

# Challenges Facing the DNI

June 13, 2005

## Moderator John Lehman's Opening Remarks

Good morning. On behalf of the Board Members of the 9/11 Public Discourse Project—my friends and colleagues, the former 9/11 Commissioners—I'd like to welcome all of you here today. Once again, we also want to thank the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars for hosting today's discussion.

This is the second in our series of panels reviewing the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission and what progress has been made since we issued our Report. What we learn in these sessions will help inform our report card on the progress of reform later this year.

This morning we will be looking at the newly-created Office of the Director of National Intelligence—or DNI. As you know, one of the key recommendations put forward in our Report last July was the creation of this new office.

In our investigation of the 9/11 attacks, we found there were several structural problems within the Intelligence Community that became apparent in the 9/11 story:

- Our intelligence agencies weren't working together. They weren't synthesizing information to “connect the dots.”
- There was no unity of effort across the foreign-domestic divide. FBI agents and CIA officers didn't share essential information about terrorists. Foreign intelligence and domestic investigations were separate. Unfortunately, the terrorists did not see it this way.
- The Director of Central Intelligence had too many jobs to perform. We identified three: running the CIA; running the Intelligence Community; and serving as the President's chief intelligence adviser.

- At the same time, the DCI did not have sufficient authority to lead a unified Intelligence Community. He could not set priorities or move resources across the community.
- Finally, the Intelligence Community was too complex and too secret. Its 15 agencies were governed by arcane rules. All of its money and nearly all of its work was shielded from public scrutiny.

We concluded that the country needed a complete transformation of the way the Intelligence Community does its work. We recommended a Director of National Intelligence because we recognized that the job was not going to get done unless somebody was in charge, and somebody was accountable.

Now, Director John Negroponte is in charge. The Intelligence Reform Act of 2004 gave him:

- Access to all national intelligence;
- Authority over the budget for the National Intelligence Program;
- Authority to reprogram funds and transfer personnel across the intelligence community;
- Authority to set standards across the Community for training and career development;
- Authority to set Community-wide intelligence priorities; and
- Authority, and the responsibility, to implement information sharing across the intelligence community.

We believe the new law gives Director Negroponte authorities that are sufficient to the task at hand. With the support of the President, we believe he can lead the Intelligence Community successfully and effectively.

Director Negroponte has been in his job for seven weeks. All the key tests are ahead of him. What is his vision for the future of the Intelligence Community? What can we do to help him achieve it? Where should he focus his time, energy, attention, and leadership?

We see a number of pitfalls – and we believe the DNI sees them as well.

- The DNI should not be managing day-to-day operations;
- He should not be spending hours each day preparing to brief the President; and

- He should not be the analyst-in -chief.

The DNI has a more important job to do:

- He needs to lead the entire Intelligence Community;
- He needs to drive reform and change;
- He needs to create a unity of effort within the Community;

His vision of the future of the Community, we believe, should include the following:

- A focus on the joint mission. Agencies should contribute their own unique capabilities to working key intelligence issues. They must act in concert, not in competition.
- An emphasis on outcomes, not process. For example, as John Gannon told us last week, our goals for human intelligence should not be numbers of officers, or numbers of recruitments, but quality of sources.
- Making information available where and when it is needed.
  - First, the DNI has a heavy task in changing cultures. He needs to move the Community from a mindset of “need to know” to “need to share.” Bureaucracies always resist change. He needs to smash the stovepipes.
  - Second, the Intelligence Community needs to be in the forefront of information technology. Right now, we are behind the times. Without better technology to collect, process, analyze, and share information, we cannot connect the dots.
  - Finally, Director Negroonte needs to exercise direct and personal leadership for information technology systems across the Community. As we saw from the FBI’s Virtual Case File disaster, this question cannot be left in the hands of technical specialists: He must take charge.

Today, I am privileged to share this panel with three individuals, each of whom brings a unique perspective to the challenges facing this reform effort.

- The Honorable Jane Harman, the distinguished Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence;
- Admiral William Studeman, most recently, a Commissioner on the President's Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction; and
- Siobhan Gorman, currently a staff correspondent for *National Journal* but soon to move to the *Baltimore Sun*, who has spent considerable time covering the Intelligence Community.