

to guarantee the smooth operation of our Federal justice system.

Judge Guirola is a 1979 graduate of the University of Mississippi Law School, and he received his undergraduate degree from William Carey College in 1973. He has had a distinguished career in the law over the past quarter of a century and has gained broad experience from the various positions he has held. He has served as an assistant district attorney, an attorney in private practice, an attorney for the Jackson County Board of Supervisors, and an attorney for the Mississippi Highway Department.

Judge Guirola began his Federal service as an assistant U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas in 1990, and he was named as a U.S. magistrate judge for the Western District of Texas in 1993. He served in this position until 1996, when he returned to Mississippi to become a U.S. magistrate judge for the Southern District of Mississippi, the position he currently holds. He clearly has an extensive knowledge of the Federal court system, and his experience will be a tremendous asset for the country. It is no surprise that the ABA's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary has unanimously found Judge Guirola to be "well qualified" to serve as a Federal district court judge.

Judge Guirola has also demonstrated a commitment to education and instruction. He has been an adjunct professor at William Carey College and the University of Southern Mississippi. He also has given lectures and conducted seminars for the U.S. Attorney General's Advocacy Institute, the Federal Bar Association, the Mississippi Bar Association, the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Academy, the Texas Department of Public Safety, and the U.S. Probation Office. In addition, he has authored a number of legal articles and scholarly pieces.

Judge Guirola is well-known and respected in his community, State and profession. His nomination has received widespread support in the State of Mississippi because of his reputation for fairness and hard work. I know that Judge Guirola will make an excellent district court judge, and I congratulate him on his confirmation by the Senate.

JUDICIAL CONFIRMATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, last night the Senate confirmed two more Federal judicial nominees of President Bush: Judge Louis Guirola to the Southern District of Mississippi and Neil Wake to the District of Arizona. With these confirmations, the Senate has now confirmed 173 judicial nominees of this President. That is more than during the entire four years of the first term of President Reagan, from 1981 through 1984, and just two fewer than were confirmed in all 4 years of President Clinton's second term in office from 1997 through 2000. We have reduced the number of vacancies in the

Federal courts to 43, the lowest number in more than 13 years.

These two confirmations bring to four the number of judicial nominees confirmed in the first few weeks in session this year. The American people should remember that the Republican Senate leadership in 1996 allowed only 17 judicial nominees of President Clinton to be confirmed all year. I remain confident that with the cooperation of the administration, the Senate this year will be able to match the total from that Presidential election year, the last year of President Clinton's first term. We are well ahead of the pace Republicans achieved in 1996. The four judges confirmed so far this year is four more than were confirmed on this date in 1996.

The two nominees confirmed last night had their hearings this year but two others, J. Leon Holmes and Judge Dora Irizarry, had hearings last year, were reported by the Judiciary Committee last year, and still have not been scheduled for a vote by the Republican leadership. Democrats have been ready to debate and vote on these nominees for many months. They have generated some controversy and will need to be debated before the vote, but there is no Democratic "hold" on either nomination of which I am aware and no Democratic objection to a full and fair debate on each as far as I know.

TERRORIST ATTACKS

Mr. GRAHAM of Florida. Mr. President, yesterday, March 11, 2004, was a solemn day.

Two and a half years ago to the day, 19 terrorists hijacked four airliners and crashed them into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field in rural Pennsylvania.

It is fitting that we pause today to remember the nearly 3,000 innocent people who lost their lives that day. It is also fitting that we take a moment to remember the responsibilities that we undertook in the aftermath of those horrible events. We in public office undertook a particularly important obligation, as we vowed to take action to prevent terrorist attacks of that magnitude from happening again.

In his speech delivered before a joint session of Congress on September 20, 2001, President Bush put it this way: "Americans are asking, How will we fight and win this war? We will direct every resource at our command—every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial influence, and every necessary weapon of war—to the disruption and to the defeat of the global terror network."

Unfortunately, we have not met that commitment.

We now know that the terrorist attacks of September 11 were the result of a sophisticated plot that developed over many months and required coordination among a number of individuals.

If our national intelligence agencies had been better organized and more focused on the problem of international terrorism, this tragedy would have been avoided.

Incredibly, it is now 30 months later, and the basic problems in our national intelligence community that contributed to our vulnerability on 9/11 have not yet been seriously considered, much less resolved.

These problems are not a mystery, they are known weaknesses that simply have yet to be fixed. If we in the Congress do not take action to remedy these weaknesses, we will not be able to avoid accountability for the next attack.

A series of independent commissions and the Joint Inquiry conducted by the House and Senate Intelligence Committees in 2002 have identified a variety of issues that we must address. They fall into four categories:

One, setting priority targets for intelligence collection and analysis.

Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet declared war on al-Qaida in 1998, but few in the CIA—and almost no one in the other agencies that make up our Intelligence Community—responded to his clarion call.

Our national intelligence agencies continued to focus on states, such as Russia, China, Iran and Iraq. Despite Mr. Tenet's call for action, Osama bin Laden al-Qaida was not even near the top of our intelligence priority list on September 11, 2001. It was not until September 12 that they moved to the top of the list.

Part of the problem was that our intelligence community had no formal process for regularly reviewing and updating intelligence priorities to ensure that they accurately reflected the current security environment.

Furthermore, it does not appear that the heads of other intelligence agencies looked to the Director of Central Intelligence for leadership and priority-setting.

Even though George Tenet may have realized that non-state actors like al-Qaida needed more attention, the importance of these groups was not clear to other members of the intelligence community. The head of the National Security Agency, our Nation's electronic eavesdropping agency, was asked if he knew about Mr. Tenet's declaration of war with al-Qaida.

The director of the NSA said that yes, he was aware of Mr. Tenet's statement, but he did not think it applied to him or his organization.

Two, providing strong new leadership for the intelligence community.

Examples like this make it clear that we need to provide strong new leadership for the intelligence community. 9/11 exposed historic tensions within the Intelligence Community, and between intelligence agencies and law enforcement.

We need to empower a Cabinet-level official with the authority to end bureaucratic in-fighting and competition