

Chairman Pete Hoekstra

Keynote Address

to

The United States Geospatial Intelligence Foundation's

GeoInt 2004 Symposium

October 14, 2004, 7:00 p.m., Sheraton New Orleans Hotel

We have gathered here tonight a group of individuals who have dedicated their talents, in one form or another, to the service of our country. I believe that every one of us here tonight understands what has motivated us over the decades, and particularly over the past three years to make such a commitment. It is a fairly simple concept: we care dearly about protecting our families, our values, our way of life and the nation in which they all prosper. In other words, we believe that protecting our national security is of paramount importance. This – protecting our national security – is what I would like to talk about because I am concerned that today we the groups and individuals of the intelligence community, have been plunged into a wildly different environment, and we have been called upon to adapt rapidly.

We must make sure we don't get swept up in the current crisis and forget that we need to plan for the long term.

It was not too long ago when 'national security' was a relatively simple concept. The threats were clearer and more easily understood and so was the reaction required. For most of the last century, we have known that, above all else, we needed to contain and stop aggression and expansionism usually fueled by threatening totalitarian ideologies. Overlaying that mission for almost 50 years was the ever dangling sword of Damocles – nuclear annihilation. How gut-wrenchingly, heart-poundingly real that threat was. But we lived with it, prospered and defeated it. And now we are rapidly forgetting it.

The 90s witnessed an increasing sense of apathy about our national security. This apathy sprung from a number of factors, including the belief that we had won the Cold War and that as a result threats were diminished, that because the threat of nuclear annihilation has receded, we could take a breath, relax and move on with our lives unconcerned while taking advantage of a "peace dividend."

Not many of us imagined or anticipated, however, the world we live in today. The threat environment appears to be more complicated. It is not the simpler world that we all envisioned, but a world complicated by threats from traditional superpowers like China; rogue nation states like North Korea and Iran; foreign drug lords and racketeers that poison and corrupt our citizens at home; and non-state actors such as terrorists networks that reach across continents to kill our citizens overseas and operate under a different set of rules, or more likely, few rules at all.

These networks are not associated with governments. There likely will never be a negotiated settlement. They are not limited to a physical land boundary and therefore will never be completely eliminated by force or otherwise be occupied. Their weapon is terror, their objective is chaos. With nuclear, chemical, biological and electromagnetic weapons now able to be delivered in a suitcase with little to no forewarning, we have been thrust into a wildly different atmosphere. It will require a great deal of determination and persistence to eliminate this threat. But that is not new. We have done it before.

For now, we are at war, and there are urgent daily demands that we must meet. We must provide the war fighter with tactical intelligence, situational awareness and force protection overseas while uncovering the current threat at home.

While we are meeting these tactical and reactive problems, we also need to view our national security with a strategic eye. We must think longer term. We must be prepared to solve not only those problems that I have mentioned but frame our thinking in long-term strategies. This is where intelligence enters into the equation; it is key to formulating sound national security policy and strategy. The planning must reach beyond the military conflict today and build a broader service for tomorrow, one that does not just report on current situations, but can work to prepare us for future crises and put them on the scope for the President, senior policymakers and military commanders so that decisions can be made and actions taken in order to avert them, or, at the least, to manage them.

My experience on the House Intelligence Committee as Chairman of the Technical and Tactical Subcommittee provides telling examples of problems and opportunities. Every year we spend billions of dollars, yet we

seem to be faced with having to select the least-worst option from a multitude of bad choices. For example, most of you are aware of the recent challenges the community faced with our imagery program. In the end, the only way to preserve a minimal level of imagery performance was to damage signals intelligence. In this environment, being 'fair' means that everybody is equally unhealthy.

Why do we find ourselves in this condition? Is it just a lack of resources? Is it a lack of imagination? Do we lack an understanding of the threat that we face? Or do we simply lack a strategic, long-term, visionary plan? I believe it is the latter: we lack a strategic, comprehensive and visionary long-term plan.

For example, the 9-11 Commission was silent on the issue of resources and sufficiency. Other than a few deficiencies, such as human intelligence, the 9-11 Commission recommendations did little to shed light on whether or not the community is adequately funded to perform the job that it is asked or expected to accomplish. During a recent August hearing on the commission recommendations, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich testified that the level of funding for the National Foreign

Intelligence Program should be tripled if we were serious about implementing the recommendations. His justification for such a dramatic increase was simple. He pointed to a map of the vast expanse of ungoverned land available to terrorists and recommended to eliminate sanctuaries worldwide. He pointed out that funding for intelligence community resources is insufficient for the task. This is a glaring omission in the 9-11 Commission report.

I would like to work with you in the coming year to look seriously at what is truly necessary to tackle the challenges out there and then work toward developing the plan to tackle them. We cannot limit options to the same solutions that have kept reappearing over the last 15 years. We need a fresh perspective.

The fact that the 9-11 Commission report was a best-seller indicates that the American people want to understand the problem: the terrorist threat, the capability of the U.S. government and the deficiencies of the government. The degree of this interest is proof to me that they wish to solve the problem. They are demanding that we solve the deficiencies within the system. The 9-11 Commission report made a remarkable

contribution toward educating the public on the subject of intelligence, and we should embrace this opportunity and take advantage of it. I believe that an educated public will support the strategies necessary to counter the threats if they understand them. We need to build on the 9-11 Commission report.

We should demand that the community employ some common sense practices. No CEO would invest significant resources in new products or services without a marketing survey and a strategic plan. He would understand the market, the products and services that are needed. He would then position his company to best provide those services. A company that does not consider these basic but essential issues, like a plan, is a company that will fast become outdated and extinct.

We must require the U.S. intelligence community to operate in the context of a comprehensive strategic plan. I will work earnestly to understand the threats we face and the products and services that will defeat terrorism and then, develop a comprehensive strategy to guide the developments across the various agencies.

It is critical that we bring the American people along with us in this process. We must cultivate and develop public understanding of what we face and how we should respond.

I believe that time invested in this activity is the means to an end. We must agree on what the end is. In the case of terrorism, we need to define the goal. It extends beyond preventing another terrorist attack. It extends beyond the elimination of safe havens for terrorists. We must use America's intelligence apparatus to understand and influence those who are fueling hatred. This must be done at the earliest stages of recruitment of the poverty-stricken Muslims who are led to believe that a path to a better life is through killing Americans or whatever else motivates terrorist networks. The intelligence must provide the basis for more than National Security policies; it must envelop and integrate American foreign and domestic policies. In doing so, we must be effective in supporting diplomacy as well as the efforts of the military.

Before we can expect that the intelligence community would be able to create and then implement a comprehensive plan like this, we believe that we need a single person in charge with the responsibilities and authorities to

do the job. Both houses of Congress have passed legislation to create this position – called the National Intelligence Director. This position will have more authorities to manage the budgets and programs of agencies than what was provided to the DCI, and the person who fills this position will not be burdened with the day-to-day operations of the CIA.

However, it is not enough to simply reorganize the U.S. intelligence community. We believe that there are ways of strengthening Congressional oversight to help the intelligence community succeed.

Although the 9-11 Commission included recommendations on improving congressional oversight, the current legislation will not address this issue. The House may consider several options when it reconvenes and organizes for a new Congress.

However, there are a number of measures that I intend to pursue to strengthen the Intelligence Committee and increase its relevance.

One of the challenges of forcing change from Congress has been that all committees of jurisdiction must reach a consensus, including both

authorizers and appropriators. The intelligence community understands this, and it has been very effective in dividing the various committees on issues over the years, resulting in diminished strength in the recommendations. I will be working with the Speaker to implement a strategy to better align the authorization and appropriations process, resulting in a more relevant committee and a more relevant work product. Hopefully, gone will be the days when the oversight committee will demand for five consecutive years that the NSA address the deficiency in its linguistic skill base deficiency and produce no results.

I will also work extremely hard to build the necessary intelligence community expertise on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. For staff I will hand-pick individuals with a breadth of experience, a depth of intelligence or military community knowledge and a willingness to dedicate a long-term focus on some of the intelligence community's deepest, most enduring challenges. I will encourage the Speaker to do the same when he selects members to serve on the committee.

The House Intelligence Committee will work very hard to restore the bipartisanship that should be a common denominator in all that we do. Ensuring our intelligence capabilities are as strong as possible is a shared goal of both parties. There has been far too much rhetoric in the press

recently, and that has not served any of us well. Our job is best completed behind closed doors in a professional, dedicated manner.

And there are other – many other – tasks that deserve to be addressed.

We should not fall into the trap of thinking that organization is the primary lever we should pull in shaping intelligence for the 21st century. Washington likes to reorganize roles and responsibilities. We need to focus on continuously improving the performance of intelligence—as many intelligence professionals have since 9/11—and organization is a means to improve performance. However, there are many other tools, including people, process and technology. We must carefully understand the root causes of the problems we seek to fix and then apply the right remedies, which I suspect will involve a more comprehensive plan than reorganization. We must be successful in this endeavor to achieve global support for our leadership in the spread of democracy and to restore the respect for our great nation.

Now, I have saved the most important topic of all for last. Where in all of this does Geospatial Intelligence fit in? Allow me to begin by telling

you all what you know better than anybody. The field of Geospatial-Intelligence and the missions that are enabled by it have advanced tremendously. There is explosive growth in so many intertwined markets that it is hard to imagine how to leverage all the possibilities. There is growth in remote sensing, in the aftermarket value-added products and services and in the applications. GPS and location-based services are merging and integrating your location with relevant information around you now or where you might be in the future. Mobile communications allow all this information to be made available on demand.

What does all this advancement mean to our mission? I believe that we are at the beginning of a tremendous leap ahead in the kind of capabilities that are provided across the board to our customers. The intelligence community should be able to leverage all the innovations that are evolving to apply them to our purposes. However, technology leaps have proven to be both a friend and a foe. While advancements in encryption technology has presented new challenges for NSA, the advancements in Geospatial-Intelligence-related technology is providing us with a tremendous opportunity. Our enemies are adept and innovative and have amply demonstrated their ability to adapt new technologies to nefarious

purposes. To counter this ever-evolving threat, we can never rest on our laurels or develop a complacent attitude in our technological superiority. We must continue to out-think, out-innovate, and out-work our enemies.

So, I call on all of you in government, in industry and in academia to help chart the future. I invite you to join me in identifying the opportunities, creating the strategic plan and working together to implement it. Together we will make this reorganization work and build the intelligence community that America requires for its national security.

Most people spend time pondering what the future holds. I do believe that the future is an uncertainty, but I am an optimist. I believe we can take charge, and if we choose, we can shape and influence the future.

I have enjoyed visiting the exhibits today and meeting with so many dedicated people. The enthusiasm here tells me that this community is moving forward at a tremendous pace. I would like to congratulate all the people who have worked hard to make this event successful, and particularly the members of the foundation. Congratulations to all of you.

The America that attracted my parents in 1957 to immigrate was not an America of certainty. It was an America of optimism that said “in America you can shape your future and the future of your family.” Shaping America’s national security future is the road that we now travel together. Thank you very much.