

**Interview of Mr. Mike McConnell
Director of National Intelligence**

With J.J. Green – WTOP Radio – Washington, DC

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MR. J.J. GREEN: Admiral, thanks for the opportunity to talk to you again. First, the idea that we're here again talking about FISA is interesting because not much has changed except the Protect America Act was approved and passed on a short-term basis. But we're back again in the same place trying to figure out how to get it passed again and to do it on a more permanent basis. So would you tell me, from the very beginning of this story, what is the purpose of that particular piece of legislation? What would it do? What advantages would it have? And how would it address America's concerns about threats?

DIRECTOR MIKE McCONNELL: Well, thank you, J.J. It's nice to be talking with you again, and I appreciate your question. This is a very, very complex issue, and so often people sort of get into the details before they appreciate sort of the bigger picture. Let me just start when the act was passed. There were some abuses by law enforcement and intelligence officials directed by government officials to conduct surveillance against Americans, U.S. persons, back in the '70s. And quite frankly, it went back '60s, the '50s, and all the way back to the '40s.

Post Watergate, the Congress held a series of hearings where they looked into these activities. And the issue was we wanted that to stop. But the situation was that we have a need to conduct foreign surveillance – remember, the '78 Cold War periods – we have a need to conduct foreign intelligence activities, and we want to protect America. So there's a perfect place to start on this issue. On the one hand, you have to conduct foreign intelligence activities; on the other, you want to provide warranted protection for Americans. So if you pick it up there, the rest of it is pretty simple.

What happened when the bill was passed in 1978 is the way – the words that were chosen basically said that no warranted involvement by a court for foreign intelligence – remember, it was Cold War, Russians, Chinese, North Koreans, whatever – but warranted protection for Americans. Well, the wording in that law did not anticipate changes in technology. And so the word said something to the effect, if you intercept information on a wire, you must have a warrant. Well, because technology changed so dramatically, it's not uncommon today for foreign communications from a foreigner to a foreigner to pass through the United States, and there's the dilemma.

So post-2001, after 9/11, the question was, can we go fast enough and be thorough enough to be able to confront a very dynamic threat; i.e., al Qaeda. And so some decisions were taken to conduct the activity and the way that it was conducted immediately for a couple of years – several years after that period. The decision was taken in January 2007 to return the process to the FISA court. And so when we went back into the FISA court with the overall effort to conduct our operations, initially, we got a favorable ruling from the court, and in essence, we

could conduct our mission of foreign surveillance against foreigners in a foreign country. But the FISA court consists of a number of judges, and increasingly as we went forward, the interpretation by the court was – individual judge – I have to interpret the specific words in the law, and the law says wire in this country – you have to have a warrant.

So what happened to us over that period of time – January to about summer of 2007, we lost about two-thirds of our capability. So we were getting to a point where al Qaeda has reestablished a safe haven in Pakistan, de-facto safe haven in the border area of Pakistan with the Afghanistan. And they had the senior leadership, they had middle management, they had a place to train, and they were recruiting. And the objective was to recruit in Europe and a broad area across North Africa and so on – trained operatives, and then get back into Europe, and get them into U.K., and into the United States to conduct activity.

And what we use to pull out of the communication system, the data we needed, we couldn't turn fast enough with the restrictions that we had because it's a time-consuming proposition. Let me explain it this way: If we're going to conduct surveillance against someone in the United States against a U.S. person, we have to satisfy a probable-cause standard. That's a demanding standard. It's voluminous. It takes a lot of time. And it could be a sleeper cell here in the United States. It could be a U.S. citizen that was spying for a foreign government. So there's reasons to do it, but it's a very strenuous probable-cause standard to be able to do it.

What happened to us was we were in a situation where we had to do a probable-cause standard for something that's fleeting and dynamic in a foreign country against a foreigner talking with someone else – another foreigner in another foreign country. So that was the dilemma. The Protect America Act allowed us to conduct our activities without those warrants for foreigners. That was the major thing we needed.

The second thing is because of the dramatic change in communications, we could no longer do this mission without the help of the private sector. And so we needed to do a couple of things. One, we need a way to compel the private sector to help us. And two, if they're going to help us, we needed to give them liability protection. Now, this was the give-and-take in the debate over the law – Protect America Act, which was passed in August of 2007 – was in the law, it provided prospective, meaning future liability protection. But the debate was what about retroactive liability protection.

Now, there's a debate by some members on the Hill with the administration on how surveillance was conducted immediately after 9/11, and that is a legitimate debate, checks and balances between the Congress and the administration. That's an Article 1, Article 2 disagreement.

In the mean time, what I'm faced with is I have to have the help of the private sector, and they're being sued for billions of dollars. So you can see, they're not incentivized to give us much help given that that help could result in huge suits that they would have to litigate – probably win, but if they lost one of them, it would be devastating.

So as we came into the fall of 2007, we worked very closely with the Senate Intelligence Oversight Committee, spent countless hours going through the details because the complexity is

such that if you change a word or a phrase or a comma, it could have unintended consequences for us being able to do our mission. So over months, we worked with the Senate Intelligence Committee to understand what is the intent of their change, and in choosing the right words so we could get what we needed to do. And that effort came to closure, and after a very strenuous debate in the Senate, the bill was passed 68 to 29, so over two-thirds.

Now, the bill on the House side was done a little bit differently. We didn't have the opportunity to sit down and engage. As a matter of fact, it's my understanding – wasn't there, don't know for sure, but it's my understanding that it wasn't even a bipartisan effort to work through the specifics of the bill that they drafted. The most important flaw in the bill, from my standpoint is it does not provide retroactive liability protection for the private sector, where the Senate bill does, and that's the disagreement.

We can't do this mission without their help, and when the Senate looked at it, examined all of the paperwork, what they concluded was that the private sector, post-9/11, had cooperated with the government based on legitimate requests to do so, and they had done so in good faith. And they went on to conclude, since we can't do this mission without their help, it would be serious detriment to U.S. intelligence capability to protect us against terrorists if it were subjected to litigation or debate or dialogue each time. That's where we find ourselves today.

The Protect America Act expired. We no longer have in the law a way to compel private-sector participation. And the – even prospective liability protection, which was in the law originally, is now in question, and we still haven't addressed the retroactive liability protection. So that's the dilemma. This past week, we engaged with some private-sector partners, and they weren't so sure they were ready to engage with us.

Now, there's a debate going on here in town. Some will say, well, you've got an authority that was passed from the law last August, and you had authorizations that occurred in August and September and so on, and they would run for a year. And that's true; it's exactly true. However, an authorization is one thing; a directive to a private-sector partner to load information that would allow us to extract surgically the key information we need is another thing. And that's what we debated over the last week.

Now, fortunately for us, the private-sector partners have agreed to cooperate with us as of last Friday night. So this morning, we are okay, but the question is, we can't compel, we will debate. Private-sector companies will be questioning this because of the uncertainty, so it's my prediction, unless we get this bill agreed, passed in the House and the Senate and signed by the President, our capability is going to atrophy going forward.

MR. GREEN: What is your message, then, in terms of how you needed to address this? What's your strategy and what's your timetable?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: The timetable is immediate, and the message is quite simple. What is our objective? Our objective is do not require your Intelligence Community, the United States Intelligence Community, to secure a warrant for conducting surveillance against a foreigner in a foreign country, communicating with another foreigner, particularly when that communication

may be plotting and planning for a method to come into the United States and do something as heinous as those attacks at 9/11. That's the first thing.

The second thing is the Senate bill, although we had warranted protection for U.S. persons in the United States, the Senate bill makes – extends that protection to warranted protection for any U.S. person anywhere on the globe, and that's the appropriate thing to do.

Now, the reason it was a little bit different in the past is if – let's say there was a U.S. person spying on America, cooperating with a foreign government. In that case, if they traveled overseas – not in United States, but if they traveled overseas, the Attorney General could authorize us to conduct surveillance. That has been changed now, that even in that situation, it would require a warrant issued by a court.

The third thing is we can't do it without the private sector. They acted in good faith. So we need to compel their assistance, we need to provide liability protection going forward, and just as importantly, we need to provide liability protection retroactively. We need to do that and get it closed so we can move on, otherwise our capability will atrophy.

MR. GREEN: You have laid it out very eloquently what you're trying to do, and you've done it several times before, but you have a problem, and that problem is, as you've mentioned, there are members of Congress, people on the Hill that don't agree, and some that say over and over again that what you're really doing is trying to scare people. You say the concerns are real. So how do you plan – what do you plan to say to them or present to them to make that suspicion go away?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: Well, J.J., you can do – if you carry out this conversation at an unclassified level, which is what we're doing now of course, and then you can also have it a classified level, where I can be much more specific about the details of what I know. The only way I know to do this is keep making the argument as clearly as we can possibly make it. As I highlighted, after very strenuous debate in the Senate, the final bill passed by over two-thirds majority. And so I believe if it's brought to the floor of the House, it would pass. I'm fairly confident of that.

So the question is how do we get the right bill up for vote in the House. Now, there will be a period of – a conference to look at – there is a bill crafted in the House – there is one in the Senate and how might those be compromised in some way. But the specifics of what I laid out are essential. If we don't get in this bill from the Congress that the President can sign – retroactive liability protection for the private sector, we're not going to be as capable, and we risk losing the participation of the private sector, and as I mentioned earlier, we can't do this mission anymore without their help.

Telecommunication globally has changed so dramatically in the past 15 or 20 years. It is global. Think of it as one global net. And the United States enjoys an advantage because much of the technology was invented here. If you were to look at a map of the world by bandwidth, it would show that the United States is the center of the world. So in one case, we have that advantage; and two, many wish us ill will for a variety of purposes. We want to take advantage of that in a way to be able to conduct appropriate surveillance against foreigners who wish us harm.

MR. GREEN: So you're in a situation now where there are those out there that wish you ill. And you've got this issue getting the measure through Congress, and you've also got some reservations in the private sector as well. But you can't talk about this in a classified – most of it is classified; you can't talk about it. But take us as close to the classified version of the problem, the threat, if you will, and explain it to us as close to the classified level as you can in order for us to grasp it.

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: Let me start – everybody wants to go to terrorism immediately – let me start somewhere other than terrorism – weapons of mass destruction proliferation, could be nuclear, could be biological, could be chemical and so on. There are weapons development activities, nuclear, research activities and so on going on around the globe. Our ability to understand, know about, be able to do something about that kind of activity frequently is driven by our collection capability, which of course includes electronic surveillance. So at one level, while most will immediately go to terrorism, what I would say is monitoring weapons of mass destruction proliferation, monitoring nation-states who disagree with our policies who wish us harm – North Korea, potentially Iran, potentially Syria – all of those things we need to keep very close details on day to day.

Now, let me go to terrorism. Following 9/11 and the United States reaction in Afghanistan, we were successful in eliminating probably two-thirds of al Qaeda, either its leadership or its middle management or its combatant force and so on. That situation remained in effect until about 2006.

Starting in the fall of 2006, al Qaeda achieved a de facto sanctuary in the location between Pakistan and Afghanistan. It's referred to as the FATA, the Federally Administered Tribal Area. That is an area about the size of the state of New Jersey. It's never been ruled from the outside ever. It is very fundamentalist in its outlook; it's tribal. Literacy for women in that region is about 2 percent. Literacy for males is somewhere between 20 and 25 percent. Very distrustful of the outside world; and the tribal chiefs in that region very fundamentalist, in many cases radical, have invited al Qaeda in to enjoy sanctuary.

So from that location – and remember, this region, it's high in altitude – the mountain peaks upwards of 14,000 feet; valleys around 4,000, 5,000, 6,000 feet, very mountainous terrain, has never been ruled from the outside, as I mentioned – even in the Pakistani constitution, it's referred to as a Federally Administered Tribal Area, meaning autonomous, separate. That's where they've enjoyed this sanctuary.

So Osama bin Laden and Zawahiri were the leaders of al Qaeda; they still are. They're in that region; we don't know where; we just know in the region. Middle management – top 10, top 20, top 30 leaders, battle-hardened, lots of experience, have skills in combatant training, have skills in explosives, have skills in moving people around in a variety of locations and so on. And they have been recruiting across a wide net.

Now, what's enabled that? Every society has radical elements – every society. And what al Qaeda's been able to do is to connect the radical elements in many societies. Mostly driven by

the Internet – but you can start in Morocco and Algeria and come all the way across Northern Africa – Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, around to Levant, up into Syria, so on. And there have been connections made in affiliations determined. Also, there are Muslim communities in Europe. Some small element have become radicalized. And so, it's been relatively straightforward for al Qaeda to establish contact, recruit, and then have Europeans come to Pakistan for training and then reposition back into Europe.

It has been a particularly difficult problem for the U.K. because they have so many Pakistani-origin citizens. I don't recall the exact numbers but it's something on the order of 400,000 terrorist-age males move between U.K. and Pakistan every year. Now, are they all terrorists? No, but some small segment could be and are. And how do you find the few that are potential terrorists? And that's the challenge. So trained, repositioned, waiting for instructions. And the intent, for intent, J.J., all you have to do is go to an al Qaeda website. They intend to inflict mass casualties in Europe, in U.K., in the United States. And what their ultimate goal is to drive the West out of the Saudi Arabian/North African/Iraq/Pakistani region so they can establish a caliphate in their own image. And so that's the stated goal. And they have been successful in recruiting and training, and they're looking for an opportunity to penetrate.

MR. GREEN: All right, so you've made this appeal; you've made your case to Congress and the American people and the world on a number of occasions. And you're making it again, and you're going to do it again soon because Congress still has to deal with this. And based on what we're hearing from you and the other intelligence officials that this is a very critical time, specifically when you look at all of the threats that are out there. So a message that you might leave key members of Congress, mainly the ones who have been holding this up, mainly the ones that have been causing problems, and mainly the ones that don't believe you. What's your message to them?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: The message is we are better off today than we were last summer. We were in a position of extremis last summer. The Protect America Act was passed in August of last summer. And as mentioned earlier, the authorizations that were established were good for a year, so we have until August, September on the authorizations that were created. And that's the argument made by many who are resisting moving forward.

But I would say, given the uncertainty, given the fact we can no longer compel, given the fact that public-sector companies are being sued and they're disincentivized – and as a matter of fact, the boards are fiscally responsible for these companies – our capability is atrophying today as a result of the expiration of the Protect America Act, and it will increase in its atrophy – the effect of the atrophy will increase as we go forward. And I would suspect we'll get back in that position we were in last summer where we lost two-thirds of our capability if we don't get this bill appropriately moved through the houses of Congress and on the President's desk.

MR. GREEN: Okay, I want to move on and talk about a number of specific sub-issues that have to do with all of these questions and this particular issue we've talked about this morning – Pakistan, Iran, Russia, China, al Qaeda, a number of other issues that may come underneath that. But first of all, I'd like to hear from you about eminent threats. And I'm not thinking today or tomorrow, but I'm just thinking – when I say eminent, I'm thinking near-term because we heard

from you last year; we heard from Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff. And we saw some evidence in New York City of some changes that they were making. We heard from Director Hayden from CIA and recently from General Maples over at DIA about concerns.

So what are those top three or four threats that are really hanging out there right now? I mean, not just, yeah, al Qaeda hates us but what is al Qaeda doing? Is there something going on that you really need to have all of your forces at top strength and ready for in the near-term?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: As I mentioned, J.J., al Qaeda is training to get operatives inside the United States. That's happening and so we're monitoring that. At another level, if I think about threats, the number-one immediate threat to the United States in terms of harming Americans is from terrorism. Number two, in my mind, would be weapons of mass destruction proliferation. If something like a nuclear weapon, nuclear material got in the wrong hands, it could be devastating and used not only by terrorists but by someone else with a different agenda.

Beyond that, when I think about threats, one of the things I worry most about is the stability in the Middle East. As you know, there's been confusion about what Iranian intentions are with regard to nuclear weapons. You know from our National Intelligence Estimate we released, we highlighted the fact that a specific portion of the program had been cancelled, and that was the technical design of the warhead.

What I'd just highlight for you is there are three parts to a nuclear-weapons program. First, you have to have fissile material. Second, you have a nuclear-weapons warhead design; and third, a means of delivery of that warhead, given that you had such a warhead. And what we highlighted that was cancelled was the specifics on the warhead design. They are still pursuing fissile material – which that is the most difficult challenge in a nuclear program. And they're still doing the ballistic missile design and testing, which is probably the second-most difficult part.

So when you go back and look at our estimates from 2001, 2005, and 2007 about nuclear weapons in Iran, each time the basic bottom-line conclusion was the same. On the current path, it would have enough fissile material to produce nuclear weapons between 2010 and 2015. And we said it in 2001; we said it in 2005; and that was our estimate in the NIE that was made public last December. Fissile material for nuclear weapons between 2010 and 2015 – now, you can make the case if you want to make it worst case to push it back to early 2010; you could say if there are technical issues, it might be as far as 2015. If I were asked, I'd pick sort of the middle ground. They have the technical capability. They have the scientific know-how. They are pursuing fissile material.

And so, on that course, our estimate is they intend to have a nuclear weapon. And if that happens, it will have an incredible destabilizing effect in the Middle East because if Iran has nuclear weapons, it's going to incentivize the neighbors to have nuclear weapons and then you don't know. I am very hopeful, like others, that we'll find alternative energy sources. But that is probably 20, 30, 40 years away, so the world is going to run off energy, oil, that comes out of the Middle East for the next 30 years. And it's in our interest to have that to be a stable, peaceful, democratic region. And so, I worry about it becoming unstable because of the action of some of the players and specifically Iran.

MR. GREEN: Let me jump in here before you continue to some others. Iran – how long should it be, would it be at the current rate of production, at the current rate of work – would it be before they have something usable, a weapon of mass destruction that could possibly be usable?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: That's an interesting question. Let's think about North Korea for a second. I don't know exactly what warhead weapon they produce, but they did achieve a nuclear yield. And just observe what happened: The whole landscape shifted because now they had a nuclear device. So a nuclear weapon, could be a nuclear device; it could be something you just cause a nuclear yield and is not a deliverable weapon. But the landscape changes; everything changes with regard to how people think about a nation and treat a nation and so on. Iran could probably have a nuclear yield by as early as 2010. It would probably take them 2012-2013 before they could have a nuclear weapon – weapon being something you can mount in a platform and deliver at some distance, a yield being something you just bury in the ground and cause it to go off.

MR. GREEN: All right, Pakistan. You and CIA Director McConnell went there.

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: No, I'm McConnell.

MR. GREEN: Oh, I'm sorry. You and CIA Director Hayden went there. By all intents, some of the press coverage of that – we don't know a lot about what happened, but it seemed as though President Musharraf was a bit reluctant to give you what you needed, what you wanted, and to cooperate. I know that there is a level of cooperation between the two countries. But tell us about what you got out of that meeting?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: Well, first I'd highlight that cooperation with Pakistan as a partner in counterterrorism has been exceptional. And as a matter of fact, we've been able to kill or capture more al Qaeda senior leadership in cooperation with Pakistan than any other nation. So we're always looking for more and better. Our effort to have a dialogue with our Pakistani partners has been how can we make it better? And now, they've just gone through an election, as you are aware, on the 18th of February and we're going to form a new government. So the question for us now is new government. How do we engage? What happens internally in Pakistan because ultimately we have to work with the Pakistanis to be more effective in going after al Qaeda in that tribal region upon the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

There are many ways we can help them and we will. And the question is, how does it evolve over the next few months? And I am optimistic that they have gone through a democratic process. What I would highlight is many of the radical members of the assembly lost the election and more secular members were elected. So now it's going to be a coalition government. There will be a lot of debate. And it's not certain exactly how it's going to play out. But it was a democratic process and it will result in a government hopefully more stable that we can deal with.

MR. GREEN: Just briefly – I've been told we've only got five minutes or so left. I need to ask several questions. Just briefly, did you get what you wanted when you went there?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: Let me say that we are continuing to be good partners and we are getting good results.

MR. GREEN: But you didn't get the results you wanted from that meeting?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: Now, J.J., that's not what I said. I said we are good partners and we're getting good results. So to go further than that would be inappropriate for –

MR. GREEN: Classified?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: It would be inappropriate for me to go further.

MR. GREEN: Okay, Russia. Broad question: Is the Cold War over?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: Cold War is over; it's definitely over. If you look internally in Russia, although some of the things we see we don't like, it's a very different place. And what I would highlight for you is the person who is believed to be the next President, Medvedev, look at his press conferences. Read what he's saying. It's very interesting when he's talking about the rule of law, the power of a contract, the rights of the people, the entrepreneurship. So I think we are seeing a change in Russia that resulted from the collapse of the Communist system.

We had a very strong leader in Putin over these eight years. He, because of the price of oil and because of his leadership was able to regenerate a feeling of nationalism in Russia. But Russia had some very serious problems. They have population problems. It was a huge nation of well over 200 million at one time. It's down to something on the order of 110 million. Demographics are not kind to them right now. Health issues are serious. Mostly what they've been able to do is because of the price of oil and the fact they have so much of the world's energy resources.

What happens going forward? We're optimistic that Russia will choose to be more integrated with Europe and we'll see a different situation over time. There are some issues between us. Russia tends to interpret many of the actions on the part of the United States as attempting to hold Russia down or to conduct activities to weaken Russia. I don't see it that way. I see it more as an opportunity for engagement. But we have to engage as equal partners. And I think if the Russians will engage with America as a partner and with Europe as a partner, it would be like the United States in Europe – it would be a profitable enterprise as opposed to a negative enterprise.

MR. GREEN: China, there are a lot of questions. And this probably should be another conversation for another day, but I need to hear something now from you on China, and all of the issues that we have with China or the nation has with China. And then I want to ask you if you want to add anything after you're done with that answer.

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: China will be the world's largest economy in about 20, 25 years. So the first thing you have to think about when you think about China – it's 1.3 billion dollars – pardon me – 1.3 billion people, the world's largest economy in the future. Their major energy resource is coal. They have a situation where about half the population is not yet experiencing

the benefits of this economic prosperity. So one of the biggest challenges for China is 15, 20, 25 million new jobs a year. Another challenge for China is access to raw materials. And another is access to markets that will buy their goods.

So China is making progress. Many would see China as a – it's a communist country, therefore it's a mortal enemy. I believe that this economic prosperity in China will cause them to change in time. And as they continue to develop, we'll see a very different nation. It will be – in this observer's view, this will be the century of Asia because when I said Russia(*) will be the largest economy, who will be number two? And we're not certain whether that's going to be the United States or India. The United States will be two or three, and then who will be number four? Japan. So this is going to be the century of Asia.

MR. GREEN: What about Titan Rain/Assassin's Mace and China's efforts to hack into U.S. military and government systems, and to disrupt business and industrial espionage and all of that.

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: What the Chinese are engaging in are activities engaged in by most modern nations, and that's to collect information. Now, is it overly aggressive? Some would argue that it is. I would argue that it is. Do nation states attempt to gather information for advantage against other nation states? They do. But J.J., in this observer's view, the real challenge of the future is not collecting information. You can think of it as collecting it through normal means, or newspapers, libraries, and so on. You can think of collecting it through intelligence means, which that happens in all nation states. But it's still collecting information. You still have the deterrent effect, as an example, with China. China needs access to U.S. markets. They need a stable global economy. They need to – they need the world to exist in a stable environment so they can continue to prosper to benefit their own citizens. So they're incentivized for a world that is stable.

Let me switch the venue from exploiting information to data destruction. My worry is what happens when someone has the capability to destroy data as opposed to exploit data, and they're not deterred. So I worry a great deal about someone engaging in electronic intrusions for data destruction as opposed to data exploitation, particularly when organizations and units could get that capability and they don't have a deterrent effect. They're not faced with the deterrent that a nation-state can be faced with.

MR. GREEN: Are we talking about China or beyond China?

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: We're talking much beyond China. China is a nation state that would not be benefited by destroying another nation's monetary system or markets, or electronic – or electric power distribution. So if you think about Russia or China or anyone, for that matter, targeting the United States to get information, that's one thing. Would they target the United States for data destruction, that's another?

Now, a terrorist group with a capability would not be so deterred. That's what I worry about.

MR. GREEN: Anything you want to add that I haven't asked you about that you think is important that I –

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: No, I thank you very much for the opportunity. It was a – I very much appreciate the idea that I can explain some of the issues that we are facing and the needs for us to get this legislation agreed to and passed through the Congress and I am optimistic we will be able to do that in the near term.

MR. GREEN: Thank you, appreciate it.

DIRECTOR McCONNELL: Thank you very much.

(END)

(*) The Director of National Intelligence was referring to China.