

McConnell backs Bush's security comments

by UPI

WASHINGTON - U.S. National Intelligence Director Mike McConnell said Sunday President George Bush's warning of a growing security threat were justified. The federal intelligence official said on "Fox News Sunday" that the president's recent comments regarding the need to renew a surveillance law were based on factual evidence from intelligence sources. McConnell said Bush "is repeating advice that I'm giving him."

"And our situation now, when the terrorist threat is increasing because they've achieved -- al-Qaida's achieved de facto safe haven in the border area of Pakistan and Afghanistan -- the threat is going up," McConnell said. "And therefore we do not have the agility and the speed that we had before to be able to move and try to capture their communications to thwart their planning." The law in question expired at midnight Saturday, ending the federal government's ability to circumvent the court system to conduct surveillance activities without a warrant. McConnell said on "Fox News Sunday" that obtaining such warrants can be very time-consuming and therefore place restrictions on the U.S. government's ability to gather vital intelligence information.

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