

**Additional Views
of
Senator John Warner**

Over my years of Senate service, I have participated in many reports. This may prove to be the single most important one.

Under the terms of Senate Resolution 400 of the 94th Congress (1976), Members may serve up to eight years on this Committee; then, after a period of time rejoin, by appointment of the Senate leadership, for additional service. My first term on this Committee was 1987-1995, and I was Vice Chairman for the last two years of that term. I am now in my second term.

That experience, coupled with over twenty five years on the Armed Services Committee, which shares budgetary responsibility and oversight over the National Foreign Intelligence Program, provides me with a measure of experience to render the following views on this report. I accept this work product of the Committee, provided that my concerns, stated below, are made a part of the report.

Chairman Roberts, Vice Chairman Rockefeller, and Committee Members have worked diligently and conscientiously in collecting and evaluating the facts. Reducing and presenting the voluminous materials has been a prodigious task undertaken by the hardworking staff of the Committee. Where there were honest differences of opinion, conscientious efforts were taken to reconcile those differences and to produce this report.

The focal point of the Committee's work and the subject matter of the Committee's report was the process -- including the review by senior officials in the Intelligence Community -- that led to the publication of a National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iraqi Weapons on Mass Destruction Programs in October 2002. This NIE proved to be seriously flawed; and from this flawed NIE, Congress and the President were briefed.

I am concerned, however, that the conclusions of the Committee's report, as written, will be viewed as a broad indictment of the entire Intelligence Community, and the thousands of hardworking, dedicated, patriotic individuals who make up that community. Overreaction could well send the wrong message, causing our intelligence operatives and analysts to become too cautious and risk averse. Such a result could cause degradation of ongoing operations as well as the finished intelligence products available to our national leadership during a time of war. The errors of a few must not tarnish the good work of the vast majority.

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The U.S. Intelligence Community is, in my judgment and long experience, the most capable intelligence organization in the world, by far, and is a critical element in the overall national security of our Nation. The very nature of intelligence -- as with every nation -- is one of a degree of uncertainty. Best judgments are made as required, with such information as is in hand. Over time, some judgments will prove to be wrong, some partially wrong, and some will prove to be right. Rarely can this profession deal in absolute certainty. We ask our intelligence operatives the world over to take risk, sometimes risk of life and limb, as they collect the information this country requires. The information is a combination of scientific data, human sources, documentary evidence and other means. The evaluation of this information then falls to intelligence analysts to make their best evaluation. At every step, this process requires subjective judgment. Nevertheless, policymakers must rely on these reports.

It is important to view this report against that background of procedures. Our Committee, as the findings reflect, discovered that there were serious flaws in the production and step-by-step review of the October 2002 NIE which was the subject of the committee's inquiry. In some cases, the agencies with significant technical competence and differing views were overruled by the CIA in the overall process. Some sources of information were not properly evaluated; indeed some were given undue weight. In some cases, key judgments did not include appropriate qualifiers to communicate to policymakers the level of uncertainty associated with the judgment. These problems that we have pointed out in the report must be addressed and corrected for future estimates.

We must remember, however, that this was an unusual NIE, required by Congress, on a compressed time line. Most NIE's are conducted using a more deliberate process, mostly in single discipline areas, with well-understood time lines. This NIE was carried out using a truncated process that took the best available judgments, across a variety of normally distinct disciplines. The resulting shortcomings can be partially explained in this light; but not excused. There must be accountability for those errors that violate the standards of professional competence and good judgment that we must expect of our intelligence professionals. When their actions fall below those standards, resignation or dismissal is in order. The environment and culture that allowed such errors to occur must be corrected.

While the committee report concludes that there were errors in judgment, there was no evidence of willful misconduct by anyone involved in the production of this intelligence estimate. Furthermore, there was no evidence that anyone involved in reaching intelligence judgments for this NIE was subjected to any pressure from their superiors or from policymakers to alter any of their judgments or analyses. The problems with this NIE were very serious. The environment, the culture, the procedures followed and the review process clearly were flawed. I further note that as this Committee report goes forward, the work of the Iraq Survey Group, which was tasked, in large part, to

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ascertain the status of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programs, remains ongoing. The Congress has received two interim briefings, to date, and I anticipate we will receive additional updates before they conclude their work and submit their final report.

Our challenge now is to address the errors and procedural problems associated with the NIE process. Some fixes can be done promptly; some must evolve over a period of time.

There is much conscientious discussion in this committee, in other committees of the Congress, and from various commissions and interest groups calling for massive reform and reorganization of the U.S. Intelligence Community. I commend the Chairman for deferring such judgments until a sufficient body of fact and recommendations can be assessed. This report examines one aspect and one compressed time period of the complex intelligence process that goes on continuously, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. It is a process undertaken by dedicated public servants who take their profession and their loyalty to country very seriously. It is a process that invariably produces exceptional intelligence products that have, are currently and will continue to serve our country well, in peacetime and in time of war.

I trust this committee will continue its thorough examination of our Nation's intelligence processes. There are systemic and cultural problems that must be addressed and improved, in a careful, fair manner. As we continue with that examination, an examination that will invoke conflicting views, I urge my colleagues to be patient and thorough in our deliberations.

I also urge my colleagues to remember the outstanding work that the vast majority of our intelligence professionals do, day in and day out. It is our duty to work with the Intelligence Community to ensure that the organization and procedures of our intelligence agencies are worthy of the noble work and sacrifices of the dedicated professionals who work within their walls.