

Ranking Member Opening Remarks
House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
Open Hearing on IC Support to DoD
November 17, 2016

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to thank each of you for your many years—indeed, decades—of service to this country.

Director Clapper in particular has served us honorably since the 1960s, first as an Air Force officer and later as director of DIA, NGA, as the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, and of course for the last six years as DNI. You have always exhibited sober judgment and put the fate of the nation first. I hope that as you look back on your career, you are proud of the work you've done. We are all certainly very grateful.

Deputy Secretary Work and Under Secretary Lettre, you also have exemplary public service careers, and you, too, have our heartfelt gratitude.

As we near the end of this Congress—and face a new political reality—now is an appropriate time to reflect on the attributes of our current and future leaders, as well as on the values that shape America, and how those values are manifest in our national security domain.

Our country is best served when we put aside partisanship, temper our anger and blame, and conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the American people. That requires a commitment to at least three things: (1) intellectual honesty; (2) respect for the rule of law; and (3) a willingness to accept accountability for

past mistakes, the responsibility to learn from them, and the commitment to never repeat them.

As we have done on this Committee, we must all work together to solve problems on a bipartisan, and really nonpartisan, basis.

The Intelligence Community and, at times, our military operate in the shadows, but that in no way diminishes their responsibility to act in accordance with these principles—in fact, it makes the responsibility even greater.

At home, we rely on our military and the IC to be nonpartisan, objective, and honest about the challenges we face. That candor is what allows the most senior leaders in this country to make hard choices about how to protect Americans.

Abroad, even as we engage in espionage and warfare to protect ourselves and our allies—and world stability itself—we rely on the IC and the military to comport with the rule of law and with the highest moral standards.

Even in the shadows, act as if you're under a spotlight.

Because you are. The world often sees what we are doing, and the intelligence committees are always shining that light. The American people expect and deserve an Intelligence Community and military that are responsive and as transparent as possible to the public, and completely open to their oversight committees. The intelligence oversight committees in Congress act as a critical check on the most secret activities that the IC and DoD undertake, and they also provide oversight, sound judgment, and ultimately either authorization or disapproval.

Each of us must continually seek to strike the right balance between protecting privacy and civil liberties, and ensuring our security. That balance is not always clear, and nor have we always achieved it. But it must always be our goal—in the IC, in the Department of Defense, and here in Congress.

So, today I look forward to a far-reaching discussion about how the IC can and does support the Department of Defense, as we on HPSCI continue our pursuit of meaningful, comprehensive, bipartisan oversight of the critical work you all do, now and into the future.

Thank you, I yield back.