



The families of the victims of September 11, 2001
www.911fsa.org Phone: (860) 927 3822

9/11 FAMILIES FOR A SECURE AMERICA

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THE CONTINUING CHAOS IN U.S. INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES

Porter Goss, Director of Central Intelligence, recently resigned after only 20 months on the job. The CIA's executive director has also resigned and the FBI and the Agency's Inspector General are investigating possible corruption. Elements within the Agency regularly leak sensitive information, apparently in an ongoing struggle to undermine or support the President's policies. John Lehman a member of the defunct 9/11 Commission said last fall that since the attacks, "little has changed except that a new bureaucracy has been created." The intelligence reform that was promoted by Senators like John McCain and Joe Lieberman as the way to combat terrorism, is as the Wall Street Journal says, "a royal mess."

America's intelligence gathering apparatus is as ineffective today as it was before September 11, 2001. As a result, we are just as vulnerable today to foreign terrorists as on that day. Yet, America would not be so open to terrorist atrocities if Lieberman, McCain, et al. had permitted our borders to be secured in 2004 when the Congress considered legislation on implementing the forty-one recommendations of the 9/11 Commission.

The Commission stated the federal government has "obligations to the American people to prevent the entry of terrorists" and that to accomplish this, all those who entered and left the U.S. should be required to show identity documents with a biometric identifier (for example a digital photograph or thumbprint). Furthermore, given the important role played by US-issued drivers' licenses in the terrorists' planning and execution of their attacks, the Commission said that "secure identification must begin in the United States."

Unfortunately, securing our borders and tightening standards for I.D. documents would have created minor new procedural obstacles for legal visitors to overcome and also would have stopped illegal immigration. McCain, Lieberman, Pelosi and others would not permit these results and so they blocked the passage of a bill introduced in the House that would have implemented all forty-one recommendations as well as intelligence reorganization. Since that time, these same Members of Congress have continued to keep America's borders completely open to the terrorists and criminals who are among the legal and illegal aliens in the US. Even today, citizens of 27 countries are permitted to visit the US without first obtaining a US visa.

In 2004, 9/11 Families for a Secure America predicted that intelligence reorganization would likely take many years and that it would be meaningless if the same individuals who staffed the agencies then remained in place. We said that intelligence reorganization without secure borders and secure ID was like building a fortress with walls on only two sides: impressive from the front but worthless for security.

Our prediction has proved correct. Because some members of Congress refuse to secure our borders Americans are as vulnerable as ever to the Mohammed Attas of this world.

Members of Congress like Senators Hagel, Kennedy, Schumer and Lugar and Representatives Pelosi and Conyers cannot escape their guilt for this situation; nor can President Bush, who refuses to prosecute employers who attract illegal aliens by giving them jobs.

They continue to block all reasonable efforts at strengthening our borders and when the next 9/11 occurs, all Americans will know whom to blame.

