

WAPO TOP SECRET STORY: WHY NOT NOMINATE GOD TO BE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

I trust you will all read Dana Priest and William Arkin's story on the unwieldiness of our Intelligence Industrial Complex. It is good, insofar as it focuses needed attention on a huge problem.

But boy is it itself unwieldy. Today's overview appears to want to be two stories: one on the problem with out-of-control contracting, and one on how that led to the failure to identify the Nidal Hasan and UndieBomber threats.

Moreover, what I find utterly shocking is that today's 5315-word installment includes only this reference to the simmering battle over intelligence reform and the Director of National Intelligence position and tomorrow's confirmation hearing for James Clapper!

"There's only one entity in the entire universe that has visibility on all SAPs – that's God," said James R. Clapper, undersecretary of defense for intelligence and the **Obama administration's nominee to be the next director of national intelligence.** [my emphasis]

Remember, this hearing is **tomorrow**. The debate that has led up to it has covered whether or not we need a stronger DNI, whether or not GAO can audit intelligence programs, and whether more than 4 people should be briefed on major new intelligence programs.

Every single one of the issues that has led to tomorrow's confirmation hearing is an issue that

goes to the heart of the problems identified in the WaPo piece: the ongoing lack of real value-added analysis to make sense of all the intelligence collected, the opacity and potential waste and fraud of the entire IIC, and the turf battles that contribute to that waste.

So while I'm grateful that this story (and more importantly, the issues behind the story, since the content of today's installment has largely already been reported by Tim Shorrock) is getting as much attention as it is, I'm aghast that the WaPo didn't try to contextualize it by framing the issues in it in terms of Clapper's nomination to be DNI.

The guy the Obama Administration nominated to be Director of National Intelligence seems glib about the utter lack of transparency and oversight in our intelligence world (his predecessor, Dennis Blair, claims in the story he was able to see it all). One after another high level security official are quoted in the story complaining about the lack of central focus on intelligence—precisely the issue that Clapper's nomination won't solve.

If Clapper's nomination is approved tomorrow—and it sounds like DiFi has resigned herself to approving Clapper not because she thinks he's adequate to the job but because the interim DNI is retiring shortly—it will represent success on Obama's part at forestalling efforts to deal in substantive way with the problems identified in the story.

That's the news in this WaPo story.