DNI Mike McConnell
All-Hands
March 23, 2007

(U)DNRO Dr. Kerr: Well, it's Friday and I know you didn't all come to hear me. Without wasting any really valuable time, I'd like to introduce the second Director of National Intelligence. It's important that I mention that it's also a pleasure to note he is a career intelligence officer. And while he's spent almost eleven years in the private sector since his service as the Director of NSA, which of course followed his service as the J2, he hasn't forgotten this community because he touched it in many ways during his period out in industry. So, it's a particular pleasure to have Mike McConnell here today to tell us a bit about what he's thinking about for the intelligence community; and particularly, of course, we're interested in the parts that affect us. So, Mike welcome.
(Applause)

(U)DNI Mike McConnell: Thank you all; thank you all very much. Am I projecting, can you hear me alright? That's a very kind introduction, and I appreciate it very much. Just to, sort of, show you how life changes, the last time I was here, I couldn't get in. (Laughter) And when they finally made me go through that machine I'd set off an alarm and I was spread eagle on the floor, so life changes. (Laughter) This time nobody even checked. (Laughter)

(U) I had a couple of opportunities to be considered for employment back with the government. It didn't work out for me early, so, when I got a phone call on the twenty-third of December from the Vice President, it was a little bit of a surprise. My secretary came in and said, "Mike, the Vice President wants to talk to you." And, I said, "The vice president of what?" (Laughter) She said, "The United States." "Oh, that Vice President." And I thought it was a joke, because he said, "Mike, this is Dick, how are you, sir?" I said, "Yes." (Laughter) The deal was "come back, we need to move Ambassador Negroponte over to State...they need a Deputy over there, and it's a big need. We looked around, and we would like to ask you to come do this. And one of the things we want to do is attract somebody from the profession, somebody who has long term in the community."

(U) But, he now is going to hold me accountable for this vision, and collaboration is where I want to try to go. Information sharing is another way to say it. I want to change the way we, as a community, think about information and I've got a little bit of a dilemma. I would like for us be an analyst driven community, with the analyst in the center. Folks out here, say, "Wait a minute, we're building things, we're important, too." You are. I don't mean you're not important, but think about us as a community. An analyst's first responsibility is to know the customer, the client, the user, President of the United States, military commander, Secretary of State, national security policy member, whoever it is. Who is the user, what's the need, what's the rhythm, what's the pace, how do they get information, how do they accept information, how do they best digest it, in what format, and what about timeliness. You've got to know all that and you've got to know it well. That is the first requirement for the analyst.

(U) The second requirement is to know sources and methods. Now, here is the shock for Mike McConnell, coming back after a few years. "Mr. Director, we got thus and thus and such and such." "Really, very interesting, how do we know that?" "SIGINT." "Oh, really," I said, "What is it?" "NSA." "Okay, it's NSA and it's SIGINT. What is it?" "Sir, it is SIGINT." I said, "We have a failure to communicate here." (Laughter) I said, "Is this line of sight, is it satellite, or is it encrypted?" "Why would you ask me that? And, my response to that is "How can you do your job if you don't know?" So, if the analyst is in the middle, and you know your customer, and you know your sources and methods and how you get the information, don't you become a very valuable asset to cause collection to be focused in the right place to get information to the user and you have a higher level of service. Think of it as relevancy on one side, I'm relevant to my user, and I'm knowledgeable in what the art of the possible is.

(U) So, I'm trying to figure out how do you do that, and how do you cause true collaboration, and how do you cause information sharing and a truth in lending. Famous senior in my community, Admiral Bobby Ray Inman, in the seventies, whipped out his trusty pistol and shot HUMINT in the head. He said, "The Navy doesn't do HUMINT, we're not interested in HUMINT. We will never do HUMINT, it doesn't serve our interest." So, now, a whole generation grew up following in Bobby Inman's footsteps. I was one of them. "Yeah, HUMINT, I don't know what that is, it's kind of over there. You know, we got all this stuff and our world was the Soviet Union, which

is 14 time zones and denied territory. You have to be timely, know about ships, airplanes and rockets and so on. HUMINT, it'll catch up someday, but we gotta know what minutes as my whole framework." ·

(U) I just went to Iraq, Afghanistan,and Pakistan. I would say a huge portion, I don't know if its majority, I don't know if it's a third, but I would say a huge portion of what's happening is all HUMINT enabled. And what I've learned so much about it is even the SIGINT portions are HUMINT enabled. So, now here's my dilemma. While I'm there, people are dying because we're compromising information on sources. So, it's easy to sit on the Hill, or to be SIGINT, or to sit as an industry guy, and say, we've got to share. It's easy to say, we don't need to be first to need to know; we need to have first responsibility to provide. That's easy; those are easy slogans, but, how do you now balance the need to protect sources and methods for this sharing. That's a dilemma. Now, if we do this as a collaboration thing and it works, what I'm hoping to do is find a way to work that issue so that we can share it better, and we can know each other, and we can not be afraid to pick up the telephone, and then we can still protect sources in an appropriate way. I'm using HUMINT as an example, I certainly roll that over to the very sensitive space based programs, and so on. So, that's kind of the horizon for me right now.

(U) Let me go to something that might be in your more personal interest in your day to day. When I came back in the community, I consulted with lots of folks and here's a point-of-view that you may agree with or you may disagree with, but from what I can see so far, it's reasonably factual. When the Wall collapsed in November 1989 and then the Soviet Union collapsed in August of 1990, the term 'peace dividend' worked its way into our vernacular. The peace dividend became the watchword for, "give us the money back." We had a bipartisan level of consensus for a commitment to a community that was robustly funded for almost 50 years that worked, and worked darn well. And I had the benefit of that, because as a young Navy guy trying to find Russian submarines I had this wonderful system that could see, take pictures, listen and do just incredible things. We did absolute magic in my time in the Pacific. My customer, a four star admiral, says" I want to know about these bad submarines and I want to be able to constructfully kill them or hold them at risk." So it was pretty simple for me to turn to the system and get imagery, get a coherent receiver or look for special communications and we were pretty good at it.