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THE IRAQI DOCUMENTS: A GLIMPSE INTO THE REGIME OF SADDAM HUSSEIN

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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THE IRAQI DOCUMENTS: A GLIMPSE INTO THE REGIME OF SADDAM HUSSEIN

THURSDAY, APRIL 6, 2006

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:35 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dana Rohrabacher (Chairman of the Subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me note those of you who will be witnesses as we call the order, if you could summarize your statement in 5 or 10 minutes, and then we would move on to questions and answers.

So with that said, good afternoon. The Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations is called to order.

The purpose of today's hearing is to evaluate the importance of recently declassified Iraqi documents found by American troops during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The mammoth declassification process is about to commence under the auspices of the Director of National Intelligence. I want to applaud our colleague, Chairman Pete Hoekstra of the House Intelligence Committee. He has spearheaded the effort to convince the Executive Branch to publicly release millions of pages of captured Iraqi documents, recordings and other data. Without Chairman Hoekstra's effort, the information which will now be available to the public would have been locked up and seen by no one. Instead, the power of the internet and public participation will speed the process of translation and dissemination as never before. Decisionmakers will have invaluable information now, and historians will have primary source material for many years.

The United States has nearly 48,000 boxes of documents and hundreds of hours of recorded conversations, many by Saddam Hussein, that have yet to be thoroughly translated and analyzed. There are more than 2 million pages of information contained within this untapped archive.

This treasure trove of data will yield an unprecedented understanding of a defeated enemy regime. We may well be treated to surprise revelations for years to come. Like any good Stalinist dictatorship, Saddam Hussein's regime documented nearly everything, so we are talking about a mountain of data.

Interestingly, one of the first Iraqi documents to be declassified appears to address the fate of the Kuwaiti prisoners of war. Among

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his many cruelties, Saddam never accounted for or returned at least 605 Kuwaiti prisoners of war. Most of these victims were civilians captured during the brutal and murderous 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

As part of the cease-fire agreement in early 1991, Saddam agreed to account for their whereabouts. Needless to say, Saddam failed to keep his word, and all these years there has been no word of the Kuwaiti prisoners. The agony of the Kuwaiti people over their missing family members was painful and omnipresent in that little country.

By a scale of comparison, 605 prisoners of war in a small country like Kuwait would be equivalent to the holding of 250,000 Americans.

Until now there has been no solid information about the fate of the Kuwaiti prisoners. In fact, there is question as to the authenticity of the documents concerning the Kuwaiti prisoners that has emerged, or that have emerged, I should say. These documents, however, do serve a useful purpose in stimulating the discussion and examination of the issue which is in itself a positive outcome to the document declassification process.

Here, to comment on Iraq's monstrous cruelty to its Kuwaiti prisoners is Ibrahim M. Al-Shaheen, Deputy Chairman of the National Committee for Missing & Prisoners of War from the Government of Kuwait, and we welcome him, and look forward to have him express his views, which will be in one moment.

On a broader subject, we will hear from Lieutenant Colonel Kevin Woods, U.S. Army, retired, the lead author of the Iraqi Prospective Project, this path-breaking new study, and his project manager, General Tony Cucolo, who are with us today, and from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and that is Ambassador Negraponte's office, is Dan Butler, who will comment on the declassification process and how the roll-out of these documents will unfold.

This hearing focuses on the wholesale declassification of documents and we seek to improve our understanding of the evil nature of the regime that we deposed. Saddam Hussein's megalomania and virulent hatred of the United States and his intentions of removing the United States' influence from the Middle East are confirmed in documents that are waiting to be found and published.

Through these documents, we also are provided with a greater insight into the abject fear that Saddam inspired in his own government and in his own military leaders, thus causing mistakes and abuses. It remains to be seen what else we will find when more of these documents become public, but I believe this is an important opportunity to learn more about the monster who ruled Iraq, the monster we drove from power, and eventually the monster we found hiding in a hole.

I look forward to the hearing, and from our eminently qualified witnesses.

Today we are here to proclaim when it comes to information the more, the quicker, the better. The massive document disclosure America is about to engage upon will create an intellectual dynamic that can only happen in a free society. Not all the documents will be authentic, as we will hear today, but in total they will

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present a more vivid and complete picture of recent history, the history that is important to us today, and will stimulate a major national and international discussion on issues that need to be discussed.

I now yield to my Ranking Member, Mr. Delahunt, for an opening comment.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I will be very brief, Mr. Chairman.

Well, finally we are having a hearing on Iraq. It has been a long time coming, but here we are. I think, unfortunately, it happens to be an historical review. Clearly it is interesting and fascinating, and I am sure we are going to learn something. Well, I think we all are in full agreement about the evil nature of that regime which ended about 3 years ago.

I think, however, that we should not limit ourselves to just studying the regime of Saddam Hussein. We need to look at what our own Government did and is now doing. That is why we are called the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee.

I had very little hope that we would ever do that, but I was really heartened today by a report in my hometown paper, which is the *Boston Globe*—in case you didn't pick up on my accent, the *Boston Globe* is my hometown paper. But it looks like it might happen, Mr. Chairman, because this is the headline, "GOP to co-sponsor war cost oversight panel." I am just going to read excerpts for the record because it is heartening for me that maybe something will happen about things that are within our control before we continue to make mistakes:

> "Two House Republicans have agreed to co-sponsor a landmark proposal to create a special House Committee to investigate Iraq war spending, joining Democrats in demanding more accountability for billions of dollars that allegedly have been misspent."

Well, myself and my colleague to my left, Mr. Schiff, and others have been pleading with the leadership in this Congress to do just that. We don't need a new select Committee. It belongs before this Committee.

My first issue, Mr. Chairman, would be, as you will know, to send our staffs all over the world to see if we can find that missing $9 billion that was transferred from an account within the Oil for Food Program—we did have a lot of hearings on that, but only as it related to the United Nations—and we transferred to the Coalition Provisional Authority, but we can't seem to find it, according to the report of the Special Inspector General on Iraq reconstruction.

We can't bring ourselves to do it, but to someone out there I want to compliment my Republican colleagues, Gil Gutknecht and Walter Jones, good, serious Members of Congress, conservatives, true, that are willing to take up that particular challenge.

You are right, Mr. Chairman, the more, the quicker, the better. We ought to be about finding out what is happening in Iraq today.

As I read the testimony of our military officials and some recent comments by retired generals, and former civilian authorities, a certain parallel between the Saddam that we knew as a despot and

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a dictator, and his military came to mind. There was a disconnect in that his military gave him what he wanted to hear.

Our military, our military, General Shinseki, General Eaton, and others, gave our civilian leadership the truth, and they ignored it, much to our detriment, because here we are today debating as to whether there is a civil war or there isn't, indicating our displeasure about the prime minister. He is not our guy, I guess.

But in any event let me just finally conclude by saying to Dr. Al-Shaheen, I know that I speak for everybody when I extend our collective sympathies and condolences for the losses, the horrible losses, that the families of the Kuwaiti prisoners of war have endured and experienced. You have our most profound and heartfelt sympathies.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much.

We will also have a short opening statement from Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you very much for being here today.

I just appreciate so much your being here, but I appreciate the efforts of the Iraq survey group. I had the opportunity to visit there several times to see the dedication of the persons putting together the records of the heinous regime of Saddam Hussein, and I am so grateful for the American forces. My son served there for a year. He served in Kuwait also, served for a year in Iraq. He got to see the effects of the liberation of the people of Iraq, and indeed, you know, we have had this before.

We had people who opposed the liberation of Kuwait, and I remember them actively saying that it wasn't America's business, that this was not in the interest of the United States; that it could not be successful; that there would be 40,000 body bags.

Well, somehow they were all wrong. Kuwait is now a free country. I am very proud. I visited your country and learned of the concern about POWs (prisoners of war). Thank goodness that issue can now be looked into fully with a liberated Kuwait and a liberated Iraq.

Again, I want to thank the Chairman for getting this Subcommittee together so we can bring out the positive effects of what has occurred in the liberation of Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait.

Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. And Mr. Schiff, do you have a short opening statement as well?

Mr. SCHIFF. Yes, I do, Mr. Chairman, and I really wanted to echo some of the comments that Mr. Delahunt made, and I appreciate all the witnesses that are coming here today and the importance of what they have to say.

But I am very disappointed with the agenda of the Subcommittee thus far—given the wealth of important oversight that really needs to be done of so many critical issues—that it has been as anemic as it has been. The whole question of the missing billions of reconstruction funds, the problems we have had in providing armor vehicles and body armor for our troops, issues of oil production in Iraq, or water and sewer production, issues of Valarie Plame, of Abu Ghraib—none of these things have we really had any oversight hearings on.

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Even within the documents that have been released regarding Iraq, I think one of the most pressing issues for our consideration ought to be the potential Russian complicity. I would love to have a hearing on that. Bring in the Administration. Bring in those that wrote that report. What do we know about whether the Russians were disclosing our military plans to Saddam's regime?

These are some of the questions I would love to have answered, and I know our Chairman and his diligence when he is on the hunt for answers, and I can only imagine that the reason why we are having hearings on the despotic nature of the Hussein regime—which none of us question; he was an awful tyrant; we can stipulate to that at the beginning of this hearing—but I can only imagine the reason we haven't had more of these really critical hearings is that the instructions from the top down are telling this Subcommittee what we can oversee and what we can't.

So we can look into how bad Saddam was, but we can't look beyond that at really almost anything involving the conduct of the war, or our expenditures in the war, or any of the questions that Americans are asking us.

My constituents aren't asking whether I think Saddam was a terribly tyrant. They all know he was, and so do I. But they do want to know what has happened with our equipment. Why aren't we better protecting our troops? What has happened with our expenditures? Why isn't reconstruction going better? What is this about the White House approving the leaking of Valarie Plame? What is that all about?

These are the questions that our constituents want us to get answers for, and I just wish this was the subject of our work in this Subcommittee rather than plumbing the depths of the Saddam regime.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much.

Mr. Berman, do you have any opening statement?

Mr. Berman does not.

Let us note that if you do have questions about Soviet influence, I think we have some people, some generals, who are with us today who can answer those questions in fact; talk about Soviet influence in Iraq prior to the invasion, prior to the liberation, I should say.

Now, instead of focusing on what we are not going to be covering today, I think it is important that we move forward and do the job at hand.

Dr. Al-Shaheen, we are very, very pleased that you have come halfway around the world to be with us. This is an issue of utmost importance to your people. As I mentioned, the equivalent number of Iraqi or Kuwaitis being held would have been 250,000 Americans, and I think the United States of America can be proud of what we have done in the Middle East, and I think when the conflict and chaos is over in this conflict that is now taking place in Iraq, and the confusion and chaos that always accompanies war and blood-letting—when that ends and we can see what society emerges, the United States of America will be able to be very proud that it has taken the Saddam Husseins of the world and relegated them to holes to hide in, and that we have taken the Saddam Husseins and the monsters who would now create some sort of Islamic dictatorship in Iraq and instead we have opened up an opportunity

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to decent people to live at peace with their neighbors, which you know is more important than anything else right now—to make sure that Iraq isn't recaptured by some monstrous regime that would attack your people and their own people.

So with that said, we invite you to let us know about this great suffering that your people have had, and some of the details that may help us understand the importance of finding out information through these documents.

STATEMENT OF IBRAHIM M. AL-SHAHEEN, PH.D., DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR MISSING & PRISONERS OF WAR—KUWAIT

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Honorable Chairman, Members of the Subommittee, on behalf of the people and Government of the State of Kuwait, I extend to you our utmost thanks and appreciation for your continuous support to the issues that are vital to the state of Kuwait, especially to the issue of Kuwaiti POWs in Iraq.

Also extending many thanks to your kind and considerate invitation to participate in this hearing.

May I briefly introduce a summary of the this humanitarian tragedy?

On the 2nd of August 1990, Iraqi armed forces invaded Kuwait in an act of aggression that was universally condemned. The Iraqi forces remained in Kuwait for 7 months, during which they committed all sort of atrocities against the Kuwaiti people, such as cruel executions of innocent individuals in front of their families, random and mass arrests of citizens, detained in various locations before transferring them forcefully to prisons in Iran, a crime against humanity and a violation of human rights.

During the years that followed the liberation of Kuwait, every conceivable effort was exerted in vain, to convince the former Iraqi regime to account for the fate of the prisoners. A humanitarian committee chaired by the International Red Cross was set up to resolve this issue. Iraq signed its commitment to actively participate in the meetings. But the former regime boycotted the meetings in 1992 until 1994, and then again boycotted from 1998 until 2003.

All along, Kuwait insisted on the humanitarian nature of this issue, expressing the importance for the families to know the fate of their loved ones, whether alive and held prisoners, or deceased.

Over 50 meetings were held before the fall of Saddam regime, during which Iraq's answer to Kuwait's requests to identify the fate of the prisoners was the claim that it had no information. It was only after the fall of Saddam's regime that the search process picked up steam, breaking free from all deadlocks criminally imposed by that regime for such a long period.

Key information that had been insistently requested and persistently denied suddenly became available. It was possible to locate the first mass grave and to start up with the process of mortal remains exhumation and identification.

Honorable Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee, results achieved to date confirm through DNA tests the identification of 227 individuals out of 605 prisoners. The tests also confirmed that they were executed in 1990 and 1991. Hence, it is ascertained that

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the former Iraqi regime intentionally violated all of its obligations on this tragic humanitarian issue.

It is appalling to realize just how much mental distress has been needlessly imposed on POWs' families by such immoral behavior extended over such a long period of time, and perhaps for years to come until all individual cases are definitely resolved. Family members of disappeared persons are certainly considered to be victims as well, and subject to the worst psychological torments.

And if you allow me, Mr. Chairman, I just would like to mention a personal experience related to my sister-in-law. She had two of her sons among those 600 prisoners. In 2004, we found their mortal remains. Their mother has suffered strokes, high blood pressure, diabetic disease, and I was really worried about her condition on the day that we buried her sons.

So the next day after burying her sons I called her just to see how she was, and Mr. Chairman, I was surprised to hear her saying that last night was the first night that she could sleep in peace. That is the importance of returning the mortal remains and having their families know that their loved ones are back in their homes.

All possible hints and bits of information leading to identify the final fate and burial site of the prisoners are most valuable. We appreciate the kindness and assistance of our friends in the United States in sharing such information. We are aware of the presence of a huge amount of documents alleged to belong to former Iraqi regime. Certainly many of them are useful in resolving several issues. But we have to caution that some of them might be forged.

So we in Kuwait have been offered several of such documents. But it is important and most useful to follow all leads by seriously investigating all available documents and information so that bits and pieces can be used to solve the many puzzles left by Saddam. Even though this particular document has discrepancies, other documents surely will be useful.

To conclude, I extend our thanks to the U.S. Congress, Government and military for the support we have been receiving. May I request a more detailed report of this issue to be attached to this document.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Al-Shaheen follows:]

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اللجنة الوطنية لشؤون الأسرى والمفقودين في الكويت
NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR M. & P.O.W'S AFFAIRS

The Honorable Ibrahim M. Al-Shaheen
Deputy chairman of Kuwaiti national committee for P.O.W's in Iraq
April 6th 2006
House Committee on International Relations, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Honorable Chairman, Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the people and Government of the State of Kuwait, I extend to you, our utmost thanks and appreciation for your continues support to the issues that are vital to the state of Kuwait, especially to the issue of Kuwaiti POW's in Iraq.

Also extending many thanks to your kind and considerate invitation to participate in this hearing.

May I briefly introduce a summary of this humanitarian tragedy..

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اللجنة الوطنية لشؤون الأسرى والمفقودين
NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR M. & P.O.W'S AFFAIRS

During the years that followed the liberation of Kuwait, every conceivable effort was exerted in vain, to convince the former Iraqi regime to account for the fate of the prisoners. A humanitarian committee chaired by the International Red Cross was set up to resolve this issue. Iraq signed its commitment to actively participates in the meetings. But the former regime boycotted the meetings in 1992 until 1994, and then again boycotted from 1998 until 2003. All along, Kuwait insisted on the humanitarian nature of the issue, expressing the importance for the families to know the fate of their loved ones, whether alive and held prisoners, or diseased. Over 50 meetings were held before the fall of Saddam regime, during which Iraq's answers to Kuwait's requests to identify the fate of the prisoners was the claim that it had no information. It was only after the fall of Saddam's regime that the search process picked up steam, breaking free from all deadlock criminally imposed by that regime for such a long period. Key information that had been insistently requested and persistently denied, suddenly became available. It was possible to locate the first mass graves and to start up with the process of mortal remains exhumations and identifications.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Results achieved to date, confirmed through DNA tests, the identification of 227 individuals out of the 605 prisoners. The tests also confirmed the they were executed in 1990-91.

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NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR M. & POW'S AFFAIRS

Hence, it is ascertained that the former Iraqi regime intentionally violating all its obligations on this tragic humanitarian issue.

It is appalling to realize just how much mental distress has been needlessly imposed on POW's families by such immoral behavior extended over such a long period of time , and perhaps for years to come, until all individual cases are definitely resolved. Family members of disappeared persons are certainly considered to be victims as well, and subject to the worse psychological torments.

All possible hints and bits of information leading to identify the final fate and burial site of the prisoners are most valuable. We appreciate the kindness and assistance of our friends in the US in sharing such information. We are aware of the presence of a huge amount of documents alleged to belong to former Iraqi regime. Certainly many of them are useful in resolving several issues. But we have to caution that some of them might be forged. We, In Kuwait have been offered several of such documents. But it is important and most useful to follow all leads, by seriously investigating all available documents and information, so that bits and pieces can by used to solve the many puzzles left by Saddam. Even though that this particular document has discrepancies, other documents could be useful.

To conclude, I extend our thanks to the US Congress, Government and Military, for the support we have been receiving. May I request a more detailed report of this issue to be attached to this statement.

Thank you,

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Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much for that very insightful and also heartwarming testimony, and let me just say that your indication that there was—how many have already been identified of the 600?

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. 227.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. 227. And that is the equivalent of about 100,000 Americans proportionately, and one can—we are very, very pleased that we are bringing closure to that. We are bringing closure to that, and members of your families now can rest assured that that chapter is closed, and they don't have to have that agony.

The fact that Saddam Hussein's regime intentionally kept people, mothers and fathers, and brothers and sisters, in the dark for so long indicates how evil he was. He was not satisfied with just inflicting damage, but instead he had to create agony in the hearts and souls of his victims.

So we thank you for letting us know, and again your testimony underscores the importance of these documents. As we go through these documents, it will bring closure to the people in Kuwait and also the large numbers of people in Iraq who are also victimized by the horrible monstrous regime.

So again I appreciate your testimony, and let us reconfirm today that we are very grateful for your friendship and the friendship of the Kuwaiti people because I know that as time goes on we can build on that friendship that was borne in this tragedy, and we can build on this friendship to build a better world and to create peace in your region.

So thank you very much for being with us today.

Mr. Delahunt.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you, Mr. Rohrabacher.

I simply would associate myself with the remarks of my friend, the Chairman, and echo all of his sentiments, and I think this is a very important initiative, and an effort for the reasons that you so eloquently described when you were referring to your sister-in-law, and God speed, and may there be the kind of work concluded that will give peace of mind to all those who have suffered so egregiously.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Thank you very much. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Wilson.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your comments, and it is so significant that 227 of the 605 have been identified. Have any of the others been identified of POWs/MIAs (missing in action)?

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. We have brought from Iraq from different mass graves over 320 mortal remains; 227 were identified by the DNA, and the rest are under work tests in the forensic lab in Kuwait.

Mr. WILSON. I remember visiting Kuwait in 2003, and hearing about this issue, and certainly those of us who—all of us have been concerned about MIAs, the issue that America has faced, and so I understood from the beginning how important this was.

Are efforts being made to try to identify the balance?

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Yes. We have information about locations of mass graves, and we are cooperating, of course, as I mentioned with the United States military in Iraq, and they have been really

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providing great help and assistance to us. Without them we would not really be able to move around the country.

We also now have been cooperating with the Iraqi Ministry of Human Rights, helping us in reaching those places, but of course due to the security conditions on the ground, this has been delayed, not stopped—let us say obstacles to the work rather than stopping them completely—so we are working on certain sites now of burial sites, and we have information that we think is reliable, and we have teams that are ready to go there and retrieve those mortal remains.

Mr. WILSON. Were any of the persons identified as POWs/MIAs found alive?

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. No, none of them, and according to the information that we received, of course, after the fall of Saddam and the liberation of Iraq, all have been executed in the period between 1990 and 1991, and buried in different places.

I brought just a couple of pictures—if it is possible to show them—of where we find those burial sites, just to give you an idea of how Saddam and his regime intentionally tried to hide this crime.

Mr. WILSON. It is a little difficult to see that.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. No, no, there are some pictures.

Mr. WILSON. Keep going, keep going then. Keep rolling. Here.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Okay, this shows some examples of the mortal remains, the sites where they are—and if we just go on with the pictures.

Mr. WILSON. Yes, keep going, and if we could turn down the lights a little bit.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. This, for example—in the middle of nowhere in the desert they would dig mass graves like this, and this is how we found those graves, in that way. So there is no document being kept by the Iraqis to show where they are. We only relied on people who were actually involved in the digging of the graves, and we found those 227 in different places in Iraq, and the pictures here show them maybe not so clearly, but we have them in detail. We show that all of them have bullets in their head, in the scalp.

So they would bring them, they would dig a long hole. In cases we found it is as much as five meters deep trying just to hide it completely, and then they would put the people in line and then shoot them and throw them in that hole.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Wilson, I would like to add in here that we are talking about not only people who have been captured, but people who are basically noncombatants. Many women whose——

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Yes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER [continuing]. Skulls you see with bullet holes right in them.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. All of them were arrested as civilians and they were not combatant, they were arrested, yes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. WILSON. So these were not Kuwaiti military or police.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. No, no.

Mr. WILSON. These were citizens who had been picked up?

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Yes.

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Mr. WILSON. Was there a reason why they would pick up people aside from maybe business leaders or government leaders?

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. No, it was at random.

Mr. WILSON. Random.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. 124 of them students out of the 600, and of course, the scheme of Saddam was much worse than this. He had thousands of Kuwaitis. Fortunately, they were already in the south, or when there was this revolution in the south, and we had over 6,000 people that came back to us.

Mr. WILSON. I see.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Some helped by the coalition forces and some just came through the Shiite revolution in the south. So the scheme of Saddam was much, much bigger and worse than this. Those 600 unfortunate people who had already moved into those areas and were executed at the time.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, and let us note that it was just said that if we have 6,000 people who were able to get back because of the Shiite uprising that happened, and I remember that very well, that for Kuwait it would be the equivalent of millions of Americans. We would see that the lives of millions of our citizens were saved. That would be very significant.

Thank you for alerting us to that and showing us the magnitude of what we are talking about.

Mr. Berman, do you have any questions?

Mr. BERMAN. No, Mr. Chairman, but it is quite a story.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right, thank you.

Well, Dr. Al-Shaheen, thank you very much, and again thank you to your Embassy and your Ambassador for helping us today and preparing for this hearing. I think you have put a human face on this new project of releasing these documents and looking into finding information that is not available, and you have really shown us why it is important to dig and get as much of that information as we can, and get that information out because there is a real human element here, especially for the people of Kuwait.

Let me note it is also for the people of Iraq who have suffered so much under this same tyrant.

So thank you all very much, and we will now have the next panel of witnesses.

Mr. AL-SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you all very much, and I would ask the witnesses if they can facilitate this by going to their central points, focusing on the objective, pushing away all opposition that will get in their way, and getting right to the meat of the issue, and if they could do this in about a 5-minute summary, it would be helpful.

General Cucolo, you may proceed, and we are very, very grateful for each and everyone of you being with us.

STATEMENT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ANTHONY A. CUCOLO III, USA, DIRECTOR, JOINT CENTER FOR OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS, UNITED STATES JOINT FORCES COMMAND

General CUCOLO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am Brigadier General Tony Cucolo. I am the Director of Joint Center for Operational Analysis, essentially the lessons learned Di-

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rectorate in Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, Virginia, and I would just like to put the Iraqi perspective project in context.

The Iraqi Perspective Project is a research effort conducted by United States Joint Forces Command, specifically the Joint Center for Operational Analysis, and it focuses on Operation Iraqi Freedom in the time period from March to May 2003.

Using information gathered through dozens of interviews with senior Iraqi military and political leaders during the fall and winter of 2003–2004, and making use of thousands of official Iraqi documents, we have a comprehensive historical analysis of the forces and motivations that drive our opponents' decision.

Now, to accomplish this, the project leader, Kevin Woods, led a small team of professionals in a systematic 2-year study of the former Iraqi regime and military. This book is the first major product of that effort.

Essentially, Kevin and his team crafted a substantive examination of Saddam Hussein's leadership and its effect on the Iraqi military decisionmaking process. Moreover, we believe it goes a long way toward revealing the inner workings of a closed regime from an insiders' point of view.

The overall objective of the project was to learn the right lessons from Operation Iraqi Freedom, and while the practice of self-critique and gathering lessons learned are distinguishing feature of the U.S. military, in almost every past instance our understanding of events remained incomplete because any assessment was limited to a "blue" or a friendly view of what happened.

While we often had a relatively complete picture of what our adversary did, we remained in the dark as to what motivated his actions. At the conclusion of past conflicts, we were left to speculate on which of our actions were causing specific enemy responses and why. Expert analysts and "red team" assessments attempt to make this speculation as informed as possible, but because of the impenetrability of closed regimes, even their usefulness is somewhat limited.

In this case, by shedding light on the actual "red team's view," this study hopes to contribute to a more fully developed history of the war.

It should be noted that this is the first such effort by the United States Government since World War II, when the United States conducted a comprehensive review of recovered German and Japanese documents, as well as interviews with key military and civilian leadership of our former enemies.

Though this is an important first step, we acknowledge that our understanding of Operation Iraqi Freedom remains incomplete.

This report is a declassified version of a product that has been applied to Joint Professional Military Education, joint training, and concept development venues for the last 2 years. It is in the interest of getting as much accurate information as possible into the hands of those already studying Operation Iraqi Freedom that we released the report to the general public.

Mr. Chairman, with your permission I would like to allow my colleague, Kevin Woods, to make his opening statement.

[The prepared statement of General Cucolo follows:]

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PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL ANTHONY A. CUCOLO III, USA, DIRECTOR, JOINT CENTER FOR OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS, UNITED STATES JOINT FORCES COMMAND

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The overall objective of this project was to learn the right lessons from Operation Iraqi Freedom. While the practice of self-critique and gathering lessons learned are distinguishing features of the U.S. military, in almost every past instance our understanding of events remained incomplete because any assessment was limited to a "blue" only view of the situation. While we often had a relatively complete picture of what our adversary did, we remained in the dark as to what motivated his actions. At the conclusion of past conflicts, we were left to speculate which of our actions were causing specific enemy responses and why. Expert analysts and "red team" assessments attempt to make this speculation as informed as possible, but because of the impenetrability of closed regimes, even their usefulness is somewhat limited.

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Though this project is an important first step, we acknowledge that our understanding of OIF is far from complete.

This report is a declassified version of a product that has been applied to Joint Professional Military Education, joint training and concept development venues for the last two years. It is in the interest of getting as much accurate information as possible into the hands of those already studying OIF that we released this report to the general public.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. General, thank you very much for your testimony, and Lieutenant Colonel Woods, you may proceed.

STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL KEVIN M. WOODS, USA (RET.), PROJECT LEADER AND PRINCIPAL AUTHOR OF IRAQI PERSPECTIVE PROJECT, UNITED STATES JOINT FORCES COMMAND

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In the interest of time, I have submitted a written statement. I would just like to make a couple of points about the——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Go right to the heart of the matter. You got it.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir—make a couple of points about the research methodology. I hope that answers some questions.

As the General said, we took a small team into Iraq in the late fall of 2003. We proceeded to do interviews. The interviews were focused on the members of the Iraqi leadership that were in custody, that we could gain an understanding of the operational level of war, the major war fight, if you will, of Operation Iraqi Freedom predominantly between 19 March and 9 April, 2003, the conventional fight.

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Through those interviews—some were done in custody, some were done in safe houses—we met Iraqis who were not in custody, and conducted those interviews.

From that understanding or that framework, we came back to the states, and proceeded to exploit the captured document database which we are still doing to this day.

The oral histories, if you will, that we collected on the scene provided a roadmap of critical areas to explore, a historical narrative, if you will, to allow us to explore the right issues. So rather than be intimidated by the shear scale of the captured document database, we had somewhat of an understanding of where to go look first, and be able to focus our efforts, which allowed us to get the study that we have in front of us today, and that still animates our primary project.

With that, sir, I just wanted to put that on the table how we did the work, and I am prepared to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Lt. Colonel Woods follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL KEVIN M. WOODS, USA (RET.), PROJECT LEADER AND PRINCIPAL AUTHOR OF IRAQI PERSPECTIVE PROJECT, UNITED STATES JOINT FORCES COMMAND

> Professional historians . . . tend, perhaps naively, to underrate the degree of unwisdom prevalent in the world of action, and too often expect political leaders to behave rationally—as men of goodwill with the advantage of hindsight define rationality. Mussolini's outwardly erratic course and irresponsible decisions, and above all his failure, have therefore aroused widespread contempt, which in turn has inhibited analysis of his intentions and actions on their own terms.
>
> — MacGregor Knox

Iraq's response to the Coalition's military threat was dictated by the nature of the regime and of Saddam Hussein himself. While to Western eyes the choices Iraq made may appear dysfunctional or even absurd, the regime's responses to the threat and then the invasion were logical within the Iraqi political framework, even if later proven to be counterproductive. Saddam may have been, to a large extent, ignorant of the external world; he was, however, a student of his own nation's history and culture. Thus, the Iraqi response to threats and the invasion of Coalition forces was a function of how Saddam and his minions understood their own world, a world that looked nothing like the assessments of Western analysts.

As the massive buildup of coalition forces proceeded in 2002 and early 2003, two major assumptions governed Saddam's preparations. The first assumption was that the greatest danger the regime faced was an internal coup. In fact, Iraq's national history is littered with military coup attempts with one following another in dreary progression. Even Saddam's Ba'athist Party saw its first try at seizing power in the early 1960's collapse under the hammer blow of a military coup that overthrew the first efforts of the Ba'athist party to mold Iraq in accordance with its ideology. In response to the catastrophic defeat of Arab armies by Israel in the Six Day War, another military coup ushered the Ba'athist return to power on July 17, 1968, with Saddam as one of its leading players.

Saddam and his colleagues were determined that this time the military would not overthrow their new Ba'athist regime, and created a multitude of secret police organizations to ensure the unswerving loyalty of the population. These secret agencies immediately proceeded to infiltrate the military in order to ensure its loyalty. Once he had established himself in absolute power, Saddam set about creating a number of military organizations in addition to the regular army. In the desperate days of his war with Iran, Saddam created the Republican Guards to have a military organization closely tied to the regime and its ideology rather than to the country. With the best military equipment that Iraq's oil money could purchase, the Republican Guard, unlike most other private armies, established a regional reputation for military competence.

However, the fundamental purpose of the Republican Guard was to protect the regime from not only the Iraqi Army but also the Iraqi people. In the 1991 Gulf War, its units died in large numbers while accomplishing little against Coalition

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forces. However, when the Shi'a and others rebelled in March 1991 in reaction to the regime's military defeat at the hands of the Coalition, the Republican Guard proved its worth, putting down the rebellion with devastating effect. Yet even among the elite Republican Guard, connections to Saddam's family or to his tribe counted for more than military competence.

For the remainder of the 1990s, Saddam confronted increasing discontent among his population as United Nations sanctions significantly impacted the life of Iraq's people. The discontent spilled over into several failed coup attempts, including at least one by members of the Republican Guard. Hence the need to establish the Special Republican Guard, and then the Saddam Fedayeen, the Al Quds, and the martyrs brigades, as means to ensure that Iraq's military forces would be too splintered to organize a coup. The regime's security was the priority in military affairs, not preparations to fight against an external enemy.

Because Saddam was unwilling to trust anyone except for his sons and a few close relatives, he forbade the military to train in anything resembling a rigorous fashion. Fearing that any training maneuvers might well turn into another coup attempt, Saddam severely restricted unit movements and even social contacts between senior officers. For commanders, Saddam only picked the most loyal, those tied to him by blood. Most of the competent fell by the wayside, retired if they were lucky, dead if Saddam had any reason to distrust them. Military effectiveness, at least in Western terms, ceased to exist.

The second assumption that Saddam made had to do with the nature of his opponents. Through the distortions of his ideological perceptions, Saddam simply could not take the Americans seriously. After all, had they not run away from Vietnam after suffering what to him was a "mere" 58,000 dead? Iraq had suffered 51,000 dead in just one battle on the Fao Peninsula against the Iranians. In the 1991 Gulf War, the Americans had appeared on the brink of destroying much of Iraq's military, including the Republican Guard, but then inexplicably stopped—for fear of casualties, in Saddam's view. Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo all added to Saddam's belief that the Americans could not possibly launch a ground invasion that would seriously threaten his regime. At best they might be willing to launch an air campaign similar to OPERATION DESERT FOX in 1998 with a few small ground attacks around Iraq's periphery. But from Saddam's point of view, the idea that the Americans would attack all the way to Baghdad appeared ludicrous.

A few senior military officers believed that the coalition might launch a ground campaign, especially given the enormous buildup that was taking place in Kuwait. But even they believed that as in OPERATION DESERT STORM, the Americans would wage a sustained air campaign before they launched their ground forces on an invasion of Iraq. Therefore, the entire Iraqi leadership—military and civilian—was surprised by Coalition ground forces beginning their offensive into Iraq at the same time the air campaign was starting. Adding to their incomprehension were the speed and power of the American offensive, which were simply beyond their understanding of military operations and logistical capabilities.

Undergirding Saddam's assumption about the Americans was a profound misunderstanding of things military. Like the First World War generals, Saddam's conception of military effectiveness revolved around the number of casualties that an army suffered. To Saddam war was about warriors willing to die for their country, not about killing the enemy. In effect, he turned General George S. Patton's famous aphorism ("No bastard ever won a war by dying for his country. He won it by making the other poor dumb bastard die for his country") on its head. Thus, the lack of training in Iraq's military organizations never crossed Saddam's mind as carrying with it dangers in a war against a foreign opponent. Ignorant of military history, logistics, technological changes, and any conception of modern military operations, Saddam was incapable of addressing the looming threat in any sensible fashion.

Exacerbating all these difficulties was the atmosphere of fear that Saddam had instilled throughout his civil and military bureaucracies. Iraqis at all levels understood that in this regime the bearer of bad news was in almost every case punished severely. When Saddam developed a new plan for the defense of Iraq that made no military sense, his generals with few exceptions applauded the wisdom of their great leader.

Once combat operations began, Iraqi commanders at the rapidly moving front reported one success after another against the invading Coalition forces. On 31 March 2003, the Minister of Information, Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf ("Baghdad Bob"), reported to the international press:

> Those mercenaries of the international gang of villains sent their failing louts, but the snake is trapped in the quagmire now. The lines of communications now extend over 500 kilometers. Our people from all sectors, fighters, courageous

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> tribesmen, as well as the fighters of the valiant Arab Socialist Ba'athist Party fought battles and pushed the enemy back into the desert . . . Now hundreds of thousands of the fighters of the valiant Iraqi people are distributed in all places. Saddam's Fedayeen and some small units of the Iraqi Armed Forces began to engage the louts of the villains of the US and British colonialism day and night. We have decided not to let them sleep . . . [W]e destroyed 13 tanks, 8 tracked personnel carriers, and 6 half-tracked vehicles.

In the West such comments appeared as palpable nonsense. But from the point of view of Iraq's leaders, Baghdad Bob was largely reporting what they were hearing from the front. In such an atmosphere Iraq's leaders could not make coherent decisions on what they were actually confronting.

The conduct of Coalition operations also helped to contribute to Iraqi misperceptions as to what was going on. The Ba'athist Party bureaucrats in the cities along the Euphrates reported that the fanatical Saddam Fedayeen attacks, in which the Iraqis died by the thousands, were having an enormous success. What made these reports even more believable was the fact that the US Army's 3rd Infantry Division had screened off these cities, rarely entering them. "Baghdad Bob" was able to claim that the Americans had been driven back into the deserts with which few urban Iraqis had any experience. But those at the top appeared convinced that their strategy was working. When the US Marines pulled back from ad-Diwaniyah during the Coalition "pause" at the end of March to avoid giving away their next move, the Ba'athist regime was able to claim another success for Iraqi arms.

But the largest contributing factor to the complete defeat of Iraq's military forces was the continued interference by Saddam. Just as soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division were about to push through the Karbala Gap, Saddam decided that all of that fighting was a mere feint, with the real threat coming from American forces moving from Jordan. His attempted reorientation of Iraqi forces added to the list of targets destroyed by Coalition aircraft. More important was the fact that those defending the Karbala Gap were robbed of any chance to establish defensive positions that could hold the Americans for anything more than a couple of hours. Once the Americans were through the gap, the Iraqi regime was finished.

The arrival of American forces at Saddam International Airport must have brought some sense that things were not going well. The desperate claims of Baghdad Bob were becoming even shriller. Now the regime's military forces were literally falling apart at the seams, no longer possessing the ability to put together anything resembling an effective defense. Most of the Iraqi army were voting with their feet. Those who still desired to fight had to do so in small groups with no coordination and little leadership.

There were Iraqis who had suggested alternative courses of action. General Raad Hamdani, the commander of the Republican Guard II Corps, suggested a defensive approach in which Iraq's military forces would use urban landscapes to defuse the advantages that Coalition forces enjoyed with their superior technology. Such an approach would not likely have changed the outcome—the disparity between Coalition forces and those of the Iraqis was just too great—but it would have probably added considerably to the casualties the Iraqis could inflict on Coalition forces. However, Saddam and his advisors lived in a world determined by personal ideology and the narrow perspectives of people who grew up in small Iraqi villages. It is this insular mindset, and its subsequent manifestations, that this book describes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much.
Mr. Butler, you may proceed.

STATEMENT OF MR. DANIEL BUTLER, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE ASSISTANT DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR OPEN SOURCE, OPEN SOURCE CENTER, OFFICE OF DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Mr. BUTLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon.

I am Dan Butler, the Senior Advisor for Policy and Oversight in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI). I work for the Deputy DNI for collection and her assistant DNI for Open Source.

I appreciate the opportunity to join my colleagues from Joint Forces Command here today to assist the Committee's examination of this topic.

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I have come today prepared to discuss DNI policy and process with respect to how we review captured Iraqi documents for release to the public.

The intelligence community has released 95 Iraqi documents to the public that were used by the Joint Forces Command IPP (Iraqi Perspective Project) study authors. I would be happy to elaborate on our policy and process or any questions you have, Mr. Chairman, in that regard.

Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, thank you very much.

Mr. BUTLER. Yes, sir.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I have some questions about the information I have been able to glean so far. First and foremost, was Saddam Hussein a vicious dictator who oppressed his people and saw himself as the dictator in Iraq, or did he have a more grandiose vision of his power and perhaps an expansionary vision of his power? Do we know that from the documents? Can we tell anything about that?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, in the documents and both in the transcripts of the audio tapes, Saddam had a—it could best be said—clear view of his own vision for Iraq. That included a pan-Arabist vision along the Ba'athist philosophy for a pan-Arab state much wider than Iraq, inclusive of most of the Arab states that we know today.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Does that mean he saw himself as the man who would be the powerful figure in that region, in these other Arab states that you are talking about?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. In some ways, yes, sir. In other ways, he tended to talk more broad based about how the natural destiny of the Arab people is to be one state.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. And of course his vision of himself being at the center of Iraq, and the natural leader of that movement. I would assume he meant that he would be in charge of the wider state.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. He was born, I believe, in the same town that Saladin was born in, is that right?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. From my recollection of the history, yes, sir.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Was there an indication that he saw himself as this new Saladin that would lead the Arab peoples?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, he placed himself in his own historical narrative. He called it writing the pages of history, and his historical narrative included defending the Arab people, expanding the Arab people to their natural destiny, which would be a pan-Arab state, and which was inclusive of kicking out any outsiders, any non-Arab variously referred to as the zionists or the colonialists that were not part of that wider sphere, and he viewed himself as the natural leader for that.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So if he would have remained in power and remained with huge new oil revenues that were available to him as time went on, and actually if oil became more expensive, he became more powerful—he would have had been an incredibly powerful figure. Would you have expected him to be an aggressive force

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or an aggressor in order to achieve that vision that you are talking about?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, I am not sure I can recall right now the statements he would have made about specifically what he would have done. Again, he talked in broad historical terms, almost sweeping terms about what the future would look like. As far as specifically explaining an aggressive intent, I can't recall right now any——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me be a little more specific. On page 54 of your book, you make reference to Iraqi-trained terrorists who were non-Iraqi and non-Palestinian.

Can you provide us any detail on that?

General CUCOLO. I think absolutely, Mr. Chairman.

Saddam was a—I could best characterize—Saddam was a survivor, and he sought to not only survive at all costs, but to watch the "direction of the wind" and fund, finance, support in any way possible rolling constituencies that would support him in what he wanted to get done in Iraq and in the region.

As such, from the study of captured Iraqi documents and interviews, we found that Saddam could be considered a sponsor of transregional terror groups, and I would like Kevin to fill in the blanks on some of the specificity, some of the anecdotes, if you would.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, in addition—in the anecdote in the book as we focused on the Saddam regime, the anecdote in the book was the development of the Fedayeen Saddam in the mid-90s. After the Fedayeen Saddam stood up in 1994, the documents indicate that they started inviting in non-Iraqi Arab fighters, and variously described as either Arab fighters or members of this Arab liberation movement, the grander Arab liberation movement, which had been part of Ba'athist political philosophy going back to the beginnings of Saddam's regime, or the Ba'athist regime in Iraq.

So they were invited in to go to the training, and they went through the training. Apparently, according to the documents, throughout the late 1990s, and then to include all the way up through the summer of 2002, after training they were to leave Iraq, which is what we note in the book, and apparently many of them came back on the eve of war, back into Iraq. These would be non-Iraqi Arabs from other states surrounding Iraq.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So when you talk about the Arab liberation movement, would this be considered somewhat of a secular equivalent of the al-Qaeda or the Muslim Brotherhood and that type of thing?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. The Pan-Arab movement, sir, had long viewed the consolidation of the Arab states, so he viewed in some ways, after 1991, when he didn't get a lot of support out of Arab states, he went directly to the people in a way, and so there was a—his idea was to have members of surrounding states supporting the pan-Arab view.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So when you talk about the sponsor of transregional terrorism, are we talking about 10–20 people? Are we talking about hundreds of people who were involved and being trained or sponsored by Saddam, or are we talking about thousands of people?

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Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, it is very difficult to have a direct answer to the numbers. I know that some of the documents indicate the numbers coming back into Iraq were in the hundreds right on the eve of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The numbers going to Fedayeen training camps—in one annual report the number was 7,400, but that would include Iraqis. It is not clear what the breakdown is, but that was the scale of the training camps in the mid-90s for Fedayeen Saddam, and then we had some indication of numbers coming back in, but no way right not to have an account.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So if we had 7,500 terrorists being trained that we believe would be a number up until that time, and if Saddam Hussein would have remained in power, we wouldn't expect that he would have reversed course. In other words, as the time went on and we decided to put our foot down, and put an end to this regime, he wasn't on his way—he wasn't himself getting out of that business of supporting terrorism. In fact, it was the other direction, wasn't it?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, as I answer within the context of the document reviewed, which, you know, may not be all of the documents available, may not be the entire context, but from the context of the documents, the activity was increasing from 1995. The training activity of the groups was increasing both internally and apparently externally. It was increasing over time, but I don't have an actual number.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So we have from the documents proof that Saddam Hussein was a sponsor with the resources that he had and the power that he had of what you call transregional terrorism, and that he actually was involved in the training, if not the supporting, equipping, and financing of thousands of terrorists in the region, and that we would have expected as the trend line was, that it was actually getting worse rather than getting better, and that had the United States not acted, it may well—we may well have seen Iraq turn into somewhat of what Afghanistan turned into, a major center for terrorism not only in his country, but the region and the world?

General CUCOLO. Sir, our study is what it is, and we can call it up to April 2003, and it was clear that up to April 2003, besides attempting to survive at all costs, groups like Hamas, as we mention here, Palestinian Islam Jihad, he was a supporter of groups like that.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. And they served as a base for training and operations and equipping, et cetera. This is a safe haven for the——

General CUCOLO. We confirmed training.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Did Saddam Hussein have a safe haven for terrorists?

General CUCOLO. Sir, from our study we can confirm training, and that is about it.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Well, safe haven I think includes training. You need to have a safe haven in order to find a place to train.

I am going to let Mr. Delahunt have his go at this, and then we might have a second round.

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Mr. DELAHUNT. Well, I appreciate that opportunity, Mr. Chairman.

My memory of Saladin is that he was a Kurd. Am I accurate? Right, I doubt that he would have emulated Saladin.

And the Ba'athists, gentlemen, I mean they are secularists, aren't they? I mean, they were not fundamentalist Islamists in the nature of Osama bin Laden. Is that a fair and accurate statement? When we talk about pan-Arabism, wasn't that Gamal Masser's vision too for the region?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir, you are correct. The Ba'athist political philosophy is a secular philosophy, but it did change after 1991 inside of Iraq.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay. And the Fedayeen, they were created because he was concerned about staying in power. You know, I mean, let us talk about Saddam Hussein in real life terms. He was paranoid. I mean, he was—you know, as I am reading your report, someone with severe psychological, emotional issues. I mean, he had dreams, and then the next day he figured out how to conduct a war. Is that an accurate statement?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, as related by his personal secretary, that is accurate, yes, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Right. I mean, I don't know whether I believe it or not, but it was clear that he didn't listen to his generals. He didn't trust anybody. I mean, that is what I get from your—you know, other than these two incompetent sons who were also wackos, vicious, and incompetent by the way. Does anyone disagree with that?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. No, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Was he concerned about Iran, by the way?

General CUCOLO. Absolutely, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. He was a lot more concerned about Iran than he was the United States.

General CUCOLO. I think from our study his top three concerns in order——

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay.

General CUCOLO [continuing]. Were internal security, survival of the regime.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Right.

General CUCOLO. Second would be an attack from Iran, and third would be a western coalition.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Right. Did you find any plans to invade the United States or to launch any kind of a dirty bomb or a missile here?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. No, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay. One thing, did you have a chance, any of you, to read "Cobra II"?

General CUCOLO. No, sir, I have not read it.

Mr. DELAHUNT. You haven't read it, General?

General CUCOLO. No.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Lieutenant?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. I have not read it, sir.

Mr. DELAHUNT. No? Mr. Butler. Are you familiar with General Trainor?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir, we are.

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Mr. DELAHUNT. I presume—well, let me ask you. Do you respect his opinion?

General CUCOLO. Sir, General Trainor was a fine Marine.

Mr. DELAHUNT. That is right. I thought that was the answer that I—and Major General Paul Eaton?

General CUCOLO. Sir, I have served with General Eaton. He is a fine soldier.

Mr. DELAHUNT. He is a fine soldier. Did you read his op-ed piece recently?

General CUCOLO. Sir, I did.

Mr. DELAHUNT. What was your opinion of that, General?

General CUCOLO. Sir, I thought——

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am not going to ask you that question. You are not retired yet.

General CUCOLO. Well, sir, that is not it. General Eaton is a great soldier, and I admire his candor.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I do too, and you know what, it is good to get somebody that tells it like it is, and tells it straight because you know something, the same lessons that I think we can glean from the history of Saddam and his relationships with his military, we ought to be learning here in the United States. Listen to the generals. Listen to the professionals.

I would like to just read some excerpts from General Eaton, and by the way, for the record, General Eaton was a general who was tasked with the responsibility of training the Iraqis in terms of their security forces, a no-nonsense, well decorated, American hero, a military man.

He was given five men, five military personnel to accomplish that particular mission. It was a disgrace, in my judgment, that that was the resources that he was handed to do a job that clearly entailed more. But if you would bear with me for a moment, he is speaking of the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Rumsfeld.

This is not me, Mr. Chairman, this is Major General Paul Eaton who served in Iraq and served this country well. "He," meaning the Secretary of Defense, "alienated his allies and our own military, ignoring the advice of seasoned officers and denying subordinates any chance for input. He has shown himself incompetent strategically, operationally and tactically, and is far more than anyone else responsible for what has happened to our important mission in Iraq. In the 5 years Mr. Rumsfeld has presided over the Pentagon, I have seen a climate of group-think become dominant. Mr. Rumsfeld has put the Pentagon at the mercy of his ego, his Cold War's view of the world, and his unrealistic confidence in technology to replace manpower. He ignored competent advisors like General Anthony Zini and others who predicted that the Iraqi army and security forces might melt away after state apparatus self-destructed, leading to chaos."

Well, thank God for General Eaton telling it like it is.

With that, I yield back.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Schiff.

Mr. SCHIFF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wanted to follow up on some of the comments I made earlier about the documents that were revealed concerning Russian poten-

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tial complicity in relaying information about our military plans to the Iraqis.

The Chairman, I think, suggested that some of you on the panel could shed light on the veracity of those documents on what the Russians may have provided in terms of intelligence information to the Iraqis.

What can any of you shed light on in that issue?

General CUCOLO. well, sir, I will lead off if that is all right. And I would like to start by saying, and I am new to this document world, after working with Kevin for the last 18 months, a document is a dangerous thing. It can be very deceiving if it is taken alone.

In this particular study, we used three documents in particular to cite Iraqis noting passing Russian information, I am sorry, Iraqis logging that they have information from a Russian source and passing it on. That is what we have. One of them is handwritten.

For us the interest was that—not so much what the Russians said, but what the Iraqis were—how the Iraqis might use that information, the fact that they were getting information from the Russians and how they might use it. And the significant part of the study where that comes into play is at a critical point in the middle of the fight, the fight in March, actually the first week in April. Saddam gets a brief back, if you will, from the battlefield from one of his most reliable CORPS commanders. He is also presented with alleged Russian intelligence, and he waves both off and is convinced that the main attack is coming from the west out of Jordan and not from the south out of Kuwait.

So that was—it adds a piece to the puzzle of the nature of the regime and the effect the nature of the regime had on the military decisionmaking process, and that is where we went with it.

Mr. SCHIFF. You know, I understand, I guess, the scope of your analysis. What I am primarily interested in is, did the Russians provide intelligence, and what was the intelligence the Russian provided?

Now, I think I hear you saying we can't answer that question. All we can tell you is that there were documents suggesting that the Iraqis told Saddam they had information from the Russians. Of course, the Iraqis told Saddam they had WMD (weapons of mass destruction), evidently that they didn't have.

There was, I think, in your analysis abundant evidence that a lot of these documents were fabrications, and this one might have been a fabrication as well. So it does shed some light in terms of the Saddam's military response or lack of military response, but is there any information you can provide to us that goes to the very basic question, did the Russians provide intelligence to Saddam's regime in the early days of the war?

General CUCOLO. Sir, you describe the scope of our knowledge about the documents very well. Captured documents are triaged, translated, and logged. We didn't go looking for Russian intelligence. We went looking for how Saddam made his decisions, and we found this in the Iraqi battle logs specifically, and that is it. So I can't shed any more light on the veracity of that.

Mr. SCHIFF. Can you tell us on a different topic then about the decisionmaking to post these documents wholesale, what the thinking was in terms of doing that? Some of them have not been trans-

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lated evidently, haven't been interpreted. Their veracity hasn't been ascertained. They can therefore be used, I guess, for a variety of purposes, some political, some otherwise.

What was the thinking behind this mass disclosure without analysis?

General CUCOLO. I would like to pass that to my DNI wingman. We are users of the Harmony database, not the policymakers for its use.

Mr. BUTLER. Sir, the thinking behind that was that, as with this large cache of documents that were captured during Operation Iraqi Freedom, it was desirable to exploit this cache as quickly as possible and as extensively as possible, and to understand the process, it is helpful to understand that these documents are exploited in phases. In essence, they are exploited very quickly at the tactical level in the field as they are captured to determine whether or not there is perishable information in the documents that can be immediately utilized by our forces operating forward.

As documents are gathered and accumulated, they are then sent to the rear; in this case to a facility in Qatar, a facility we call the combined media processing center in Qatar.

There those documents receive a more detailed triage for information that might be relevant.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Butler, if I could just interrupt for a second. From what I gather, a lot of these documents haven't been translated. Are some of the documents being posted being made available without our military knowing what their contents is?

I think the Secretary of Defense when he was originally asked about the Russian report said, "Do you know how many reports we issue? What makes you think we can actually go through all of those?" That was sort of the gist of what he had to say.

How do we prevent disclosing what might be valuable intelligence to others, but not helpful to us, if it is already disclosed? Have we prevented that from happening?

Mr. BUTLER. Well, we have tried to be very prudent in terms of this process, Congressman. First of all, all the documents have been looked at. They do receive a very quick triage, and as I was starting to describe, at a very tactical level they are looked at quickly. Then they receive a much more in-depth evaluation further to the rear in the AOR (area of responsibility). And then they go back. They are eventually entered into this database that Colonel Woods has made reference to, the Harmony database, which makes all of those documents then available to the entire intelligence community to exploit.

The database is designed in such a way that an analyst can get a very quick sense of what is in the document from a thing we refer to as "the gist," basically a linguist's summary of what is in the document.

Mr. SCHIFF. If I could just interrupt again because I only have 5 minutes. At what level would the decision have been made that this document on the Russian potential intelligence cooperation could be disclosed unreviewed, unscrutinized and unverified, without injuring our relationships with Russia, or creating a whole host of other issues?

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Mr. BUTLER. Well, the documents are scrutinized. They are scrutinized in a variety of ways. Again, during the triage process from the tactical level to the operational level and then at the strategic level back here in the U.S. The documents receive quite a bit of scrutiny.

Mr. SCHIFF. So someone at the Pentagon then would have made the decision that it was okay to release this report without verifying the contents?

Mr. BUTLER. No. What would occur in this specific case, for example, the Russian documents in question, we looked at the report that Joint Forces Command had prepared, anticipated that they would be issuing a nonclassified version of the report for the reasons that the General has described, which is to encourage peer review and good dialogue among the experts regarding what these documents actually tell us.

During the course of that process, we could appreciate that there would be a lot of interest in the underlying documents that were foundational to the study. For that reason we put those documents in a queue to be very quickly reviewed and released, if possible.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Butler, in my remaining seconds, because I have a very specific question—what was the highest level of approval that was applied here to release these Russian documents to the public without verifying their authenticity first? What is the highest level at the Pentagon or elsewhere that made that approval?

Mr. BUTLER. That is difficult to say, sir, with regard to those specific documents. The documents were reviewed by cleared linguists here in the United States. Those linguists——

Mr. SCHIFF. I am sure it wasn't the linguists that made that determination. If it was, there is something really wrong.

Mr. BUTLER. No, sir. No, they make recommendations to a government official.

Mr. SCHIFF. Who is the government official? Who signed off on this?

Mr. BUTLER. I don't know the name of the government official, but——

Mr. SCHIFF. Do we have a title?

Mr. BUTLER. It is generally a U.S. Government analyst with some expertise in the intelligence community that can assess whether or not the document meets certain criteria.

Mr. SCHIFF. So some government analyst approved the disclosure of this document, that that is——

Mr. BUTLER. Yes, sir.

Mr. SCHIFF [continuing]. The only approval that was necessary?

Mr. BUTLER. Yes, sir. Under the current process that we have in place, that is true. Our policy is to try and release as many documents as possible, and to lean forward in that regard and be biased toward release, if at all possible, recognizing that there are some—there is information in many of these documents that would be inconvenient for some constituencies; in this case perhaps the Russians, or for individuals that might be identified in documents.

But our release criteria specifically protect United States persons or United States citizens in that regard. But we do not endeavor to protect the citizens of other governments, or in this case the Russian Government.

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Mr. SCHIFF. Thank you.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Yes, thank you very much, and I would note that I think it is a great idea for us to disclose all that information about Russians' involvement with Saddam Hussein. In fact, we should disclose all these documents that will indicate that the—when the United States Government had different relations with Saddam Hussein—certainly we shouldn't be trying to protect the Russian intelligence from some sort of embarrassment whatsoever.

In fact, we should expect the Russian Government to be doing what they think is in the interest of the Russian Government and the Russian people. So it is——

Mr. SCHIFF. If the Chairman would yield. I would wager doughnuts though that it was no analyst who would make the decision about releasing documents that were critical of our strategy in the war effort.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, I am very happy to hear that there are some people who were involved with releasing information that are patriotic people who want to make sure that they are watching out for the interests of the United States. They should not be watching out for the interest of Russia at the same level that they watch out for the interest of the United States of America.

There are times—look, there is no doubt in my mind that at times the United States of America falls short of what we should be. There is no doubt about that. And there is no reason for anybody to think their country is perfect. There is especially no reason to expect a high level of efficiency and perhaps even integrity at a time when the gun smoke is in the air and the blood is on the ground and peoples' friends have just lost their lives in a gory and horrible way.

I don't know if you ever read the book, *Catch-22*. Have you read that book? I mean, who knows about what went on in World War II, the type of craziness and corruption that was going on, the stealing of supplies, the Sergeant Bilko-type people who were there. Does that in any way mean that our crusade to end the world of Japanese militarism and Adolph Hitler was in some way tainted because—well, free people will be free people, and they will do things that are different than people that have been hemmed in their entire life and controlled by dictators?

Yes, Americans go and they steal, like in *Catch-22*, the heroine out of the airplane. Does that besmirch in any way the integrity of the mission of those airplanes to bomb the access? No way.

I came back from Vietnam in 1967, and I wasn't in the military, but I had been doing some political work in Vietnam, and I was very discouraged about some of the things that sound exactly like what is being suggested here in terms of corruption and things that were going on. We didn't win there either, and that probably has something to do with it. But I was discouraged about that fact, that here is a young man who saw blood and gore for the first time in his life, and also noted the horrendous profiteering that was going on in Vietnam.

And General, I don't know if you were there or not, but it was an incredible thing for me at that age, and I went home to see my father, who was a Marine and flew one of the first missions into the Puson perimeter into Korea when we were backed up there.

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And I told him about the chaos and total anarchy of decision-making and morality, and the corruption level that I saw.

And he said, "Well, do you think it was any different in Korea?" Well, it wasn't any different in World War II, and it wasn't any different in Korea, and it is not any different now. During these types of conflicts, we will try to put the perimeters around it, try to get the word out, and try to keep control of the situation, but what is most important is to obtain that objective against an evil force with which you are in brutal and deadly combat.

Yes, and there will be a lot of questions about what goes on underneath that umbrella.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. But wait 1 minute. But we need to make sure that we understand that either the cause is just or it is not, and we can disclose all of the warts and we can disclose all of the imperfections of a society, and every society has them, especially America, but that does not mean the goals that are set out, and that the decision to go for those goals are in any way tainted, or that there should have been another decision because this goes with every war we have been in.

You look back, and Washington's troops at Valley Forge did not get the supplies they were supposed to get because of corruption and because of the incredible bickering at the Continental Congress. So it has happened in every war.

In the Spanish-American War, more of our troops died because of the corruption of the procurement process, which gave them bad meat. Does that mean the Spanish-American War was good or bad? No.

What was the goal? And what is our goal? And yes, we should try to make sure our country obtains its objectives as efficiently and as honestly as possible—and this is why some of us are a little bit concerned about letting all the information Mr. Delahunt is asking for—and just say you damage people with this, and even if it does undermine the total effort, which may be the purpose of some of this, to obtain the objectives of the war.

Mr. Delahunt, I am going to give you plenty of time.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, can I——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me give Mr. Delahunt a chance, but——

Mr. SCHIFF. Well, Mr. Chairman, your comments are directed to me——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I do have the time, and let me just again note that our witnesses are talking about a disclosure of information to the American people at a magnitude and a level that is unprecedented, and there may be some situations where the Russians are embarrassed or even we would be embarrassed.

But as far as I am concerned, right now the information that they are going to provide us is going to give us a better understanding of the context of why the decision was made for us to get involved in this region in the first place.

We have already heard from a man who gave us his personal family's tragedy, and we know about the tragedy of what is the equivalent of hundreds of thousands of Americans in the Kuwaiti families that suffered. We heard that as a personal issue here.

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So, I would commend our Administration for their effort to get these documents out, and to get them out as soon as possible—and I don't know, I am not sure I disagree with Mr. Delahunt on this. I probably don't. I would like to see more information get out in terms of other issues.

But in terms of why we got in and the nature of Saddam Hussein's regime, the more information we get out about that the better, and I commend our witnesses for that.

Certainly, Mr. Schiff, because you are anxious to get a point in, I will be happy to yield to you.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, I think it only fair if you make a 10-minute rebuttal to some questions I ask of the witnesses, I should be——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Go ahead. No, no, go right ahead. I am going to yield.

Mr. SCHIFF. I think I heard you say that in the fog of war when the bullets are flying we shouldn't expect efficiency, competence or integrity. Well, what I am talking about is——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, complete.

Mr. SCHIFF. I think, I think that before we send people into war we have every right to demand efficiency, competence and integrity——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Correct.

Mr. SCHIFF [continuing]. Among the war planners. I think while our young men and women are facing bullets flying in the air, we have every right to demand of our Pentagon and our war planners and prosecutors efficiency, competence, and integrity, and that is the point I am making.

In terms of disclosure of documents, that is wonderful, but it is not to protect the Russians that I am having a concern about this. If this information turns out to be patently false, then we have needlessly damaged our relations with Russia. That hurts us. That doesn't just hurt the Russians. We want Putin's help right now on nonproliferation with Iran. This doesn't help the cause if it turns out to be false. That is my point.

It is not worry about Russian sensitivity. It is worry about our own national security interest. So I want to know what the people who are running this program are thinking about these issues at a high level and not the level of some analyst.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Might you yield for a question or a discussion on this?

Let me just note that at the very least it will start a discussion about where the Russians are at right now, and perhaps that discussion is in and of itself a valuable commodity just like the documents that we heard about the Kuwaiti prisoners were not totally authenticated. We know now we have to look at them with caution, but it started a discussion that has been tremendously valuable to us as to how to approach these documents in terms of opening up areas that would never be discussed except for the disclosure of the documents.

Mr. SCHIFF. If it is valuable, Mr. Chairman, it is only valuable because we stumbled into it, and that is my point—because the decision of a low-level analyst we have stumbled into this, and it may turn out to be valuable, or it may turn out to be very detrimental.

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My point is I would like someone making this decision on a rational basis and not as a matter of accident.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, again, I think it is a good thing that there has been a big fight on the release of these documents. There has been an enormous struggle as Mr. Butler sort of indicated, and Mr. Butler may have been part of that back and forth as to how much information should be released.

I am thinking that the amount of harm that could possibly be done is far outweighed by the good of having the American people and the people of the world being able to get these insights into Saddam Hussein. And as Mr. Delahunt expressed earlier that, well, maybe we had a relationship with Saddam Hussein at some point. Well, I would hope these documents would—I hope we are not censoring the documents to that degree either.

Mr. Berman, you have the floor.

Mr. BERMAN. Well, there are some things we don't need the documents to know, and that is, we had a relationship with Saddam Hussein at some time before. The new Iraqi Saladin seeking to become a training camp, and in your terms a sanctuary for terrorists, was because of that relationship taken off the list of countries supporting terrorism in 1982, when you were at the White House, but I don't blame you for that decision.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Did I write that Presidential directive?

Mr. BERMAN. You might have written it, but it was because you were told to.

But this is a fascinating—it sort of leads into the question I had. Just as it is easy and somewhat unfair to be a total Monday morning quarterback after the fact, to say, "I could have done it better, or I know what we could have done that was done wrong after it is all over," it is also strange, and I thought I heard the Chairman suggesting this, that information we had no knowledge of before the war took place becomes an after-the-fact justification for a war taken for other reasons.

For history's purposes, it is interesting. I don't think it is an answer that says, well, your decision, you made the right decision when you had no knowledge of that information. But that is the question I had, or two questions.

One, on this issue, you look at documents and you do interviews, and you come to certain conclusions. In the course of doing this, and in your report I gather you have indicated that some of the documents are very likely forgeries.

You then put out for public view a number of documents, some of which may be authentic and some may have been forged. So one question I have is, might it not have been sensible to give at least your opinions about those documents as you published those documents? Because I do think it was probably the right call to publish the documents. So that is one question.

The second question I am interested in is to what extent—I mean, you are able to have access in Iraq to both files and people that you didn't have access to before. To what extent did our intelligence agencies, not our policymakers who made decisions, but our intelligence agencies who were providing the information on which our policymakers made decisions know some of the things that you have found out? Can you give any sense of the breadth of intel-

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ligence information we had beforehand that was confirmed by these documents?

The third one is purely a curious note. I assume Tariq Aziz was one of the people—I believe he was one of the people you spoke with. I am curious about—more from an historical point of view just because he was so active even in the United States during that time when we had that relationship with Saddam Hussein. I am curious how he saw his relationship with Saddam because he did survive through a lot of different periods of time during those last 25 years, and I am wondering what insights he had.

Thank you.

Mr. BUTLER. Congressman, if I would, I will take your first question, and actually I would like to elaborate a little bit on my earlier answer. I think I owe Congressman Schiff a better answer with respect to the policy and the process by which we do release documents and how those decisions are made.

With respect to the two Russian documents that were cited in the Joint Forces Command report, that report was written by academics, academics like Colonel Woods who also have extensive military backgrounds. We had a lot of confidence in their expertise as analysts and as professionals with firsthand knowledge of what to look for in order to validate the sources that we are using.

We were confident, too, that they would not make reference to what they suspected to be unreliable documentation or forgeries in their report, and had no reason to suspect that those particular documents that you have cited were in fact forgeries.

We do have instances where documents that were contemplated for release were withheld. I personally was involved in the process where five such documents were evaluated. One was determined to be genuine, and was approved for release. Four were determined to be probable forgeries, and we, per our policy, decided they should not be released for obvious reasons.

So I would like to elaborate in that regard. Releasing forgeries to the public obviously would be inappropriate. It would not serve any good interest.

Mr. BERMAN. So then, if I may put it in my own words, the documents you made public did not include any documents that you felt the weight of evidence showed they were forged documents or not authentic documents. Is that a fair conclusion?

Mr. BUTLER. That is fair to say with respect to the documents that were referenced earlier.

Mr. BERMAN. You either had authenticated them or had no reason to believe they weren't authentic?

Mr. BUTLER. That is correct with respect to these documents. Yes, sir.

Mr. BERMAN. Okay.

Congressman Schiff hands me a note here that says the Web site cautioned that the U.S. Government has made no determination regarding the authenticity of the documents' validity or factual accuracy of the information contained therein.

Well, I mean, that is true. When you release a document you are not authenticating that the truth of what is in that document. This is the document. This is the battle log. You can't get into the head

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of the person who made that notation or know what information he had, so I think that is understood.

But on the authenticity of the document notwithstanding your warning you were not putting up documents that you thought were probably forgeries?

Mr. BUTLER. Yes, sir, that is correct.

Mr. BERMAN. Okay.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Woods, did you have something to say on that?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir. We actually know a lot about these documents. These aren't dusty boxes in a warehouse as such. There is what we call metadata, so actually in most cases you know when and where it was obtained, under what circumstances. So the ones that captured in the heat of battle as you are overrunning camps and posts and buildings and those kind of things, it is actually data tagged so you know when and where it came from, which also helps preclude forgeries because it is very difficult to slip it in in front of an advancing military force.

Then there is also the quality of the documents. We have learned over time, we have been studying these documents now for 2 years. The Iraqis had a certain bureaucratic style, and some documents just stand out as not of that style, and it was a very bureaucratic government. They documented things in a very deliberate way. And so you start to learn the style of the bureaucracy if you will, especially within some of the ministries that we really focused on, the military and the intelligence services.

Finally, what we——

Mr. BERMAN. But that again goes to the authenticity of the document.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Right, not the information.

Mr. BERMAN. Not to the accuracy of the information in the document.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir. But as an historian that was part of the story we were trying to understand.

Mr. BERMAN. Sure.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. How did that all come together in the decisionmaking, the choices, the range of options perceived by this regime? How did that play even with the interaction with the outside world?

So our concern was to make sure that it really was an Iraqi document in the Iraqi bureaucracy and that is the standard of evidence. Whether or not the words that the Iraqis were telling each other were facts is beyond the ability of anybody looking at a document to get the ground truth of.

Mr. BERMAN. All right. The second question was, did you make any judgment of the extent to which the intelligence agencies had information which would have allowed them to reach some of the conclusions you have reached after the fact about what was in the mind of Saddam Hussein and his leadership?

General CUCOLO. Sir, no one is harder on themselves than the United States Armed Forces. This document came out of as a result of us looking hard at lessons from the initial combat operations phase in Iraq. The idea was, "Would what we think we learned be

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any different if we knew what the Iraqis were thinking and what decisions they were making?"

So we came up with this body of work. Again, it came out first in a classified version in another forum in early 2004, and immediately began circulation among members of the intelligence community. It became a part of the Joint Professional Military Education.

But what I would like to say is this effort caused the intelligence community to pick up on the type of analysis that might get to the answer of the question that you asked. The breadth of information, I cannot answer that, but I can confirm that the effort to better understand what we did not know prior to the war is ongoing.

Mr. BERMAN. And is there a way in which one of us could find out what their conclusion was about that?

General CUCOLO. Sir, I can't answer that, but I would be happy to come back and brief the classified portion of this study at anytime to this Committee.

Mr. BERMAN. Well, I am mostly thinking about what the intelligence agencies have done having looked at your study, what they have concluded about what they know versus what was true.

General CUCOLO. Sir, I know their work continues, and I would have to defer to DNI.

Mr. BERMAN. Okay. Anybody have any insight on the Tariq Aziz?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir. He is one of the most interesting characters of all the people we dealt with in the study only because he is a Christian, and he had a very close relationship with Saddam Hussein through all the different manifestations of Saddam's reign going back to his time as Vice President, and he was Saddam's trusted——

Mr. BERMAN. He was Foreign Minister before he was Vice President.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir.

Mr. BERMAN. Yes.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. But Tariq was Saddam's window to the outside world, a very trusted advisor on the nuances of what is the world thinking. A lot of the taped material, a lot of the discussions that we have on audio tape is Tariq Aziz coming back from world trips to either the U.N. (United Nations) or to other capitals, and relating back to Saddam an outsider's view, and Saddam Hussein is trying to put it into his world view within the context of——

Mr. BERMAN. This is not just interviews with Tariq Aziz after the fact. This is either—I mean, Saddam Hussein or Tariq Aziz was taping the conversations they were having.

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Absolutely, sir.

Mr. BERMAN. Wow.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. That is why it is important, I would imagine, that we get all of these documents out and not have the extensive analysis of everyone of these document because, first of all, let us get back to the statistics, there were 48,000 boxes of documents which include over 585,000 files, and if we go about trying to authenticate everything rather than let the public decide for themselves what they are going to put their trust in and weight on, those documents will not be released, and a lot of information that

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should get out to the public will just be left in secret and unobserved for many, many years.

So I applaud this effort to get these documents on the internet, and out, and translated by private citizens, and they can draw our attention to the things they think are important.

Mr. Butler, there is a four-part triage that these documents have to go through before they are released. You might mention that, just give us a little bit better understanding that this isn't as chaotic disclosure as perhaps I just suggested.

Mr. BUTLER. Certainly, Mr. Chairman, I can elaborate on that. Again, at the point of capture documents are immediately triaged for any tactical value. Any actionable intelligence that can be used right then and there is hopefully detected and utilized effectively.

As documents are compiled, and as you mentioned, there are 48,000 boxes of documents right now in our possession in a warehouse in Doha. Those documents eventually are sent back to the rear to Doha to be catalogued, indexed, scanned, and triaged by a team of linguists who are cleared—U.S. citizens cleared to the secret level. They have supervisors who have higher clearances who can evaluate the documents further if there is valuable information that requires their insights and their determination as to what should happen to the documents in order to effectively exploit them.

Then the documents are entered into this database I mentioned earlier, the Harmony database, which makes the documents available to the entire intelligence community to query against.

So the documents receive quite a bit of scrutiny, direct scrutiny and the opportunity to scrutinize the documents is available throughout the intelligence community.

The review process that then takes place in terms of what might be released is, of course, resource-constrained. We have only so many Arabic linguists that we can put to that process without removing them potentially from the fight, so to speak, and so those linguists, again cleared linguists, evaluate the documents according to specific criteria that we have identified to ensure that documents that would perhaps harm United States interests are not released inadvertently to the public or documents that might hurt an innocent Iraqi who could be the victim of retribution, for example, are not inadvertently released to the public.

After those documents have been triaged, exploited, and then reviewed, in this case for potential release, a government supervisor evaluates the documents, an intelligence officer, a United States intelligence officer who then takes that recommendation under advisement received from the Iraqi linguist, may engage in a dialogue with that Iraqi linguist.

I have been involved myself in some of those dialogues and I highlight that because this is a new process. We only began this on 14 March, and we are still in the process, and so people at my level and actually also my boss have been involved in attempting to calibrate these document release determinations to ensure that we do not willy-nilly release documents onto the internet.

Now, we have released quite a few. More than 70 percent of the documents that have been reviewed so far just since 14 March have

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been released to the public, over 1,300 files, audio files, and document files.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, thank you very much, and again, I am coming down on the side of those who would say, "Speed up the process, don't worry about some of the documents not being totally authentic." Let the public make their determination as to what they believe rather than keeping from the public information that may be very accurate in the name of not letting them get to see some things that are inaccurate.

One of the first bits of activity I had as a Member of Congress, and I want Howard to especially hear this before he leaves—Howard, one of the first things I did in Congress—I remember Chris Cox and I were elected the same year—was to participate on the Floor, and you may have been involved in this, in passing out leaflets asking our fellow members to vote against the agricultural credits that we were providing Iraq at that time. It was a billion dollars.

Mr. BERMAN. No, I was very involved in that issue. That was when President George Herbert Walker Bush——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. BERMAN [continuing]. And his Administration.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Correct.

Mr. BERMAN. And a number of Members of Congress, some Democrat, mostly Republican, were fighting against that effort because wheat sales are wheat sales.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Well, it was also the facts providing a billion dollars or several billion dollars worth of credit. Let him feed his people while spending his own money on arming his military.

Mr. BERMAN. No, no. At that particular time he—well, that is right. That was after the world knew that he had used nerve gas against the Kurds; that he had sponsored state-supported terrorism; that he—the 8-year effort in Iran.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Right.

Mr. BERMAN. I remember that fight very well.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Now, just to put all this in perspective, and that is this ongoing situation with Iraq, during the Second World War the United States allied with someone who was very similar to Saddam Hussein. His name was Joseph Stalin, who probably was responsible for more deaths than Adolph Hitler, and the fact is that Nazism at that time was seen, justifiably so, as the evil power that had the greatest chance of expanding aggressively and threatening Western democracy.

So we allied ourselves with a vicious dictator in order to fight Adolph Hilter.

Mr. BERMAN. So why did you oppose giving them agricultural credits?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let me put it this way. I think that those people who are worried that the United States, especially during the Reagan years, had any relationship with Saddam Hussein also have to understand that at that time it was in the middle of the battle with Iran, and the people there, and I think justifiably so, saw the Mula regime in Iran as the greater threat to the world than Saddam Hussein was at that time.

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Now, we ended up in the Cold War with the Communists. So does that mean we should never have allied ourselves with Joseph Stalin in order to defeat Adolph Hilter? No, it doesn't mean that at all.

And while I believe that much of the criticism of what we have been doing in Iraq and what has been going on in the last few years may be based on information that is accurate, and maybe very based on well-meaning idealism, I would suggest that at times like this we do need to make sure that we are accomplishing what is, I believe, a noble, noble goal, which is eliminating dictatorship and radical Islam, and the rest of the threats to Iraq, so that the people there of Iraq can serve as a stable force in the region, not threatening their neighbors in Kuwait, not threatening the region. Not, as we have heard today from these documents, that Saddam Hussein was training thousands of terrorists, a commitment that he had made that was expanding during the latter part of his regime, and thus we would have expected perhaps as more petro power came into his hands, that this evil that he was exerting on the region would have expanded.

By the way, just on the record, yes, Ba'athism is not radical Islam, and Communism was not Nazism, but Ba'athism is Fascism and is a vicious anti-freedom force in that part of the world, just like Communism and Nazism are different but they are both bad and evil forces.

Mr. BERMAN. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I certainly will.

Mr. BERMAN. If I were, and my guess is he will do it, but if I were Mr. Delahunt who voted against the war and at the time was one of a group of people, I on the other hand voted for it because I knew he had weapons of mass destruction, but——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. We didn't ask them about that yet, Howard.

Mr. BERMAN. But if I were one of the people who opposed it, I would say, let us go back to that decision in the early 1980s. Iraq was bad but Iran was worse, and translate it now, and say, to what extent have we constrained our ability to deal with Iran and effectively deter their efforts to pursue a nuclear program because we are so enmeshed in Iraq now.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Berman, if you were Mr. Delahunt, that is exactly the question that you would ask.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I am going to just add one thing and then let Mr. Delahunt speak for himself on that. I believe that standing up to Saddam Hussein when it is all over, just as in the end of World War II, just as in Korea when that struggle was all over, all of the murky things that went on that weren't seen but happened during war will be forgotten and we will remember the——

Mr. BERMAN. I hope you are right.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. We would be proud of what we have given the world, a more peaceful world.

Mr. BERMAN. I truly hope you are right.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. As was true in the Civil War and every other war.

Mr. BERMAN. Well, I am not sure we are standing up to Hochimin worked out that well.

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Mr. ROHRABACHER. Okay. Mr. Delahunt, I will be happy to grant you a couple of minutes, and then we are going to call an end to the hearing.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Thank you again.

Some would suggest or opine, Mr. Chairman, that what we have accomplished in Iraq is to conclude the 1980s Iran/Iraq War in favor of Iran. I would remind you, Mr. Chairman, that the current prime minister, and it would appear that he will be moving on, actually secured that position because of the votes of Moqtada al-Sadr, and Abdul Aziz al-Hakim, who I guess, although they now have their disagreements, are closely aligned with the Iranian regime.

We have done a lot of good work for Iran in the course of the past 3 years. We rid them of the Taliban and we rid them of Saddam Hussein. But I don't want to go on. I think my feelings are pretty well known.

But talking about the relationship between the United States and Saddam Hussein in the 1980s, Mr. Butler, has any of your research discovered documents relative to our relationship and interaction with the Saddam Hussein regime, from say 1982 to the Gulf War of 1990?

Mr. BUTLER. Congressman, I have only been involved with the policymaking with respect to document release.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Colonel Woods?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Yes, sir, there are going back into the eighties. Most of it is on economic issues, attempting to find ways to get more material support or political support or economic support during the war with Iran.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Is it fair to characterize those documents as reflecting an American policy of support for Saddam Hussein?

Lt. Colonel WOODS. Sir, it only reflects the Iraqi opinion of—it is transitory conversations during a whole series of things, so it reflects their opinion of trying to get more. It doesn't reflect anything about the American position.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Okay. You know, the Chairman talks about terrorists, and the training of terrorists in Iraq. I would suggest that, you know, since our invasion, there have been more terrorists trained in Iraq than there were pre our invasion. I think that is tragic, but I think that is the truth. And I know that there are terrorists and there are terrorists. There are the terrorists that pose a threat to the United States and there are terrorists who are malevolent and have ill will, but not necessarily focused on the United States. I know we don't talk to terrorists, but I read reports that our military does talk to insurgents, as opposed to terrorists, and I really have difficulty making the distinction between insurgents and terrorists.

By the way, let me be very clear, I am glad our military has taken the initiative because I think it is very practical and pragmatic, and something that we have to do to achieve stability in Iraq. But I mean, we toss terms around like, you know, terrorism and democracy. All of these issues are just simply so complex and so nuanced that they are not susceptible, I would suggest, to easy answers.

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But again, let me go back to the earlier observations that I made, and I am not going to ask you, General, I am not going to ask any of you, but what I found particularly fascinating was this—it would be difficult to give any credibility to the substance of the reports coming from the Iraqi military up the chain because everybody wanted to cover themselves for fear of being executed, or being removed, or being incarcerated.

I read something just recently where—I think it was April 6, where the ministry of defense put out—in Iraq the ministry of defense put out some statement that "things are going well." You know, clearly we were going to win that war. We have a professional Army, a professional Marine Corps, a professional military, and that there was no doubt that it was going to happen.

What I find profoundly disturbing is that there is almost a reverse when I hear opinions—I quoted earlier Major General Eaton. I am going to read into the record some other quotes of other military personnel that were on the ground, and how we could have misread, or how the civilian leadership in the Pentagon, could have so badly misread the reality and refused to listen to the professionals and have kept us there.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Would the gentleman be satisfied with just putting it into the record rather than reading it into the record so that we wouldn't have to take too much longer?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Out of respect to the Chairman, I will resist the temptation because these are such good quotes. Can I just give one.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. The Chairman agrees to read them.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Can I just have one——

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right.

Mr. DELAHUNT [continuing]. Because I think this kind of sums it up.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right, go right ahead.

Mr. DELAHUNT. This is General Tommy Franks, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith, right out of the Bob Woodward book, *Plan of Attack*, and I am not going to use one word here, but for those of you who have interest I could show it to you later, and this is his quote, this is Tommy Frank's:

> "I have to deal with the blank stupidest guy on the face of the earth almost every day."

I yield back.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. The Chairman will just take the prerogative of a very short summary, and first of all, to all the witnesses, especially our friends from Kuwait, I want to thank all of you for joining us today. I think it has been a very successful exchange of ideas and getting things out, and I will tell you that is what happens when you disclose information rather than keeping such a close hold on it that people don't have the chance to have these kind of discussions, and I would again think that the more information that we know, especially about the Saddam Hussein regime, the more that people will understand the evil nature of it, and the heartache that it brought to so many millions of people.

Let me again say in this hearing we have heard that the documents we have already, the millions of documents that are there that will be released and put on the internet at some point, and

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hopefully sooner than later, have indicated that Saddam Hussein was a person who was engaged in not only murdering his own people, but also in training terrorists to have a major influence in the region and the world, and when the price of oil went up it would have provided Saddam Hussein with billions and billions and billions of dollars of power that he would have had in his hands. We could have expected nothing more than further evil to be exerted on the world, and further bloodshed, tyranny, and mayhem to be created by this monster.

So these documents will give us a good understanding of who Saddam Hussein was when he was in power. They give us an understanding that he was training terrorists and it was probably an expanded operation. We didn't want Iraq to become an Afghanistan in terms of staging area for attacks on everyone else in the region.

So as we end this hearing I want to thank everybody and I think it has been worthwhile and the more information we get out about this the better. So with that this hearing of this Subcommittee is over.

Mr. BERMAN. A job well done, gentlemen.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. We are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:29 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

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