant, low-cost, and high-power computing,"* Petraeus explained. *"The latter now going to cloud computing, in many areas greater and greater supercomputing, and, ultimately, heading to quantum computing."*

In the meantime, the biggest microchip company in the world, ARM, presented new processors that can be implanted into nearly any household appliance and connect it to the Internet so that the appliance could be remotely controlled in tandem with other applications. The company described the concept as the "Internet of things."

And the National Security Agency is already building a gigantic supercomputer to process this gigantic amount of information. It's a \$2 billion Utah-based facility that can process yottabytes (a quadrillion gigabytes) of data, according to the Gizmondo technology blog. It will be the centerpiece for the Global Information Grid and is set to go live in September 2013.

These latest announcements paint a somewhat Orwellian picture of the future, with TV's spying on their viewers and beds recording the dreams of those sleeping in them. Perhaps this data would then be sent to the Utah supercomputer, which would assess the person's pros and cons. And what if the computer uses statistics to decipher the likelihood that that person will commit a crime? A score could land you in jail — for a crime that had not yet happened.

But even now we see how people are being arrested for posting online or clicking the wrong button in the privacy of their own home. A British teenager is set to appear in court on charges of racially aggravated assault after posting comments about six British soldiers killed in Afghanistan.