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## Conferees Resume Talks on Sept. 11 Measures

By PHILIP SHENON

ASHINGTON, Nov. 16 - House and Senate negotiators renewed talks on Tuesday on a long-stalled bill to enact the major recommendations of the Sept. 11 commission and create a cabinet-level job of national intelligence director. Congressional aides said a fresh White House lobbying effort had created some optimism that a bill could be worked out before Congress adjourned for the year.

The aides said the efforts, which included a telephone call last weekend by President Bush to the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, had put pressure on lawmakers to agree on measures that could be sent to Mr. Bush for his signature before Congress ends its lame-duck session, probably next week.

"I feel hopeful, I feel positive," said Timothy J. Roemer, a Democratic member of the Sept. 11 commission who has been involved in the Congressional negotiations. "We're making good progress."

Mr. Roemer, a former House member from Indiana, said high-level resignations at the Central Intelligence Agency and other reports of trouble at the agency under its new director, Porter J. Goss, had put pressure on lawmakers to agree on a bill to overhaul the intelligence agencies.

"The tumult at the C.I.A. is actually helping move reform in the halls of Congress," he said.

The House and Senate have each passed a bill in response to recommendations of the commission to reorganize the intelligence activities, and both bills would create the post of national intelligence director to oversee the Central Intelligence Agency and other spy agencies.

Creating the position was the central recommendation of the bipartisan commission, which found that turf battles and poor communication undermined the work of the intelligence agencies.

The Senate bill, which the commission and Mr. Bush have endorsed, would provide the intelligence director with far greater budget and personnel authority over the agencies,

including those in the Pentagon, than would the House bill. The more limited powers in the House bill reflects a view by House Republican leaders, backed by Pentagon leaders, that the Defense Department needed to retain much of its authority over intelligence budgets.

A House-Senate conference committee has been trying for weeks to reconcile the two bills, and the committee leaders met in private on Tuesday for the first time since last month, when they adjourned their talks in advance of the Nov. 2 election.

The lawmakers, who continued to meet into the night on Tuesday, offered no immediate comment on progress in their talks.

But Democratic and Republican Congressional aides said the talks had a sense of collegiality and a desire to arrive at an agreement before Thursday, when many important lawmakers from both parties are planning to leave Washington for the opening of former President Bill Clinton's presidential library in Little Rock, Ark.

The aides said the negotiators were aiming for a compromise that would satisfy the Pentagon while letting a national intelligence director have explicit control over distributing the appropriations to the spy agencies, including those in the Pentagon.

Lawmakers, the aides added, were also trying to compromise on other issues, including whether a final bill should contain law enforcement and immigration provisions in the House bill but not in its Senate counterpart. Civil liberties groups have harshly criticized many of those provisions.

The aides said the White House appeared to be playing a useful role in pushing lawmakers toward a compromise, especially Mr. Bush's telephone call last weekend to Representative Duncan Hunter of California, the chairman of the Armed Services Committee, who has been outspoken in defending Pentagon interests in the conference committee.

A spokesman for Mr. Hunter would not comment on details of the call, except to say that it had been at the instigation of the White House and that it focused on Mr. Bush's desire to see Congress pass a bill to overhaul intelligence.