Congressional Record: June 27, 2005 (House)
Page H5243-H5250

U.S. INTELLIGENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McHenry). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Weldon) is recognized for 44 minutes.

[[Page H5244]]

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to discuss for the next 45 minutes the most important topic that will allow us to protect the homeland, provide for the security of the American people and our allies and our troops around the world: our intelligence.

Last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, I had a meeting with the very able and distinguished chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Hoekstra). We discussed many things, one of which was a source that I had hoped that we could get some information to assist us in understanding the threats in Iraq and the Middle East, and especially in regard to Iran.

I said to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Hoekstra), I am going to make a prediction to you. Based on my source, I said, common wisdom tells us that the winner of the election in Iran that will take place on Friday and Saturday our time will probably be Rafsanjani. He is the name that most pundits have said would be the likely winner in a two-person runoff against the more conservative and not well-known mayor of Tehran. But I said to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Hoekstra), based on information we had, the election was not going to be close; it will be a landslide. But the conservative mayor of Tehran, a relative unknown, had been anointed by Ayatollah Homeni in Iran and he would in fact win the Iranian election.

We all saw the results, Mr. Speaker, on Saturday night and Sunday morning as, in fact, the mayor of Tehran won the election with a margin of 62 to 38 percent, an overwhelming landslide. I raise this issue, Mr. Speaker, because good intelligence and good information is the most critical tool that we can have over the next several years and decades to protect our homeland.

Mr. Speaker, I rise because information has come to my attention

over
the past several months that is very disturbing. I have learned that, in fact, one of our Federal agencies had, in fact, identified the major
New York cell of Mohamed Atta prior to 9/11; and I have learned, Mr. Speaker, that in September of 2000, that Federal agency actually was prepared to bring the FBI in and prepared to work with the FBI to take down the cell that Mohamed Atta was involved in in New York City, along
with two of the other terrorists.

I have also learned, Mr. Speaker, that when that recommendation was discussed within that Federal agency, the lawyers in the administration
at that time said, you cannot pursue contact with the FBI against that cell. Mohamed Atta is in the U.S. on a green card, and we are fearful of the fallout from the Waco incident. So we did not allow that Federal
agency to proceed.

Mr. Speaker, what this now means is that prior to September 11, we had employees of the Federal Government in one of our agencies who actually identified the Mohamed Atta cell and made a specific recommendation to act on that cell, but were denied the ability to go forward. Obviously, if we had taken out that cell, 9/11 would not have occurred and, certainly, taking out those three principal players in that cell would have severely crippled, if not totally stopped, the operation that killed 3,000 people in America.

Tonight, I am going to provide some background to my colleagues, because I think this represents a major problem with our intelligence that needs to be focused on by the committees of the House and the Senate, by the leadership of the House and the Senate, by John Negroponte, the new person assigned by President Bush, and a very able man, to integrate the 33 classified systems overseen by the 15 Federal agencies.

I want to also start off by praising Porter Goss, the director of the
CIA. Porter served us extremely well in this body as the chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence; and he went over to the
CIA with an aggressive agenda to change that agency, and he has begun that process. We, in this body, need to rally the American people to support the efforts brought forward by Porter Goss and to allow John Negroponte to undertake perhaps the most difficult task in protecting the security of America, a task that will not be easy, given the history of our Federal agency system.

Let me take my colleagues back, Mr. Speaker, to 1999. It was, in fact, the spring of 1999 when I was first involved in taking a delegation of 10 Members of Congress to Vienna with the support of my friend and colleague, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. Hoyer), and with

the support of the Clinton State Department.

{time} 2320

The 11-member delegation of five Democrats, five Republicans and myself, along with the State Department employee, traveled to Vienna to meet with five senior leaders of the Russian political parties. Our purpose was to try to reach a framework that could allow for a peaceful resolution of the war in Kosovo on the terms that the U.S. had desired after Ramboullet.

After securing a military plane, my Russian friends told me they were bringing a Serb along with them, a Serb who would be able to understand what we were talking about and help us decide and determine whether or not Milosevic back in Belgrade would accept any recommendations that we would develop. I did not know anything about the Serb. I knew the Russians. But I figure I had better ask the CIA what they knew about this Serb so I could be better prepared, and to make sure that the Serb was not a part of the Milosevic regime, because that would cause myself and my colleagues to be in violation of the Hobbs Act because we were at war with Serbia at that time.

So I called George Tenet. I said, Director Tenet, can you give me some information about this Serb? His family is evidently well known. I need to know whether or not he is a part of the Milosevic regime. I need to know any other information you can provide to me because we are going to meet with him when we travel to Vienna to meet with the Russian leaders to help provide a beginning of a solution to end the war in Kosovo.

He called me back the next day and he gave me a couple of sentences and said not to worry, he was not a part of the Milosevic regime. And he had strong ties to the Communist Party inside of Moscow and had ties to other leaders in the Russian Government. It was not much to go on.

But at the time, Mr. Speaker, I was chairman of the Defense Research Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee. My job was to oversee the funding, approximately $40 billion of defense research money on new systems and new technologies. And one of the most striking technologies was the work being done by the Army's Information Dominance Center at Fort Belvoir, formerly known as the LIWA, the Land Information Warfare

Assessment Center. I had visited the LIWA several times and was tremendously impressed with not just the ability to provide security for our Army classified systems, but I saw a unique approach to doing well beyond that, data mining, data collaboration, using cutting-edge software tools like Starlight and Spires, able to do profiling. Having plussed-up funding for this facility after talking to George Tenet, I called my friends at the Army's Information Dominance Center and said, can you do something for me as a favor, off the record? And they said sure, Congressman, whatever you like. Would you run me a profile of this Serb, for the same reason I had asked the Director of the CIA. They said, no problem, Congressman; we will get back to you in a few hours. And they did. They gave me 10 pages of information, Mr. Speaker,
about the Serb and his ties. Now, the information was not vetted but it
was from a number of sources that the Information Dominance Center was able to pull together very quickly. I used that information as we traveled to Vienna to understand who we were meeting with. We had those
meetings for 2 days and my colleagues, my five Republican and five Democrat colleagues, worked aggressively to establish a framework that would begin the end of the Kosovo war. In fact, it was historic.
When we returned to Washington several weeks later I was contacted by
the FBI and they said, Congressman, we would like to debrief you. We would like you to tell us what you know about that Serb that you all met in Vienna. I said, no problem, I will be happy to do it Monday afternoon in my office. The Friday before the Monday, my D.C. office paged me with a 911 page. When I called them they said, you have got to
call CIA Congressional Affairs immediately, which I did. CIA

[[Page H5245]]

Congressional Affairs said, Congressman Weldon, we are going to fly two
agents to Philadelphia this evening. They will meet you at the airport,
at a hotel, at your home, wherever you want to meet them. And I said, I
am sorry, I cannot do it. It is a weekend. It is a Friday night. I have
got events already planned. What is the urgency of this meeting? And the CIA Congressional Affairs person said well, Congressman, we have been tasked by the State Department to brief our Ambassador, who is negotiating the final terms to end the war in Kosovo, and he needs to know something about this Serb that you met in Vienna. I said, well, the FBI has already called me for that. Can we not do it together? And finally, after pushing back for 10, 15 minutes, the CIA agreed. And so

on Monday afternoon in my office I hosted four agents, two FBI and two CIA. These agents asked me four pages of questions about the Serb that I had met with along with our colleagues in the House.

When I finished answering all their questions and giving them all of the information I had, I said to them, now you know where I got my data from, right? And they said, well, you got it from the Russians. I said, no. Well, you got it from the Serb. I said, no. I said, before I left Washington, before I left my office, I called the Army's Information Dominance Center and asked them to do me a favor. They ran a profile and gave me 10 pages. The CIA rep and the FBI rep said, what is the Army's Information Dominance Center, congressman?

It was then, Mr. Speaker, that I knew we had a problem; that our intelligence systems were not linked together, that the stovepipes were so great that we would never be able to deal with emerging transnational terrorist threats. So beginning in the spring of 1999, I began a process working with the Army, and their subgroup working with them, Special Forces Command down in Florida, which had a similar capability to develop a national prototype, a prototype that could be providing support for the President, the National Security Adviser, and all of our policymakers. In fact, working together over a multiweek period, we came up with a plan, a document. And Mr. Speaker, I would like to place this document in the Record at this point in time.

National Operations and Analysis Hub: NOAH

Policy makers' tool for acting against emerging transnational threats and dangers to U.S. national security.

Policy makers need better decision support tools.

Policy makers continue to work in a vacuum. Briefings and testimonies are the primary vehicles for transmitting information to leadership.

The volume of information germane to national issues is expanding so rapidly that policy makers are overwhelmed with data.

Policy makers need robust situational awareness over growing asymmetric threats to national security.

Policy makers need an overarching information and intelligence architecture that will quickly assimilate, analyze and display assessments and recommended course of action from many national agencies simultaneously.

Policy makers need tools to aid them in developing courses of action against threats to U.S. policy, interests, or security.

Policy makers need virtual communications with one another.

White House, Congress, Pentagon and at the agency levels

should each have centers they can go to and receive, send, share, discuss, and collaborate on assessments before they act.

National Level Collaboration Solution: NOAH, National Operations and Analysis Hub.

Tasks supported by NOAH's overarching collaborative environment:

Provide Multi Issue, Multi-agency Hybrid Picture to White House Situation Room, JCS;

HUMINT Support;

Peackeeping Missions;

Humanitarian Aid;

Battle Damage Assessment;

Develop and Leverage new Technologies of important to national security;

Support Congressional Committees/Hearings;

Apply Analysis of Foreign Threat to Policy;

Provide Hybrid Situational Awareness Picture of the Threat;

Incorprote Industrial Efforts of Interests to the Policy Maker;

Link academia directly to policy maker; and

National Emergencies.

NOAH can leverage existing networks to address diverse issues:

NOAH's Hub Center if linked to other agency centers electronically;

Each key agency must prossess a Pod Site and be connected to the NOAH network;

The Pod can consist of a large screen and appropriate connect for collaboration. Operations Centers can simply be converted into NOAH;

National Policy makers cannot control agency Pods, agencies must post replicated data on the NOAH system so that sister groups can access data;

Support multi-level security requirements and can sanitize and ``push'' data to many types of users to many levels;

NOAH can address National, law enforcement and military needs. The situation will determine the mission;

Ties policy maker, military and law enforcement together;

Goals of the NOAH Hub Center is to apply agency operations, strategies analysis, tactical assessments to a course of action for the policy maker; and

Optimizes group of expertise within each organization--experts always on hand regardless of issue.

NOAH and Pod Site Network:

Part of national policy creation and execution system;

Will existing sites and connectivities where available;

Will share tools available at LIWA IDC so every agency has same tools;

All agencies will post data on NRO highway in a replicated format sensitive to classification;

NOAH's Global Network will use NRO System as backbone;

All centers connect to other centers electronically; and

Mechanism for gathering, analyzing, displaying, tailoring, and disseminating all kinds of information quickly at the national level.

Overview--National Operations and Analysis Hub:

Center dedicated to National Policy Makers at White House, Congress and National Agencies;

Provides system of system advanced technological communications environment to harvest, analyze, display data as needed;

Coordinate and synchronize information among IC, S&T centers, military services;

Provide near real time situational awareness at the national level;

Link virtually via a pod site to every participating member agency; and

Pod sites designed to pull together agency resources on single system of systems.

NOAH's is staffed by members from participating agencies. The staff has a 24 x 7, high bandwidth, virtual connectivity to experts at agency Pod Sites. This provides decision makers with real-time situational awareness of adversary picture and courses.

Steps to Achieve NOAH Capability:

Establish baseline capability by building initial Hub Center and congressional virtual hearing room. Equip White House Situation Room to Collaborate with these sites;

Staff the Hub Center with two reps from each of the 28 key participating agencies;

Link up NOAH internal and external collaborative environment;

Hook in Back up Site for redundancy and begin training on collaborative tools;

Build the 28 Key Agency Pod Sites along model of the Information Dominance Center at Fort Belvoir, VA;

Link all Pod Sites to NOAH hub center establish Protocols for Inter-agency data sharing;

Exercise live ability to retrieve, collate, analyze, display disparate data and provide policy makers course of action analysis at the NOAH Hub Center; and

Refine procedures and Protocols.

Agencies Represented in the National Collaborative Center:

Central Intelligence Agency; Defense Intelligence Agency; National Imagery and Mapping Agency; National Security Agency; National Reconnaissance Office; Defense Threat Reduction Agency; Joint Chiefs of Staff; Army/LIWA; Air

Force; Navy; Marine Corps; Joint Counter-Intelligence Assessment Group; ONDCP; and FBI.

Drug Enforcement Agency; U.S. Customs; National Criminal Investigative Service; National Infrastructure Protection Center; Defense Information Systems Agency; State Department; Five CINCs; Department of Energy; Department of Commerce; Department of the Treasury; Justice Department; Office of the Secretary of Defense; National Military Command Center; and National Joint Military Intelligence Command.

Elements to be connected to the national collaborative center would include the White House Situation Room, a Congressional Virtual Hearing Room and a possible redundant, or back-up site.

This document, as you can see, Mr. Speaker, is entitled the NOAH, National Operations and Analysis Hub, Policy Makers' Tool for Acting Against Emerging Transnational Threats and Dangers to U.S. National Security. This 9-page briefing, Mr. Speaker, was put together in the spring of 1999.

I asked the Deputy Secretary of Defense, John Hamre, to take a look at this capability. He went down to the LIWA and he came back and he said, Congressman, you are right. I agree with you. This capability is amazing. It offers unlimited potential. How about sending me a letter describing your interest, Congressman?

[[Page H5246]]

So on July 30, 1999, I sent this 3-page letter to Deputy Secretary John Hamre, Deputy Secretary of Defense, at his request, talking about creating an integrated collaborative center for all of our intelligence. I would like to place this letter in the Record at this point in time, Mr. Speaker

House of Representatives,

Washington, DC, July 30, 1999.

Hon. John Hamre,
Deputy Secretary of Defense,
The Pentagon, Washington, DC.

Dear Dr. Hamre: I believe the time has come to create a central national level entity that can acquire, fuse and anaylze disparate data from many agencies in order to support the policy maker in taking action against threats from terrorism, proliferation, illegal technology diversions, espionage, narcotics, information warfare and cyberterrorism. These challenges are beginning to overlap, thereby blurring their distinction while posing increasing threats to our Nation.

Before we take action to counter these emerging threats, we must first understand their relationship to one another, their patterns, the people and countries involved, and the level of danger posed to our Nation. The Department of Defense has a unique opportunity to create a centralized national center that can do this for the country. It would be patterned after the Army's Land Information Warfare Activity (LIWA) at Fort Belvoir, but would operate on a much broader scale. This entity would allow for near-time information and analysis to flow to a central fusion center, which I would designate the National Operations Analysis Hub (NOAH). I think this title is fitting, as NOAH will provide a central hub built to protect our nation from the flood of threats.

NOAH would be comprised of a system of agency-specified mini-centers, or ``pods'' of participating agencies and services associated with growing national security concerns (attachment 1). NOAH would link the policymaker with action recommendations derived from fused information provided by the individual pods. NOAH would provide the automation and connectivity to allow the pods to talk together, share data and perspectives on a given situation in a near real-time, computer-based environment.

The NOAH center in the Office of the Secretary of Defense would be comprised of representatives from an initial cluster of pod sites to include: CIA, DIA, National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NlMA), NSA, NRO, Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTSA), JCS, Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, ONDCP, FBI, DEA, Customs, National Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS), National Infrastructure Protection Center. Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), State, the five CINCS, DOE, INS, Commerce. Treasury.

Elements which would be connected into NOAH would include the White House Situation Room, a Congressional Virtual Hearing Room and a possible redundant (back up) site.

The benefits of creating a NOAH include:

For national policy makers, a national collaborative, environment offers situations updates across a variety of issues and offers suggested courses of action, based on analysis, to help government officials make more informed decisions.

For the Intelligence Community, a national collaborative environment will help end stovepiping and create more robust strategic analyses as well as near real-time support to field operations.

For military commanders and planners, a national collaborative environment offers full battlefield visualization, threat profiling, robust situational awareness, as well as near real-timer support to special missions such as peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, national

emergencies or special operations.

For law enforcement, a national collaborative environment provides investigative and threat profiling support, and field station situational awareness.

Along with its system of connected agency pod sites, NOAH would permit the display of collaborative threat profiling and analytical assessments on a large screen. It would be a national level operations and control center with a mission to intergrate various imagery, data and analytical viewpoints for decision-makers in support of national actions. I see NOAH as going beyond the capability of the National Military Command Center (NMCC) and the National Joint Military Intelligence Command (NJMIC), providing recommended courses of action that allow us to effectively meet those emerging challenges from asymmetrical threats in near real-time. Given its mission, I believe that NOAH should reside in the Office of the Secretary of Defense (Attachment 2).

I am aware of the initiative to link counterintelligence groups throughout the community. I am also aware of the counterterrorism center at the CIA, the new National Infrastructure Protection Center at the FBI, and a new HUMINT special operations center. I have heard of an attempt to connect the Office of Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and OSD assets with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. I also have seen what the Army has done at LIWA, which has created a foundation for creating a higher-level architecture collaborating all of these efforts. Each of these independent efforts needs to be coordinated at the national level. I believe LIWA has created a model that should be used as a basis for creating the participating agency pod sites.

I do not expect that establishment of NOAH should exceed $10 million. Each agency involved could set up its own pod to connect with the central NOAH site or to exchange data with any of its participants. Each agency could dedicate monies to establish their own pod site, while the $50 million available in DARPA for related work could be used to establish the NOAH structure immediately.

The NOAH concept of a national collaborative environment supporting policy and decision-makers mirrors the ideas you have expressed to me in recent discussions, and it is a tangible way to confront the growing assymetrical threats to our nation. I have a number of ideas regarding staffing options and industry collaboration, and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss them with you. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Curt Weldon,

Member of Congress.

Secretary Hamre was interested and he told me, Congressman, I will even pay the bill. The Defense Department will provide the funding for this. And I do not care where they put it, Congressman. It could be at the White House, it could be at the NSC, wherever it is most appropriate, but I will pay the bill. But, Congressman, the problem is not with me or the money. You have got to convince the CIA and the FBI that this is something they want to pursue.

In fact, he wrote me a letter, Mr. Speaker, dated October 21, 1999: ``Dear Congressman Weldon, I wholeheartedly agree that combating asymmetrical threats challenging national security requires a collaborative interagency approach as suggested in your concept of the National Operations Analysis Hub. We are actively engaged in assessing how the department should leverage ongoing activities and develop a long-term strategy along these lines. I will keep you apprised of our progress. I would be happy to meet with you on the subject.''

And then he puts a personal comment on the note that I will read. ``Sir, this is a mealy-mouth response because no one wants to commit to
a LIWA-based solution. You know I am very impressed by LIWA and see them involved in a range of activities. I would like to get together with you to review some of our thinking when you have time. John.''

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place this in the Record.

Deputy Secretary of Defense,

Washington, DC, October 21, 1999.

Hon. Curt Weldon,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Dear Congressman Weldon: I wholeheartedly agree that combatting the asymmetrical threats challenging National Security requires a collaborative, inter-agency approach, as suggested in your concept of the National Operations Analysis Hub. We are actively engaged in assessing how the Department should leverage ongoing activities and develop a long-term strategy along these lines.

I will keep you apprised of our progress, and I would be happy to meet with you on this subject.

Sincerely,

John J. Harme.

{time} 2330

Mr. Speaker, that was in October of 1999 at John Hamre's suggestion on November 4 of 1999, almost 2 years before 9/11. I had John Hamre and
the representatives of the CIA and the FBI in my office. And at John

Hamre's suggestion, we went through the 9-page briefing to create an overarching national collaborative center. When I finished the briefing which had been prepared for me with our intelligence officials off the record, the CIA said, Congressman Weldon, that is all well and good, but we really do not need that capability. It is not necessary. We are doing something called CI-21; and, therefore, we do not need to pursue that multi-system approach that you have outlined where we bring in all of these other classified systems.

I was very unhappy with that response because I knew full well the Army and our special forces commands were using that capability at that very moment in a special project against al Qaeda.

So, Mr. Speaker, in 1999 and in 2000 and in 2001, I put language in each of our defense bills calling for the creation of a national collaborative center to bring together our disparate intelligence capabilities and systems for 3 consecutive years. And, in fact, one of

[[Page H5247]]

those bills required a response by the CIA as to why this system had not been put into place.

But in the meantime, on November 12, 1999, the Defense Information and Electronics Report published an article about the need for a massive intelligence network for shared threat information. On April of 2000, Signal Magazine did another story on a fusion center concept taking root as we kept pushing this process.

Mr. Speaker, the following are both of these articles:

[Nov. 12, 1997]

Defense Information and Electronics Report

WELDON: DOD NEEDS MASSIVE INTELLIGENCE NETWORK FOR SHARED THREAT INFORMATION

Senior Pentagon officials are mulling over an idea proposed by Rep. Curt Weldon (R-PA) that would link classified and unclassified documents in a massive intelligence clearinghouse that could be accessed by 33 federal agencies--a concept similar in some ways to one floated by DOD intelligence officials but with significantly fewer players involved.

``Our problem with intelligence is that we're stove-pipped,'' said Weldon, chairman of the House Armed Services military research and development subcommittee, during a Nov.

8 interview. ``Each agency has its own way of collecting data and analyzing it, but they don't share that information with other agencies. The need is to have a better system of analyzing and fusing data sets across agencies and services--certainly within the Pentagon and the military, but my opinion is that we have to go further than that.''

Weldon first proposed the concept of a ``National Operations Analysis Hub'' to Deputy Defense Secretary John Hamre last July, although the congressman said he kept his initiative quiet until a stronger plan could be developed.

The Pentagon-funded network of agencies would be operated by DOD. According to Weldon, it would pull together large amounts of information to produce intelligence profiles of people, regions and national security threats, such as information warfare and cyber-terrorism.

``The NOAH concept of a national collaborative environment supporting policy and decision-makers mirrors the ideas you have expressed to me in recent discussions, and it is a tangible way to confront the growing asymmetrical threats to our nation.'' Weldon wrote in his July 30 letter to Hamre.

The NOAH concept, however, was not wholeheartedly embraced by Hamre, who met with Weldon last summer and told the congressman his suggested use of the Army's Land Information Warfare Activity at Ft. Belvoir, VA, as a model for NOAH, would never stick.

Because LIWA is already short of resources, the Army is apprehensive about taking on any new tasks, Hamre told Weldon.

Weldon, in a July 21 letter to Hamre, also urged the Pentagon to support additional future funding for LIWA, citing critical budget shortfalls that he said have kept the agency from fulfilling a barrage of requests for intelligence files from Army commanders (Defense Information and Electronics Report, July 30, p1).

``There's massive amounts of data out there, and you have to be able to analyze it and create ways to focus on that data so its relevant to whatever you're interested in,'' he said this week about his support for LIWA. ``Well the Army has already done that.''

While Weldon continues to push for NOAH to be patterned after LIWA, he sees it operating on a much larger scale. Impressed by its ability to pull together huge amounts of both unclassified and classified data, Weldon noted LIWA's Information Dominance Center can create in-depth profiles that could be useful to the CIA, FBI and the White House. Yet most federal agencies don't even know LIWA exists, he added.

``Right now the military is limited to [its] own sources of information,'' Weldon said. ``And in the 21st century, a terrorist group is more than likely going to be involved with

terrorist nations. So the boundaries are crossed all the time. We don't have any way to share that and get beyond the stove-pipping.''

Meanwhile, officials within the Defense Department's intelligence community have been considering another way to amass intelligence information through a concept called the Joint Counter-intelligence Assessment Group. A DOD spokeswoman said proponents of the idea, for now, are unwilling to disclose details about it. She was also unable to say whether a formal proposal to Hamre had been made yet.

In Weldon's July 30 letter to Hamre, however, Weldon alludes to an ongoing ``initiative to link counterintelligence groups throughout the community.''

``I have heard of an attempt to connect the Office of Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) and [Office of the Secretary of Defense] assets with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies,'' Weldon wrote. However, Weldon said in the interview he believes JCAG is simply more ``stove-pipping.''

``I also have seen what the Army has done at LIWA, which has created a foundation for creating a higher-level architecture collaborating all of these efforts,'' his July letter states.

NOAH would link together almost every federal agency with intelligence capabilities, including the National Security Agency, the Nation Imagery and Mapping Agency, the Energy Department, the CIA and the FBI. Both Congress and the White House would be offered a ``node'' for briefing capabilities, meaning intelligence agencies could detail situations on terrorist attacks or wartime scenarios.

``It's mainly for policymakers, the White House decision makers, the State Department, military, and military leaders,'' he said.

Although information sharing among the intelligence community has yet to be formalized through NOAH or JCAG or a similar system, military officials have said they need some kind of linked access capability.

Intelligence systems need to be included within the Global Information Grid--the military's vision of a future global network that could be accessed from anywhere in the world, said Brig. Gen. Manlyn Quagliotti, vice director of the Joint Staff's command and control, communications and computers directorate, during a Nov. 5 speech on information assurance at a conference in Arlington, VA.

``We need a more integrated strategy, including help from [the Joint Staff's intelligence directorate] with Intelligence reports or warnings of an attack,'' he said.

Quagliotti said the toughest challenge for achieving ``information superiority'' is the need to unite networks and network managers under one command structure with stronger

situational awareness capabilities.

Part of [the challenge] is the overwhelming amount of information, the ability to access that Information, and the ability to reach back and get that information, which means that networks become more crucial to the warfight'' she said.

Fusion Center Concept Takes Root As Congressional Interest Waxes

[From Signal, Apr. 2000]

Creation of a national operations and analysis hub is finding grudging acceptance among senior officials in the U.S. national security community. This fresh intelligence mechanism would link federal agencies to provide instant collaborative threat profiling and analytical assessments for use against asymmetrical threats. National policy makers, military commanders and law enforcement agencies would be beneficiaries of the hub's information.

Prodded by a resolute seven-term Pennsylvania congressman and reminded by recent terrorist and cyberthreat activities, the U.S. Defense Department is rethinking its earlier aversion to the idea, and resistance is beginning to crumble. Funding to establish the national operations and analysis hub (NOAH), which would link 28 federal agencies, is anticipated as a congressional add-on in the Defense Department's new budget. An initial $10 million in funding is likely in fiscal year 2001 from identified research and development accounts.

Spearheading the formation of NOAH is Rep. Curt Weldon (R-PA), chairman of the U.S. House of Representatives National Security Committee's military research and development subcommittee. He emphasizes that challenges facing U.S. leaders are beginning to overlap, blurring distinction and jurisdiction. ``The increasing danger is both domestic and international.''

Conceptually, NOAH would become a national-level operations and control center with a mission to integrate various imagery, data and analytical viewpoints. The intelligence products would support U.S. actions. ``I see NOAH as going beyond the capability of the National Military Command Center and the National Joint Military Intelligence Command. NOAH would provide recommended courses of action that allow the U.S. to effectively meet emerging challenges in near real time,'' the congressman illustrates.

``This central national-level hub would be composed of a system of agency-specified mini centers, or `pods,' of participating agencies and services associated with growing national security concerns,'' Weldon reports. ``NOAH would link the policy with action recommendations derived from fused information provided by the individual pod.''

Automation and connectivity would allow the to talk to each other in a computer-based environment to share data and perspectives on a given situation.

The congressman believes that NOAH should reside within the Defense Department and is modeling the hub's concept on a U.S. Army organization he closely follows. He says the idea for NOAH comes from officials in several federal agencies. However, it is also based on his own experiences with the U.S. Army's Intelligence and Security Command's (INSCOM's) Land Warfare Information Activity (LIWA) and Information Dominance Center, Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

Patterned after LIWA (SIGNAL, March, page 31), NOAH would display collaborative threat profiling and analysis with the aid of a variety of electronic tools, the hub would support national actions, Weldon discloses.

The congressman is conscious of other initiatives such as linking counterintelligence groups throughout the community. He also is aware of the Central Intelligence Agency's, (CIA's) counterterrorism center, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI's) National Infrastructure Protection Center and a new human intelligence (HUMINT) special operations center, ``We don't need another

[[Page H5248]]

analytical center. Instead, we need a national-level fusion center that can take already analyzed data and offer courses of action for decision making,'' he insists.

Weldon's wide experience in dealing with officials from the FBI, CIA and the National Security Agency (NSA) convince him that policy makers are continuing to work in a vacuum. ``Briefings and testimonies are the primary vehicles for transmitting information to leaders. The volume of information germane to national security issues is expanding so rapidly that policy makers are overwhelmed with data,'' he claims.

Robust situational awareness of asymmetric threats to national security is a key in assisting leaders, Weldon observes. ``Policy makers need an overarching information and intelligence architecture that will quickly assimilate, analyze and display assessments and recommend courses of action for many simultaneous national emergencies,'' he declares. The concept of NOAH also calls for virtual communications among policy makers.

Weldon's plan is for White House, Congress, Pentagon and agency-level leaders each to have a center where they receive, send, share and collaborate on assessments before they act. He calls NOAH the policy maker's tool. In the collaborative environment, the hub would provide a

multiissue, multiagency hybrid picture to the White House situation room and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

NOAH's concept also includes support for HUMINT and peacekeeping missions along with battle damage assessment. The same system could later help brace congressional committees and hearings. The new capability would allow application of foreign threat analyses to policy, while providing a hybrid situational awareness picture of the threat, Weldon relates. Industrial efforts of interest to the policy maker could be incorporated, and academia also could be directly linked.

In meetings with high-level FBI, CIA and defense officials, Weldon stressed the need to ``acquire, fuse and analyze disparate data from many agencies in order to support the policy maker's actions against threats from terrorism, [ballistic misile] proliferation, illegal technology diversions, espionage, narcotics [trafficking], information warfare and cyberterrorism.'' He is convinced that current collection and analysis capabilities in various intelligence agencies are stovepiped. ``To some extent, this involves turf protection, but it clearly hinders policy making.''

Weldon, who was a Russian studies major, offers some of his own recent experiences as examples of why there is a strong need for NOAH. He maintains close contact with a number of Russians and understands their programs and technologies. The congressman is quick to recall vignettes about Russian officials and trips to facilities in the region.

During the recent U.S. combat action involvement in Kosovo, Weldon was contacted by senior Russian officials.* * *

Weldon learned from the agents that they were seeking information on Karic to brief the State Department. When he explained that the information came from the Army and LIWA, the CIA and FBI agents had no knowledge of that organization, he confirms. Before his departure for Vienna, the congressman received a six-page LIWA profile of Karic and his family's links to Milosevic.

``This is an example of why an organization like NOAH is so critically necessary,'' Weldon contends. ``LIWA's Information Dominance Center provides the best capability we have today in the federal government to assess massive amounts of data and develop profiles. LIWA uses its contacts with other agencies to obtain database information from those systems,'' he explains. ``Some is unclassified and some classified.''

Weldon cites an ``extraordinary capability by a former CIA and Defense Intelligence Agency official, who is a LIWA profiler, as one of the keys in LIWA's success. She does the profiling and knows where to look and which systems to pull information from in a data mining and extrapolation process,'' he proclaims. ``She makes the system work.''

Weldon intends to use LIWA's profiling capability as a model for building NOAH. ``My goal is to go beyond service intelligence agencies and integrate all intelligence collection. This must be beyond military intelligence, which is too narrow in scope, to provide a governmmentwide capability. Each agency with a pod linked to NOAH would provide two staff members assigned at the hub, which would operate continuously. Data brought together in ``this cluster would be used for fusion and profiling, which any agency could then request,'' he maintains.

NOAH would not belong to the Army, which would continue with its own intelligence capabilities as would the other services. There would only be one fusion center, which would handle input from all federal agencies and from open sources, Weldon explains. ``NOAH would handle threats like information operations and examine stability in various regions of the world. We need this ability to respond immediately.'' The congressman adds that he recently was briefed by LIWA on very sensitive, very limited and scary profile information, which he describes as ``potentially explosive.'' In turn, Weldon arranged briefings for the chairman of the House National Security Committee, the Speaker of the House and other key congressional leaders.

``But this kind of profiling capability is very limited now. The goal is to have it on a regular basis. The profiling could be used for sensitive technology transfer issues and information about security breaches,'' the congressman allows. LIWA has what he terms the fusion and profiling state-of-the-art capability in the military, ``even beyond the military.'' Weldon is pressing the case for NOAH among leaders in both houses of Congress. ``It is essential that we create a governmentwide capability under very strict controls.''

Weldon adds that establishing NOAH is not a funding issue; it is a jurisdictional issue. ``Some agencies don't want to tear down their stovepipes. Yet, information on a drug lord, as an example, could be vitally important to help combat terrorism.'' He makes a point that too often, federal agencies overlap each other in their efforts to collect intelligence against these threats, or they fail to pool their resources and share vital information. ``This redundancy of effort and confusion of jurisdiction only inhibits our nation's capabilities,'' he offers.

NOAH would provide high-bandwidth, virtual connectivity to experts at agency pod sites. Protocols for interagency data sharing would be established and refined in links to all pod sites. The ability to retrieve, collate, analyze and display data would be exercised to provide possible courses of action. A backup site would be established for redundancy,

and training would begin on collaborative tools as soon as it is activated.

The hub system would become part of the national policy creation and execution system. The tools available at LIWA would be shared so that every agency would have the same tools. Weldon explains that all agencies would post data on the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) highway in a replicated format sensitive to classification. NOAH's global network would use the NRO system as a backbone.

NOAH optimizes groups of expertise within each organization--experts who are always on hand regardless of the issue. This approach ties strategic analysis and tactical assessment to a course of action. ``Before the U.S. can take action against emerging threats, we must first understand their relationship to one another, their patterns, the people and countries involved and the level of danger posed to our nation,'' Weldon say's ``That is where NOAH begins.''--CAR

So we have pushed the process, Mr. Speaker. We pushed it in legislation passed by this Congress 3 years in a row. I pushed it publicly in magazine articles, in newspapers, in speeches before intelligence symposiums and agency briefings; but the CIA continued to balk.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, I have one of the report languages from H.R. 5408, the conference report printed October 6, 2000, the section entitled ``Joint Report on Establishment of a National Collaborative Information Analysis Capability.''

That section is as follows:

Joint report on establishment of national collaborative information analysis capability (sec. 933)

The House bill contained a provision (sec. 905) that would: (1) require the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence to prepare a joint report assessing alternatives for the establishment of a national collaborative information analysis capability; (2) require the Secretary of Defense to complete the data mining, profiling, and analysis capability of the Army's Land Information Warfare Activity; and (3) restrict funds to establish, support, or implement a data mining and analysis capability until such a capability is specifically authorized by law.

The Senate amendment contained no similar provision.

The Senate recedes with an amendment that would: (1) require the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Central Intelligence to prepare a joint report assessing alternatives for the establishment of a national collaborative information analysis capability; and (2) require the Secretary of Defense to complete the data mining, profiling, and analysis capability of the Army's Land Information Warfare Activity.

The amendment would not restrict funds, but would require the Secretary to make appropriate use of such capability to provide support to appropriate national defense components.

Mr. Speaker, to push this process, a report came back from the CIA dated May 1, 2001, just a few short months before 9/11. And I will read one sentence in this report in the summary: ``A single overarching collaborative solution addressing the totality of mission requirements is not practical.''

In other words, the CIA said, We cannot create what the Department of Defense already has. Now, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Defense and the Army and our special forces commands already had this capability, and they were using it in 1999 and 2000. I knew they were using it, but was not quite sure of the extent of the use until 2 weeks after 9/11.

Mr. Speaker, exactly 2 weeks after 9/11 where I lost some very good friends, Ray Downey, the chief of all rescue for the New York City Fire Department and one of my best friends, was the chief of all rescue at Ground

[[Page H5249]]

Zero when the first tower came down. It was Ray Downey who had taken me through the Trade Center in 1993 when bin Laden hit us the first time. It was Ray Downey who convinced me in the late 1990s to introduce legislation, eventually becoming law, to create a commission to make recommendations to prepare for the next terrorist threat.

My legislation was passed, became law, and created what is now known as the Gilmore Commission, chaired by Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore. Ray Downey was one of those commissioners. The Gilmore Commission and Ray Downey gave us three reports before 9/11 of recommendations of things we should be doing to prepare for the next terrorist attack. And they gave us those three reports before 9/11 occurred. In fact, almost 40 percent of the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission were actual recommendations of the Gilmore Commission. But because the attack had not occurred, it did not get as much visibility.

On September 11, Ray Downey was killed. I brought his wife and five kids to my district 1 month after 9/11, and 40,000 of my constituents came out to honor Ray as an American hero at a parade ending at our county park.

We also lost one of my neighbors, Mr. Speaker, a fellow graduate of Westchester University, Michael Horrocks who served our Nation in the Navy, was a pilot on one of the planes that was commandeered on September 11. Michael left behind a young wife, a teacher in my district, and two young children in the Rose Tree Media School

District. In fact, we built a playground in Michael's honor at the school of the two children.

Mr. Speaker, September 11 touched all of us; 3,700 of us were wiped out. Two weeks after 9/11, my friends from the Army's Information Dominance Center in cooperation with special ops brought me a chart. This chart, Mr. Speaker, this chart. Two weeks after 9/11, I took the basic information in this chart down to the White House. I had asked for a meeting with Steve Hadley, who at that time was Deputy National Security Advisor. The chart was smaller. It was 2 feet by 3 feet, but the same information was in the center.

Steve Hadley looked at the chart and said, Congressman, where did you get that chart from? I said, I got it from the military. I said, This is the process; this is the result of the process that I was pitching since 1999 to our government to implement, but the CIA kept saying we do not need it.

Steve Hadley said, Congressman, I am going to take this chart, and I am going to show it to the man. The man that he meant, Mr. Speaker, was the President of the United States. I said, Mr. Hadley, you mean you have not seen something like this before from the CIA, this chart of al Qaeda worldwide and in the U.S.? And he said, No, Congressman. So I gave him the chart.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what is interesting in this chart of al Qaeda, and you cannot see this from a distance, but right here in the center is the name of the leader of the New York cell. And that name is very familiar to the people of America. That name is Mohammed Atta, the leader of the 9/11 attack against us. So prior to 9/11, this military system that the CIA said we did not need and could not do actually gave us the information that identified Mohammed Atta's cell in New York. And with Mohammed Atta they identified two of the other terrorists with them.

But I learned something new, Mr. Speaker, over the past several weeks and months. I have talked to some of the military intelligence officers who produced this document, who worked on this effort. And I found something out very startling, Mr. Speaker. Not only did our military identify the Mohammed Atta cell; our military made a recommendation in September of 2000 to bring the FBI in to take out that cell, the cell of Mohammed Atta. So now, Mr. Speaker, for the first time I can tell our colleagues that one of our agencies not only identified the New York cell of Mohammed Atta and two of the terrorists, but actually made a recommendation to bring the FBI in to take out that cell. And they made that recommendation because Madeleine Albright had declared that

al Qaeda, an international terrorist organization, and the military units involved here felt they had jurisdiction to go to the FBI.

Why, then, did they not proceed? That is a question that needs to be answered, Mr. Speaker. I have to ask, Mr. Speaker, with all the good work that the 9/11 Commission did, why is there nothing in their report about able danger? Why is there no mention of the work that able danger did against al Qaeda? Why is there no mention, Mr. Speaker, of a recommendation in September of 2000 to take out Mohammed Atta's cell which would have detained three of the terrorists who struck us?

{time} 1140

Those are questions, Mr. Speaker, that need to be answered.

Last week, I asked the gentleman from California (Mr. Hunter), the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, my good friend, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Hoekstra), the chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, my good friend, who I have the highest respect for both of these individuals, to allow us to proceed with an investigation that has not yet been brought forward to the American people and our colleagues in this body.

We need to know, Mr. Speaker, why those recommendations, if they, in fact, occurred, as my intelligence military friends told me that they occurred, why were they stopped. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have been told informally that they were stopped because the lawyers at that time in 2000 told them that Mohamed Atta had a green card and they could not go after someone with a green card.

I have also been told, Mr. Speaker, that it was because of the fear of the lawyers of the fallout that had occurred on the Waco attack in Texas just a short time earlier. Mr. Speaker, if that is, in fact, the case, that is an outrage and a scandal. If our reason for not going after the Mohamed Atta cell was because of the fear of the fallout from Waco, then someone needs to answer some questions.

The bottom line process in all of this, Mr. Speaker, is that this capability, which the CIA said we did not need, which the CIA said was not necessary, which was, in fact, being used by the military, both the Army and Special Forces command did something the CIA did not do. It identified the key cell of Mohamed Atta prior to 9/11, and it actually gave us a suggestion to deal with that cell. Mr. Speaker, this story needs to be investigated. This information needs to be pursued.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the CIA's refusal to implement a national collaborative center, thank goodness our President did respond, and in January of 2003, standing in this very chamber, in the State of the Union speech, he announced the TTIC, the Terrorism Threat Integration Center. Mr. Speaker, the TTIC is identical to the NOAH, no

different, same concept, same design, linkage together in one location of all 33 classified systems.

But, Mr. Speaker, we proposed that in 1999, 2 years prior to 9/11. The administration put it into place in January of 2003. That is the same capability that the CIA said we do not need that, Congressman; we cannot do that, Congressman; we have better ways to assess emerging threats. TTIC has now been reformed. It is now known as the NCTC, the National Counterterrorism Center, but Mr. Speaker, I still have concerns, and I rise this evening to express those concerns.

This capability was produced in 1999 and 2000 by the IDC, the Information Dominant Center. I asked them to update me on al Qaeda, to show me what they can do today at the IDC. This, Mr. Speaker, is al Qaeda today. It is obviously impossible for anyone watching our television monitor to see what is on this chart. I have had this chart magnified by a large factor and have large copies in my office.

Each of these little individual people are cells of al Qaeda, are groups of al Qaeda, clusters of al Qaeda around the world. In fact, Mohamed Atta's cell is identified in this chart. This chart, Mr. Speaker, was prepared through the national collaborative efforts of our
IDC, using, Mr. Speaker, open source data. That chart was produced with
open source data.

What troubles me, Mr. Speaker, is in talking to my friends in the defense community who work with the NCTC, I have learned that quite possibly the NCTC cannot duplicate this capability. That is a question I plan to get answered this week because we have a

[[Page H5250]]

very new and very capable leader of the NCTC that hopefully will tell me I am wrong, that they can produce this kind of capability to understand a threat group like al Qaeda.

I rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to raise the importance of intelligence collaboration. We can never allow ourselves to return back to the days prior to 9/11, to the days where individual agencies or individual agencies that think that they have all of the answers in providing security for our country and intelligence for our agencies and our policy-makers. Mr. Speaker, we can never return to the days of 1999 and
2000, and I hope this is not the case today, but back in those days where the agency bureaucrats were fighting with each other over who would take credit for the best information. Let me read a couple of excerpts, Mr. Speaker.

Back in 1999, when I was pushing the CIA to establish this collaborative capability and our military was actually using that capability, focusing on emerging threats like al Qaeda, this conversation went back and forth, Mr. Speaker, September 1999. This is,

by the way, written from military intelligence officers, a summary of notes to me.

At the military's inception, the CIA drags its feet and limits its support to the effort. In an off-the-record conversation between the DCI and the CIA representative to this military unit, a man that I will call Dave and our military intelligence officer explains that even though he understands the military's effort is against the global infrastructure of al Qaeda, he tells me that the CIA will, and I quote, never provide the best information on al Qaeda, end quote. Why would they not do that? Because of the effort that they were taking as part of a finding they had on bin Laden himself and if the military's project was successful it would, quote, steal their thunder. Steal the CIA's thunder.

Dave went on to say that short of the CINC, General so and so, calling the Director, George Tenet, directly, the CIA would never provide the best information to the military on al Qaeda. To my knowledge, that information was never provided.

Mr. Speaker, never again can America allow intelligence bureaucrats to argue back and forth over who is going to steal whose thunder, that you heaven forbid would want to embarrass the CIA because a military intelligence unit got information that is supposed to be under their authority and jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to read all these pages, but this classified information that I have to back up what I have given in unclassified format, will be provided and has been provided for the chairman of our intelligence oversight committee and our armed services oversight committee.

Again, I have to ask the question, why did the 9/11 Commission not investigate this entire situation? Why did the 9/11 Commission not ask the question about the military's recommendation against the Mohamed Atta cell? Why did the 9/11 Commission not document the internal battles and disputes between agency personnel going after the same terrorist organization al Qaeda?

If we are truly going to have an understanding of the need to reform our intelligence system, then we have to be honest with the American people about the past.

{time} 2350

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight because I am very troubled by what I have seen and by what I have heard. I have interviewed and talked to some very brave military intelligence officers who, back in 1999 and 2000, were involved in protecting America. They knew what we needed, and they were trying to do it. As I have read to you, there were some in other

agencies, especially the CIA and some in DIA, who were saying you cannot do that, that is not your area. That is our area. You cannot steal our thunder. That is our job, not your job.

Never again, Mr. Speaker, can we allow agency bureaucrats to argue over who is going to get the credit for solving the next attack or planned attack against us. I do not rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to embarrass anyone. I rise tonight because of my own frustration. We knew 6 years ago what direction we had to go. The agency said we do not need that, Congressman, we know better than the Congress. Trust us.

Thank goodness President Bush put that system in place when he took office. If we had had that system in 1999 and 2000, which the military had already developed as a prototype, and if we had followed the lead of the military entity that identified the al Qaeda cell of Mohamed Atta, then perhaps, Mr. Speaker, 9/11 would never have occurred. Certainly taking out the Mohamed Atta cell and two of the terrorists that were with him, would have had a profound positive impact in shutting down the major plan against us that moved forward on September 11, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I have placed these documents in the Record because I want our colleagues to have a chance to read them. I want our colleagues to see the facts and the information, and I want to support our very capable chairman, the gentleman from California (Mr. Hunter) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Hoekstra) as they move forward with an investigation.

We have to ask the question, why have these issues not been brought forth before this day? I had my Chief of Staff call the 9/11 Commission staff and ask the question: Why did you not mention Able Danger in your report? The Deputy Chief of Staff said, well, we looked at it, but we did not want to go down that direction.

So the question, Mr. Speaker, is why did they not want to go down that direction? Where will that lead us? Why do we not want to see the answers to the questions I have raised tonight? Who made the decision to tell our military not to pursue Mohamed Atta? Who made the decision that said that we are fearful of the fallout from Waco politically?

Were those decisions made by lawyers? Were they made by policymakers? Who within the administration in 2000 was responsible for those actions? This body and the American people need to know.