

2005, will leave his post as Director of National Intelligence to become the deputy Secretary of State under Condoleezza Rice, government officials said last night. Dr Rice has been without a deputy since the resignation of Robert Zoellick in June last year, and it is understood that several other senior career diplomats have turned down the job in recent months.

However, Mr Negroponte, who played an integral part in trying to sell the invasion of Iraq as US Ambassador to the UN in the build-up to the war, has made clear that he believes the new national intelligence bureaucracy — the amalgamation of 16 agencies after the September 11 attacks — to be an unwieldy mess, and has shown little relish for the job.

Although his move is technically a demotion, Mr Negroponte's new role comes at a crucial juncture for Mr Bush and will inevitably be focused on one issue: justifying an additional "surge" of US troops into Iraq.

The President is expected to lay out his new strategy for Iraq next week, advocating an additional commitment of at least 30,000 troops in and around Baghdad.

Mr Negroponte's likely successor as head of US intelligence is the retired Admiral Mike McConnell, director of the National Security Agency from 1992 to 1996.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,11069-2530764,00.html>

Negroponte to step down as intel czar

Top spy to move to State Department as Rice's deputy

By Katherine Shrader

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WASHINGTON // National Intelligence Director John Negroponte, who has been closely involved with U.S. policy on Iraq, will trade in his job as top spy to become No. 2 to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

Negroponte took over in April 2005 as the nation's first intelligence chief, responsible for overseeing all 16 U.S. spy agencies. He will return to his roots as a career diplomat to become deputy secretary of state, two U.S. government officials said late Wednesday.

One of the officials said the timing of Negroponte's departure was uncertain, but that it was expected soon. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because there has been no announcement of the move.

Negroponte, 67, is stepping down as President Bush develops a new strategy on Iraq. The president has ordered reviews from his own agencies and the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, which recommended a series of changes to reverse a "slide toward chaos."

Negroponte has held a series of tough posts in the Bush administration and has been at the center of the Iraq debate since before the U.S.-led invasion in March 2003. He served as U.S. ambassador to the U.N. from 2001 to 2004 and ambassador to Baghdad until March 2005 before becoming intelligence chief.

Democrats taking control of Congress today have promised greater oversight of government agencies. The Senate Intelligence Committee, for instance, is planning hearings this month on the intelligence overhaul that Negroponte helped put in place.

A top candidate for the intelligence chief opening is retired Adm. Mike McConnell, the director of the National Security Agency from 1992 to 1996. McConnell is now a senior vice president at Booz Allen Hamilton, a government contractor and consulting firm.

A message left at McConnell's office Wednesday night was not immediately returned.

Negroponte's transition to the State Department must be confirmed by the Senate, as would Bush's choice for his replacement. Both changes will create new openings for the Democrats to debate the administration's intelligence and foreign policy direction.

The Office of the National Intelligence Director and the White House both declined to comment on Negroponte's impending move.

The State Department also had no comment, but one official confirmed that Negroponte was to become deputy secretary of state. This official noted Negroponte's diplomatic credentials as a former ambassador to a number of countries.

In an interview with C-SPAN last month, Negroponte indicated that he wanted to stay on through the Bush administration.

Yet his answer to the question will he "stay with it for a while?" didn't close the door to a new assignment. Since last summer, it has been said he was interested in the vacancy at the State Department.

"In my own mind at least, I visualize staying with it through the end of this administration and, then I think, probably that'll be about the right time to pack it in," he told C-SPAN.

Robert Zoellick resigned as Rice's deputy in July to take a position with the Wall Street firm Goldman Sachs. She is said to have approached several candidates for what is widely regarded as a plum assignment, going for months without any takers.

Negroponte's departure creates uncertainty for the position of national intelligence director, which grew out of concerns over intelligence failures before the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Congress established the post in late 2004, following the recommendation of the Sept. 11 commission. Bush tapped Negroponte to set up the new office from scratch.

He brought together experts to focus on how the government collects and analyzes intelligence and helped create new organizations, including the National Counterproliferation Center, which studies the spread of weapons.

Yet, it has been at times a struggle for Negroponte and his staff to corral all 16 spy agencies. Critics have questioned whether his staff of 1,500 is becoming another clumsy bureaucracy, even as it tries to avoid the intelligence lapses of 9/11 and Iraq.

In public speeches, Negroponte has praised efforts across government to strengthen intelligence, but also stressed its limitations.

"Intelligence is not a panacea — far from it — but we are making progress in intelligence reform, and that is important," he said recently.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nationworld/bal-negroponte0104,0,5991622.story?coll=bal-nationworld-headlines>

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A bloody Talmudist Zionist
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who will meet his Karma along with the others in the near future.

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