

Seizure of terror suspect funds questioned

by UPI

WASHINGTON -- The U.S. government reportedly has seized nearly \$265 million in al-Qaida-linked assets since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks. The government has been freezing the assets of alleged terrorist financiers and banning U.S. citizens from conducting business with them, The Christian Science Monitor reported Tuesday. The seizures, viewed as an important role in the fight against terror, raise questions about whether the U.S. government has too much power to punish alleged terrorist financiers and funding groups through simple administrative actions, the Monitor reported. For example, federal prosecutors in Texas failed this month to convict officials of the Holy Land Foundation charity, alleged by the government to be funding Palestinian terrorists. The charity was closed in 2004 after the Treasury Department named it a terrorist group. "The fact that they couldn't get a single conviction suggests that we need to rethink the process by which (Holy Land) was shut down," David Cole, a law professor at Georgetown University told the Monitor. "They were able to close it down, freeze its assets ... ultimately on the basis of secret evidence."

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