

Statement for the Record by
James R. Clapper, Jr.
Nominee for the Position of
Director of National Intelligence
Before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence
United States Senate
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Madam Chairman, Vice Chairman Bond, and distinguished Members of the Committee, it is a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee for Director of National Intelligence. I am truly honored that the President has confidence in my ability to lead our Intelligence Community. My deepest appreciation goes out to him for the nomination, and my sincere thanks to all of you, the overseers of our nation's intelligence services, for the opportunity to address you and answer your questions here today.

When President Obama asked me to lead this organization he said he wanted someone who could build the Intelligence Community into an integrated team that produces quality, timely, and accurate intelligence; be his principal intelligence advisor; be the leader of our Intelligence Community; and be someone who would tell policymakers what they needed to know, even if it wasn't what they wanted to hear. Lastly, he needed someone who knew how to get things done in a bipartisan, professional manner.

While humbled by the nomination, I reflect upon my 46 years of experience in the intelligence business and find confidence in my ability to serve diligently and competently in the position of Director of National Intelligence, should I be confirmed.

I have heard expressions of concern about my independence, as a long-time denizen of the Department of Defense, and whether I might be too beholden to it, and, thus, skew things in favor of the military. I have been out of uniform for almost 15 years, over six of which were completely out of the

government. The former Secretary of Defense ended my tenure as Director of NGA three months earlier than originally planned, because I was regarded as too "independent." I am a "truth to power" guy, and try always to be straight up about anything I'm asked.

Having said that, I feel my experience in the military – starting with my two tours of duty during the Southeast Asia conflict – provided a wealth of experience in intelligence which has been expanded and honed by the things I've done since retiring from military service in 1995. Thus, I have been a practitioner in virtually every aspect of intelligence.

Over the course of my career, I served as a Commander in combat, as well as a Wing Commander and Commander of a Scientific and Technical Intelligence Center. I have also served as a Director of Intelligence (J-2) for three war-fighting commands and led two intelligence agencies. I learned every aspect of intelligence collection, analysis, operations, planning and programming, and application and in all other disciplines — HUMINT, GEOINT, MASINT, Foreign Material, Counter-intelligence, and other more arcane forms of technical intelligence. I have been widely exposed to the workings of the entire U.S. Intelligence Community around the globe.

I have also worked as a contractor for four companies, with intelligence as my primary focus. This gave me great insight into the roles as well as the strengths and limits of contractors, how the government looks from the outside, and what drives a commercial entity as it competes for, wins, and fulfills contracts.

I served on many government boards, commissions and panels over my career. Specifically, I served as Vice Chairman of a Congressionally-mandated Commission chaired by former Governor of Virginia, Jim Gilmore, for almost three years. Based on this experience I learned a great deal on how issues are perceived at the State and local levels, and helped formulate recommendations, which, in part, presaged the subsequent formation of the Department of Homeland Security.

As the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, I helped exercise civilian control over the military, served as Program Executive for the Military Intelligence Program, and developed and promulgated standards and policy across the entire range of the intelligence, counter-intelligence, and security dimensions of the Department of Defense.

Apart from all this functional experience, I have lived the history of the Intelligence Community for that same time span. I think the amalgam of this experience – the breadth, depth, and scope – equips me to deal with the demands of the DNI – a position which demands extensive knowledge of the entirety of the US intelligence enterprise.

I think, too often, people assume that the Intelligence Community is equally adept at divining both secrets (which are theoretically knowable) and mysteries (which are generally unknowable) . . . but we are not. Normally, the best that Intelligence can do is to reduce uncertainty for decision-makers—

whether in the White House, the Congress, the Embassy, or the fox hole – but rarely can intelligence eliminate such uncertainty.

But in order to provide the best intelligence support to our nation, our leaders and decision-makers, the DNI can and must foster the collaboration and cooperation of the Intelligence Community. Intelligence is a team effort. Given the complexity and diversity of the Intelligence Community– we must view it as an enterprise of complementary capabilities that must be synchronized. To be specific, the DNI will need to serve the President and work with all members of the community and the Congress as well as with many others, to be successful in fulfilling the President’s vision.

Madam Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, if confirmed, I pledge not only to follow the law, but to go a step further and endeavor, as best as I am able, to build upon and increase the trust between Congress and DNI. That’s not to say we’ll always see things the same way. And that’s not to say you won’t question us and hold us accountable where appropriate – I expect nothing less. But our objective ought to be the same: to give the Intelligence Community all that it needs to succeed, consistent with our laws and values. If confirmed, I believe I can do that. I have had very positive discussions with CIA, FBI, and other leaders across the Intelligence Community, and I am quite encouraged by their commitment to making this team work should I be confirmed.

Additionally, keeping this Committee “fully and currently” informed is not an option. It is the law, and it is our solemn

obligation. I was a young Air Force officer at NSA in the seventies, and watched the Church-Pike hearings, which led to, among other things, the establishment of the intelligence oversight committees in both Houses of Congress. I am a strong believer in the need for an informed Congress. I say this not only as an intelligence-career professional, but as a citizen. I have interacted with the intelligence oversight committees since the mid-eighties in several capacities. If confirmed, I would seek to forge a close partnership with the oversight committees.

Moreover, I would observe that the Congress will be hugely influential in ensuring the DNI succeeds. The Congressional-DNI partnership is crucial in all respects, and this is one of the most important -- keeping Congress fully and currently informed of intelligence activities and receiving your feedback, support, and oversight. Indeed, it is my conviction that, partly through the Congress, the DNI has a great deal of authority already; the challenge is how that authority is asserted. I believe my experience in the community would serve me, and the position, well.

Finally, the men and women of the Intelligence Community are courageous, smart and patriotic; if confirmed, it would be my honor to lead them in support of our nation's security. Thank you and I look forward to your questions.