[redacted]

XII. IRAQ'S LINKS TO TERRORISM

A. Intelligence Products Concerning Iraq's Links to Terrorism

(U) The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) produced five primary finished intelligence products on Iraq's links to terrorism:

- a September 2001 paper;
- an October 2001 paper;
- *Iraq and al-Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship,* June 2002;
- *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* September 2002 and
- *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* January 2003.

B. September and October 2001 Papers

(U) Shortly after the September 11,2001 terrorist attacks, the Director of Central Intelligence's (DCI) Counterterrorism Center (CTC) and the CIA Near East and South Asia office (NESA)[37] collaborated on a paper on Iraqi links to the September 11th attacks. This was the CIA's first attempt to summarize the Iraqi regime's ties to 9/11. The paper was disseminated to President's Daily Brief (PDB) principals on September 21,2001. The Committee was not informed about the existence of this paper until June 2004. According to the CIA, the paper took a "Q&A" approach to the issue of Iraq's possible links to the September 11th attacks.

(U) Soon afterward, the NESA drafted a paper that broadened the scope of the issue by looking at Iraq's overall ties to terrorism. The Committee requested a copy of this October 2001 document, but representatives of the DCI declined to provide it, stating:

> . . . we are declining to provide a copy of the paper. It was drafted in response to a request from a Presidential Daily Brief (PDB) recipient, and the final paper was

[37] The Near East and South Asia (NESA) is the CIA Directorate of Intelligence (DI) office responsible for analyzing events in the Near East, including Iraq.

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[redacted]

disseminated only to the PDB readership. Accordingly, it is not available for further dissemination.[38]

C. Iraq and al-Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship, June 2002

(U) Following the publication of the October 2001 paper, the CTC began drafting another paper that would eventually become *Iraq and al-Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship.* The paper was drafted based on widely expressed interest on the part of several senior policy makers, according to CIA. Throughout the drafting process (October 2001 to June 2002), the two offices took different approaches to assessing Iraq's links to terrorism as a result of their different missions and perspectives. According to the CIA's Ombudsman for Politicization, the CTC was aggressive in drawing connections to try to produce information that could be used to support counterterrorism operations, while the NESA took a traditional analytic approach, confirming intelligence with multiple sources and making assessments only based on strongly supported reporting. Analysts worked on several drafts over the eight month drafting period, but CTC management found them unsatisfactory and ultimately produced a draft without NESA's coordination.

(U) The Deputy Director for Intelligence (DDI) directed that *Iraq and al-Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship* be published on June 21,2002, although it did not reflect the NESA's views. CTC's explanation of its approach to this study and the analysts' differing views were contained in the paper's Scope Note, which stated:

> **(U)** This intelligence assessment responds to senior policymaker interest in a comprehensive assessment of Iraqi regime links to al-Qa'ida. Our approach is purposefully aggressive in seeking to draw connections, on the assumption that any indication of a relationship between these two hostile elements could carry great dangers to the United States.

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[38] The President's Daily Brief (PDB) has not been provided to Congress in the past by the executive branch. Committee staff notes, however, that the National Commission on Terrorist Acts Upon the United States (known as the 9-11 Commission) reached an agreement with the White House for access to the PDB and other intelligence items. The declination to provide the October 2001 CIA paper is an expansion of the historic practice to include other documents beyond the PDB. The CIA has provided the Committee items included in the PDB as long as they were also published separately as finished intelligence or in other finished products.

[redacted]

[redacted]

- (U) We reviewed intelligence reporting over the past decade to determine whether Iraq had a relationship with al-Qa'ida and, if so, the dimensions of the relationship.

- ([redacted]) Our knowledge of Iraqi links to al-Qa'ida still contains many critical gaps [redacted]

(U) Some analysts concur with the assessment that intelligence reporting provides "no conclusive evidence of cooperation on specific terrorist operations," but believe that the available signs support a conclusion that Iraq has had sporadic, wary contacts with al-Qaida since the mid-1990s, rather than a relationship with al-Qaida that has developed over time. These analysts would contend that mistrust and conflicting ideologies and goals probably tempered these contacts and severely limited the opportunities for cooperation. These analysts do not rule out that Baghdad sought and obtained a nonaggression agreement or made limited offers of cooperation, training, or even safehaven (ultimately uncorroborated or withdrawn) in an effort to manipulate, penetrate, or otherwise keep tabs on al-Qaida or selected operatives.

(U) The NESA believed that this edited Scope Note did not adequately capture the differences between the two offices over the weighing and interpretation of the supporting intelligence reports.

(U) The CIA Ombudsman for Politicization received a confidential complaint four days after the paper was published, on June 25,2002, claiming the CTC paper was misleading, in that it did not make clear that it was an uncoordinated product that did not reflect the NESA's views and assessments. The CIA created the position of Ombudsman for Politicization in 1992 to respond to alleged issues of politicization and analytic distortion. According to the Ombudsman's Charter, the position serves as an "independent, informal, and confidential counselor for those who have complaints about politicization, biased reporting, or the lack of objective analysis." The Ombudsman reports directly to the DCI. The complaint and subsequent inquiry is discussed later in this report under *Pressure on Intelligence Community Analysts.*

(U) The Committee Staff interviewed the Deputy Director for Intelligence on the production of this paper, and asked specifically why the analysts' approach was purposefully aggressive. She explained that:

[redacted]

[redacted]

What happened with the "murky paper" was I was asking the people who were writing it to lean far forward and do a speculative piece. If you were going to stretch to the maximum the evidence you had, what could you come up with?

D. Alternate Analysis in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy

(U) Independent of the IC's reviews of potential Iraqi links to terrorism, the Department of Defense Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP), established a team called the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group (PCTEG) which was responsible for studying ". . . the policy implications of relationships among terrorist groups and their sources of support." Following the September 11th attacks, OUSDP brought on two individuals as consultants. According to the two consultants, their work included looking at intelligence information related to all terrorist groups, the links between them, and the roles of state sponsors.

(U) One of these consultants stated that he was told that the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Secretary of Defense were dissatisfied with the intelligence products they were receiving from the Intelligence Community on terrorism and linkages between terrorist groups worldwide. This individual also stated that he and a colleague had gone to the CTC and to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to review what work they were doing on link analysis and relationships between terrorist groups and state sponsors. They found that the analysis was not being done, and stated that they believed their requests for assistance were being ignored.

(U) When the consultants departed, in December of 2001 and January 2002, two naval reserve intelligence officers were brought in to replace them. These two officers became the Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group (PCTEG). The PCTEG reviewed information more specific to al-Qaida and focused partly on al-Qaida's ties to Iraq, according to one of the PCTEG members who was interviewed by Committee staff. He stated that he believed his work with the Policy Counterterrorrism Evaluation Group was "to look at the network of al-Qaida, and that includes state sponsors, that includes front companies, relations with other terrorist groups. In effect, let's figure out what al-Qaida is. And that's what I was doing." He also stated that he was brought into the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to "do analysis of terrorist groups, their linkages" by looking at both raw and finished IC products.

(U) The OUSDP also requested that the DIA Director detail a specific intelligence analyst to assist in a number of intelligence-related activities. That detail began in January 2002. She reviewed the CIA assessment *Iraq and al-Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship* and other

[redacted]

[redacted]

intelligence reporting. The detailee also provided assessments of the IC's analysis to policymakers in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy.

(U) The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy stated in his July 2003 briefing to the Committee, "In the course of reviewing old stuff [the PCTEG] found some things that looked very interesting in the year 2002 that apparently didn't register with people or were not given great prominence either at the time or in the more recent work." The Under Secretary was referring to the work done by the DIA detailee assigned to the OUSDP's Policy Support Staff, not the PCTEG. Documents provided to the Committee by the Under Secretary indicated that the detailee found some intelligence reporting that she did not believe had been adequately incorporated into finished analysis.

(U) During an interview with Committee staff, the DIA detailee recounted that she had begun researching the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) on her own, and discovered intelligence reporting from the mid-1990s that had not been incorporated into more recent finished products. She indicated that she had accumulated this material and had passed it, with her own comments, up the OUSDP chain of command. The detailee also stated that she had taken the intelligence she had discovered to the DIA and asked that it be republished or incorporated into finished products, but that the DIA elements she contacted were not interested in the information.

(U) The detailee also reviewed the CIA's *Iraq and al-Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship* assessment and provided her analysis of the paper. In her analysis of the assessment, the detailee stated that the CIA provided a great deal of evidence in support of a relationship between Iraq and al-Qaida, but stopped short of providing the bottom line. Her analysis stated:

> The ["Murky"] report provides evidence from numerous intelligence sources over a decade on the interactions between Iraq and al-Qaida. In this regard, the report is excellent. Then in its interpretation of this information, CIA attempts to discredit, dismiss, or downgrade much of this reporting, resulting in inconsistent conclusions in many instances. Therefore, the CIA report should be read for content only – and CIA's interpretation ought to be ignored.

(U) The DIA detailee's critique was sent by the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to both the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Defense.

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(U) On July 22,2002, the DIA detailee sent an e-mail to a Deputy Under Secretary for Policy recounting a meeting that day with a senior advisor to the Under Secretary. The e-mail reported that the senior advisor had said that the Deputy Secretary had told an assistant that he wanted him ". . . to prepare an intel briefing on Iraq and links to al-Qaida for the SecDef and that he was not to tell anyone about it." The e-mail also referred to "the Iraqi intelligence cell in OUSD(P)." The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy later explained to the Committee that the term "intelligence cell" referred to the PCTEG and other OSD staffers and their study of intelligence reports.

(U) Incorporating the DIA detailee's work and the analysis done by the two naval reserve officers assigned to the PCTEG, a special assistant from the Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense created a set of briefing slides in the summer of 2002 that outlined the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) views of the relationship between Iraq and al-Qaida and criticized the Intelligence Community (IC) for its approach to the issue.

(U) The briefing slides contained a "Summary of Known Iraq – al-Qaida Contacts, 1990-2002," including an item "2001: Prague IIS Chief al-Ani meets with Mohammed Atta in April." Another slide was entitled "Fundamental Problems with How Intelligence Community is Assessing Information." It faulted the IC for requiring "juridical evidence" for its findings. It also criticized the IC for "consistent underestimation" of efforts by Iraq and al-Qaida to hide their relationship and for an "assumption that secularists and Islamists will not cooperate." A "findings" slide summed up the Iraq – al-Qaida relationship as "More than a decade of numerous contacts," "Multiple areas of cooperation," "Shared interest and pursuit of WMD," and "One indication of Iraq coordination with al-Qaida specifically related to 9/11."

(U) One of the naval reservists from the PCTEG and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) detailee to the Policy Support Staff presented the briefing, which was developed by the special assistant from the Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense, to the Secretary of Defense in early August 2002.

(U) After the briefing, the Deputy Secretary sent a note to the briefers, the Under Secretary and the Under Secretary's Special Advisor, which included:

> That was an excellent briefing. The Secretary was very impressed. He asked us to think about some possible next steps to see if we can illuminate the differences between us and CIA. The goal is not to produce a consensus product, but rather to scrub one another's arguments.

[redacted]

[redacted]

One possibility would be to present this briefing to senior CIA people with their Middle East analysts present. Another possibility would be for the Secretary and the DCI to agree on setting up a small group with our people combined with their people to work through those points on which we agree and those points on which we disagree, and then have a session in which each side might make the case for their assessment.

(U) On August 15,2002, the same OUSDP briefing was presented to the DCI, the Deputy Directors for Intelligence and Operations, and a number of other CIA officials and analytic managers. The Department of Defense delegation included the Under Secretary for Policy, the two briefers, the DIA Director, the Joint Staff Director for Intelligence and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, among others. The briefing did not include the slide criticizing the IC analysis that was included in the briefing presented to the Secretary of Defense. Following the briefing, the DCI requested that the two OUSDP briefers speak with the CTC and the NESA experts on Iraq and terrorism.

(U) In a memorandum to an OUSDP official the following day, one of the PCTEG naval reserve officers wrote, "Our trip to CIA can be characterized as a success in that after our brief DCI Tenet agreed to reconsider the relationship of al-Qaida and Iraq." The reserve officer added that the DCI had agreed to postpone the release of a finished product on that subject until the CIA, DIA and the OUSDP staffers could "attempt to come to some consensus." When asked about his reaction to the briefing, the DCI stated that he "didn't think much of it" and that he "didn't see anything that broke any new ground for me."

(U) As stated in the naval reserve officer's note to his superiors, the DCI agreed to postpone publishing the CIA's more recent assessment of Iraq's links to terrorism, (Iraqi Support for Terrorism, September 2002), until analysts from the CTC, NESA, NSA, and DIA could meet with the OUSDP briefers to discuss the issue. The analysts and OUSDP staffers met on August 20,2002. Although the analysts considered the attendance of OUSDP staffers at the meeting to be unusual, all of the meeting attendees interviewed by Committee Staff (eight of the twelve individuals) agreed that the OUSDP staffers were not given special treatment and their attendance contributed to a frank exchange of opinions.

(U) In a memorandum submitted by the two OUSDP staffers who attended the meeting, they stated "We raised numerous objections to the paper." One was that the draft "makes no reference to the key issue of Atta." In a subsequent memorandum, the DIA detailee wrote that the participants "asked me several times to prepare footnotes on the issues I disagreed with them. I refused. I said that this was not an NIE and I was an employee in Policy, not wearing an

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[redacted]

intelligence hat. I could only ask why reporting was not included in finished intelligence products and to make recommendations to include it."

(U) The same OUSDP staffers also presented their briefing to the Deputy National Security Advisor and the Vice President's Chief of Staff on September 16, two days prior to the publication of the CIA assessment *Iraqi Support for Terrorism.* This briefing included the slide which criticized the IC's approach to the issue that had been in the original presentation to the Secretary of Defense. In a memorandum to the Deputy Secretary of Defense the following day, the Deputy Assistant Secretary reported, "The briefing went very well and generated further interest from Mr. Hadley and Mr. Libby," who requested a number of items, including a "chronology of Atta's travels." The briefing slides presented at this briefing had been updated to incorporate information that had been included in the draft of Iraqi Support for Terrorism, which the OUSDP staffers were probably not aware of until they reviewed the draft. The slides presented additional information on the alleged meeting in Prague between September 11 hijacker Muhammad Atta and the IIS Chief in Prague, potential common procurement intermediaries shared by Iraq and al-Qaida, and other possible connections outlined in the draft CIA assessment.

(U) Though the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy stated during his July 2003 testimony to the Committee, "I asked a team to study the policy implications of relationships among terrorist groups and their sources of support," the team members interviewed by Committee staff each noted that at some point, and often predominantly, their work involved intelligence analysis. In several interviews, OUSDP staffers indicated that they reviewed both raw and finished intelligence and did undertake their own intelligence analysis after looking at IC products and discovering that what they needed had not been produced by the IC. It was not clear, however, whether the formal tasking system had been used to funnel requests to the Intelligence Community for analysis that would suit OUSDP needs.

(U) Moreover, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy stated in his briefing to the Committee that the briefing provided to the Secretary of Defense and later the DCI and White House staff was developed by the DIA detailee to OUSDP Policy Support Staff. During interviews with Committee staff, the two individuals who briefed the Secretary of Defense and later other officials, both stated that the briefing slides were developed by a Special Assistant to the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

(U) The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy's Policy Counterterrorism Evaluation Group (PCTEG) and the additional DIA detailee identified in this report relied on their own

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[redacted]

independent evaluations of intelligence reports in preparing their materials. Therefore, the Committee will evaluate the analytic products prepared by the OUSDP staffers on Iraq's potential links to al-Qaida as part of the second phase of this review to determine whether they were objective, reasonable, and accurate.

[redacted]

[redacted]

E. Iraqi Support for Terrorism, September 2002

(U) Iraqi Support for Terrorism was disseminated to 12 senior officials by the CIA Directorate of Intelligence on September 19, 2002; it was not drafted to respond to a specific request. CIA officials decided that new intelligence warranted another look at the issue. The initial drafter of the paper was a senior analyst from the Near East and South Asia Division, who according to his manager, worked closely with the Iraq analysts in the Counter Terrorism Center's (CTC) Office of Terrorism Analysis. The manager also indicated that the paper was later handed over to CTC to carry through the publication process and to update it as it went through that process. The assessment received only selective distribution to twelve senior Administration officials[39] due to the sensitivity of sources and methods identified in the document. A copy of this document was not provided to Congress until October 2003.

(U) Two weeks after publication of *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* the Intelligence Community published the October 2002 *National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction.*[40] Although the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) did not focus explicitly on terrorism, the NIE did include key judgments regarding Saddam Hussein's potential for employing terrorist attacks, which began with the judgment, "Baghdad for now appears to be drawing a line short of conducting terrorist attacks with conventional or CBW against the United States fearing that exposure of Iraqi involvement would provide Washington a stronger case for making war." These judgments were similar to those found in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism.*

[39] This assessment was shown to the Secretary of Transportation and was left with the Director of the Secret Service, Secretary of State, National Security Advisor, Deputy National Security Advisor, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Attorney General, Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office of the Vice President Chief of Staff, National Security Council Senior Director for Intelligence Programs, Secretary of the Treasury and Deputy Secretary of State.

[40] The NIE was produced at the request of Senator Bob Graham, then-Chairman of the SSCI. The NIE was written by the National Intelligence Council with the input of IC analysts.

[redacted]

[redacted]

F. Iraqi Support for Terrorism, January 2003

(U) At the request of the Deputy Director of Intelligence (DDI), to broaden dissemination, the CTC edited references to the highly sensitive sources and methods that had necessitated very limited distribution of the September 2002 version. The CTC also updated the paper based on intelligence collected from detainees between September 2002 and January 2003 and coordinated this new version with the NESA. The January 2003 version of *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* was provided to Congress and was the final major terrorism analysis produced prior to commencement of hostilities.

(U) Due to the high level of consistency among the three major CIA terrorism analyses that were provided to the Committee, the January 2003 version served as the basis for the Committee's review of prewar intelligence analysis on terrorism. Any substantial differences among the reports, however, are addressed in this report.

G. CIA Assessments on Iraq's Links to Terrorism

(U) In *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* the CIA provided the following summary:

> Iraq continues to be a safehaven, transit point, or operational node for groups and individuals who direct violence against the United States, Israel, and other allies. Iraq has a long history of supporting terrorism. During the last four decades, it has altered its targets to reflect changing priorities and goals. It continues to harbor and sustain a number of smaller anti-Israel terrorist groups and to actively encourage violence against Israel. Regarding the Iraq–al-Qaida relationship, reporting from sources of varying reliability points to a number of contacts, incidents of training, and discussions of Iraqi safehaven for Usama bin Ladin and his organization dating from the early 1990s.

(U) To arrive at this summary, the CIA examined intelligence in four main areas:

- Terrorist activities conducted by the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS);
- Iraqi support for terrorist activities conducted by regional terrorist groups;
- Iraqi contacts with al-Qaida; and,
- potential Iraqi use of terrorism in the event of a war with the United States.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) The CIA produced several key assessments based on its examination of the available intelligence. The Committee reviewed the assessments, any prior assessments on these topics, and the intelligence reports underlying the assessments. The following sections set forth the "key" assessments, discuss the underlying intelligence, discuss any variance from prior CIA assessments, and examine the accuracy, objectivity, independence, and reasonableness of the assessments found in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* January 2003.

H. Terrorist Activities Conducted by the IIS

(U) The CIA assessed that "Saddam Is Most Likely to Use the IIS [Iraqi Intelligence Service] in Any Planned Terrorist Attack."

(U) One of the strongest links identified by the CIA between the Iraqi regime and terrorist activities was the history of IIS involvement in training, planning, and conducting terrorist operations. Beginning before the 1991 Gulf War, intelligence reports and public records documented that Saddam Hussein used IIS operatives to plan and attemyt terrorist attacks. The CIA provided 78 reports, from multiple sources, [redacted] documenting instances in which the Iraqi regime either trained operatives for attacks or dispatched them to carry out attacks. Each of the reports provided by the CIA was accurately reflected in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* and the majority of them were summarized as examples to support the CIA's assessment.

(U) [redacted] This was reflected in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* as, ". . .Baghdad in late 1990 was training [more than 1000] Iraqis in camps southeast of Baghdad to conduct terrorist attacks on US and other coalition targets." In reporting that could be considered as corroborating these accounts, an IIS operative was killed when a bomb exploded prematurely in Manila near a U.S. facility. A similar explosive device was discovered in the U.S. Ambassador's residence in Jakarta, and two Iraqi males that had been observed casing the residence were reportedly in Indonesia with the t of tl Iraqi embassy. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] The CIA described this reporting in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* as "[redacted] report that Baghdad sent [redacted] terrorist teams–[redacted] – to Third World countries where the IIS apparently believed that access to Western targets would be easier." The CIA also described each of the reports regarding the attempts in Manila and Jakarta in detail, [redacted]

Iraq continued to participate in terrorist attacks throughout the 1990s. In late 1992, a foreign government service reported on an Iraqi who [redacted] assassinated an Iraqi nuclear-chemical engineer at the behest of Iraqi intelligence. In 1994, another foreign government service reported that [redacted] two employees of the Iraqi Embassy who had assassinated an Iraqi dissident [redacted]. The Iraqi regime continued to target dissidents, and in February 1995 the State Department reported in a London cable on the Iraqi's use of thallium to poison oppositionists. These three items were included as examples of IIS violence against Iraqi opposition leaders and defectors abroad in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism:*

- The killing of Mu'ayyid al-Janabi, a refugee Iraqi nuclear scientist seeking asylum in Amman, Jordan, in 1992.
- The assassination of prominent Iraqi dissident Shaykh Talib al-Suhayl in Lebanon in April 1994.
- In 1995, Iraqi agents in northern Iraq used the metallic element thallium to poison several dissidents, and opposition sources say at least two were killed.

The CIA also provided five reports on more recent assassinations in which the Iraqi regime was thought to be responsible, but the evidence was not conclusive.

(U) From 1996 to 2003, the IIS focused its terrorist activities on western interests, particularly against the U.S. and Israel. The CIA summarized nearly 50 intelligence reports as examples, using language directly from the intelligence reports. Ten intelligence reports, from multiple sources, indicated IIS "casing" operations against Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty in Prague began in 1998 and continued into early 2003. The CIA assessed, based on the Prague casings and a variety of other reporting that throughout 2002, the IIS was becoming increasingly aggressive in planning attacks against U.S. interests. The CIA

[redacted]

[redacted]

provided eight reports to support this assessment. As hostilities between the U.S. and Iraq approached in late 2002, reporting indicated increased Iraqi preparations for attacks in the Middle East and Europe. An Appendix to *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* included **43** incidents, backed up by **48** intelligence reports, citing suspicious IIS activity that resembled terrorism planning, including repor of [redacted] the development of target lists, and the transfer of weapons or materiel that could be used to conduct attacks. For example, two reports suggested the IIS was targeting U.S. facilities in Turkey. [redacted] Separately, a State Department cable from Baku indicated that Iraqis were engaged in similar activities there, trying to rent properties near the U.S. Embassy.

Each of the previous examples were in both raw intelligence reports, and summarized in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism.* The CIA's analytic judgments regarding the likelihood of Iraq's use of the IIS to conduct terrorist attacks were also supported by actual IIS activities during OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. attempted two failed terrorist attacks, one in Bahrain, and one in [redacted]. While Iraq experienced mixed results with the IIS conducting terrorist operations, the regime also supported regional terrorist groups.

I. Support for Regional Terrorist Groups

(U) The CIA assessed that:

> Iraq has a long history of supporting terrorism. . . . It continues to harbor and sustain a number of smaller anti-Israel terrorist groups and to actively encourage violence against Israel.
>
> Baghdad maintains close and overt ties to several secular Palestinian terrorist groups and with the Iraq-based Iranian Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK).

(U) The intelligence reporting relied on by the CIA in drafting this assessment in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* indicated that the Iraqi regime had directly supported several Palestinian terrorist groups and permitted many of these groups to operate within Iraq. The CIA provided a total of 53 reports detailing the Iraqi regime's interaction with Palestinian groups. A primary example of the regime's support of Palestinian terrorist attacks against Israel [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] saying that Iraq paid a total of $10-15 million to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers.[41] [redacted] Throughout the 1990s, open sources also showed that Saddam Hussein was a vocal advocate of martyrdom operations against Israel. The CIA provided two reports translated by the Foreign Broadcast Information Service as examples of his statements in support of the Palestinians, one of which described speeches in which Saddam urged the Arab nation to rise up against Israel and the U.S., and another which included Palestinian students thanking him for erecting a statue in honor of a Palestinian suicide bomber.

([redacted]) During the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein enlisted the aid of the Palestinian Liberation Front (PLF) to attempt terrorist attacks. The PLF, most famous for the 1985 hijacking of the ***Achille Lauro,*** and after 1990 when the PLF headquarters was established in Baghdad, relied wholly on Iraq for financial support and training. The PLF failed to carry out successful operations during the Gulf War in 1991 and drew criticism from Iraqi officials at the time. Regardless, the leader of the PLF, Abu 'Abbas remained in close contact with the regime. According to ***Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism:***

[redacted]

The sensitive reporting, which was from a foreign government service, reported on the arrest of an individual who attempted to cross from in a car filled with explosives. The service had identified the individual as a member of the PLF, who had purchased the car from an Iraqi intelligence officer.

([redacted]) [redacted] The CIA assessed that the PLF could still be used by the Iraqi regime to conduct attacks, because the PLF had relied wholly on Iraq for financial support and training since 1990. A report stated, however, that Abu Abbas would have refused to conduct attacks on behalf of Iraq, and

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[41] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

reports, [redacted] that PLF members in Iraq were preparing for attacks against U.S. forces in the event of war. The analysts assessed that the PLF could be convinced to conduct attacks against U.S. targets on behalf of Iraq based on foreign government service reporting, and the fact that the PLF relied wholly on Iraq.

Iraqi Support for Terrorism also assessed that other Palestinian groups such as the Abu Nidal Organization (ANO), the Arab Liberation Front, and the 15 May Organization, though largely inactive in recent years, could have acted as surrogates to conduct terrorist attacks for the Iraqi regime. The CIA provided ten reports, from multiple sources, including reports from foreign government services, substantiating the Iraqi regime's relationship with the Abu Nidal Organization. While most of the reports, [redacted] provide historical context, [redacted]

With regard to the Arab Liberation Front (ALF) CIA provided six reports on ALF-Iraq ties. These reports from a foreign government service, indicate that Saddam provided approximately $10 million to $15 million to martyrs families, [redacted]

([redacted])

Reports from multiple sources also indicated the regime was attempting to build relationships with other Palestinian and anti-Israel groups, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine – General Command (PFLP-GC), Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ), and Hizballah, but was having only marginal success. The CIA provided four reports from multiple sources on the PFLP-GC and links to the Iraqi regime. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The CIA provided seven reports on Iraq-Hamas ties. One foreign government service reported that Iraqi officials were meeting with Hamas representatives. The CIA provided two Foreign Broadcast Information Service (FBIS) reports in which Hamas leader Abd-al-Aziz al-Rantisi called upon Iraq to use "martyrdom" operations against the U.S. [redacted] This was reflected in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* as ". . .Hamas will not cross the 'red line' and target U.S. interests in the event of a war with Iraq."

The CIA provided six reports to suggest that the PIJ had a similar approach to Iraq, but was further removed than Hamas in that it would not accept support from the Iraqi regime because it questioned the regime's motives. [redacted]

The CIA assessed that Hizballah was also standoffish toward Iraq. In ***Iraqi Support for Terrorism,*** the CIA stated that,

> [redacted] q as made overtures seeking increased cooperation with Hizballah. Hizballah has rebuffed the Iraqi offers [redacted], according to a variety of reporting.

([redacted]) [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The CIA also provided eight reports from multiple sources on the Iraqi regime's relationship with the Iraq-based Mujahidin e-Khalq. To support its assessments that:

> Iraq provides bases, equipment, training, force protection, and probably funding to the MEK . . . The group is by far the most active of Iraq's terrorist partners . . . The MEK maintains bases in east-central Iraq near the Iranian border and periodically trains with the Iraqi armed forces, according to a variety of reporting . . . MEK forces perform some internal security functions for the Iraqi regime . . . .

The CIA provided reports on the MEK's bases in eastern Iraq, [redacted] The [redacted] on MEK cross-border attacks in Iran, and [redacted] indicated that the MEK had been trained in conventional and terrorist tactics by the Iraqi regime, and [redacted]

J. Iraq's Relationship with al-Qaida

(U) The CIA assessed that:

> Regarding the Iraq–al-Qaida relationship, reporting from sources of varying reliability points to a number of contacts, incidents of training, and discussions of Iraqi safehaven for Usama bin Ladin and his organization dating fi-om the early 1990s. . . .

[redacted]

[redacted]

Iraq's interaction with al-Qaida is impelled by mutual antipathy toward the United States and the Saudi royal family and by bin Ladin's interest in unconventional weapons and relocation sites. In contrast to the patron-client pattern between Iraq and its Palestinian surrogates, the relationship between Iraq and al-Qaida appears to more closely resemble that of two independent actors trying to exploit each other – their mutual suspicion suborned by al-Qaida's interest in Iraqi assistance, and Baghdad's interest in al-Qaida's anti-U.S. attacks . . . .

The Intelligence Community has no credible information that Baghdad had foreknowledge of the 11 September attacks or any other al-Qaida strike, but continues to pursue all leads.

([redacted]) In Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism, the CIA acknowledged the poor intelligence collection on both the Iraqi regime and al-Qaida leadership. Further, with respect to the information that was available, the CIA specifically noted that the information was from sources of "varying reliability." To address this issue, the CIA included a great deal of source information describing the varying degrees of reliability among the supporting intelligence reporting. A CTC analyst specified that:

> It says this is what we have. In some cases it characterizes the reporting. This is the quality of it. These are the things we don't like about it. But here's what it says. Because we wanted to make sure we included everything.

Due to the limited amount and questionable quality of reporting on the leadership intentions of Saddam Hussein and Usama bin Ladin, the CIA was unable to make conclusive assessments in Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism regarding Iraq's relationship with al-Qaida. The CIA stated in the Scope Note:

> Our knowledge of Iraq's ties to terrorism is evolving [redacted] . . . .
>
> This paper's conclusions–especially regarding the difficult and elusive question of the exact nature of Iraq's relations with al-Qaida–are based on currently available information that is at times contradictory and derived from sources with varying degrees of reliability . . . .

[redacted]

[redacted]

While our understanding of Iraq's overall connections to al-Qaida has grown considerably, our appreciation of these links is still emerging.

(U) The CIA relied on intelligence reporting on four additional subjects which they believed would provide circumstantial insight into that relationship. Therefore, Iraq's relationship with al-Qaida is subcategorized in the five following areas:

- Leadership,
- Contacts,
- Training,
- Safehaven, and
- Operational Cooperation.

K. Leadership Reporting

(U) In Iraqi Support to Terrorism, the CIA stated that it did not have specific intelligence reports that revealed Saddam Hussein's personal opinion about dealing with al-Qaida. Instead, analysts looked at Saddam Hussein's record for dealing with extremists and assessed in **Iraqi** Supportfor Terrorism that he generally viewed Islamic extremism, including the school of Islam known as Wahhabism, as a threat to his regime, noting that he had executed extremists from both the Sunni and Shi'a sects to disrupt their organizations. The CIA provided two specific HUMINT reports that support this assessment, both of which indicated that Saddam Hussein's regime arrested and in some cases executed Wahhabists and other Islamic extremists that opposed him. The CIA also provided a HUMINT report [redacted] that indicated the regime sought to prevent Iraqi youth from joining al-Qaida.

(U) Consistent with inadequate intelligence on Saddam Hussein's intentions or views toward al-Qaida, the CIA had limited intelligence reporting on the al-Qaida leadership's decisions regarding a relationship with Iraq. the CIA used [redacted] reporting from al-Qaida detainee debriefings, to judge bin Ladin's attitude toward a relationship with Saddam Hussein. The limited reporting available to analysts on al-Qaida's attitude toward cooperating with the Iraqi regime was contradictory. Some reports indicated a desire to seek assistance from Saddam Hussein and others indicated al-Qaida leaders were opposed to any association with the secular Iraqi regime. Information [redacted] noted an internal struggle within al-Qaida over the wisdom of working with the Iraqis. The CIA explained this in Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism, noting:

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The most important al-Qaida detainees that commented on interaction with Iraq were [redacted]. Khalid Shaikh Muhammad, who was captured after the January 2003 publication of Iraqi Support for Terrorism, also commented on the relationship between Iraq and al-Qaida. His comments tracked with other detainees' comments, and they are included here for additional corroboration.

L. Detainee Debriefings – Comments on the Relationship

1. Abu Zubaydah

The CIA provided four reports detailing the debriefings of Abu Zubaydah, a captured senior coordinator for al-Qaida responsible for training and recruiting. Abu Zubaydah said that he was not aware of a relationship between Iraq and al-Qaida. He also said, however, that any relationship would be highly compartmented and went on to name al-Qaida members who he thought had good contacts with the Iraqis. For instance, Abu Zubaydah indicated that he had heard that an important al-Qaida associate, Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, and others had good relationships with Iraqi Intelligence. [redacted]. During the debriefings, Abu Zubaydah offered his opinion that it would be extremely unlikely for bin Ladin to have agreed to ally with Iraq, due to his desire to keep the organization on track with its mission and maintain its operational independence. In Iraqi *Support for* Terrorism, Abu Zubaydah's information is reflected as:

> [redacted] bu Zubay(opined that it d have been "extremely unlikely" for bin Laden to have agreed to "ally" with Iraq, but he acknowledged it was possible there were al-Qaida–Iraq communications or emissaries to which he was not privy.

[redacted]

[redacted]

([redacted]) 2. [redacted]

([redacted]) [redacted]

3. Khalid Shaikh Muhammad

(U) For purposes of comparison, Committee staff requested information from the CIA on Khalid Shaikh Muhammad's (KSM) comments on an Iraq–al-Qaida relationship. The CIA provided a one page response to the staffs request that stated that Khalid Shaikh Muhammad, the planner of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks against the United States, also maintained that he was unaware of any collaborative relationship between al-Qaida and the former Iraqi regime, citing ideological disagreements as an impediment to closer ties. In addition, he was unable to corroborate reports that al-Qaida associate Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi had traveled to Iraq to obtain medical treatment for injuries sustained in Afghanistan.

(U) The CIA assessed that KSM probably is accurately describing his understanding of the relationship. Most reporting indicates that KSM did not join al-Qaida until the late 1990s and did not enter the top echelon of its decision-making leadership until after the September 11, 2001 attacks. Prior to September 2001, he was an important operational planner but had a limited role in the administration of al-Qaida. He therefore may not have been privy to many activities pursued by other parts of the group, which could include contacts with Iraq.

[redacted]

[redacted]

M. Contacts Between the Iraqi Regime and al-Qaida

Iraqi Support for Terrorism contained the following summary judgments regarding Iraq's contacts with al-Qaida:

> Saddam Husayn and Usama Bin Ladin are far from being natural partners, yet intelligence reports during the last decade point to various Iraq-al-Qaida contacts through high-level and third-party intermediaries . . . .
>
> We have reporting from reliable clandestine and press sources that [redacted] direct meetings between senior Iraqi representatives and top al-Qaida operatives took place from the early 1990s to the present.

These statements were based on clandestine intelligence and press reporting, which the CIA provided to the Committee. In addition to the meetings noted in the assessment, the CIA also provided additional reporting on several other meetings between Iraqi and al-Qaida officials during the same period. The CIA assessed these reports of additional meetings as less credible in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism.*

(U) Contacts between Iraq and al-Qaida were an important factor in determining whether Iraq would have cooperated, assisted, or directed al-Qaida in any terrorist operation against U.S. interests. However, the intelligence reporting used to create the finished papers often came from foreign government services whose reliability was questioned by the CIA. For instance, some of the contacts between the Iraqi regime and al-Qaida were reported to the CIA by foreign government services or groups opposed to the Iraqi government. The raw intelligence reporting from the CIA detailed the questionable nature of reporting by countries or groups that clearly opposed the Iraqi regime.

(U) For example, the first three of the meetings cited in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* came from one raw intelligence report and are listed below with the source of the reporting noted in bold and in brackets:

- [redacted]
- [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

•

[redacted]

(U) The January 2003 version of *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* did not include the sources in the bracketed, bold text. The September 2002 version of *Iraqi Support for Terrorism*, with a limited distribution, did, however, include information about the reporting from a foreign government service. Therefore, the reader of the January 2003 version did not know that the source of this information came from a government that could have been trying to influence the U.S. Government. [redacted]

[redacted][42]

A direct meeting is explained in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* as. "Hijazi joined the IIS chief on a visit to Khartoum in 1995, according to [redacted] reporting." [redacted] The raw report does not include information specifically about a direct meeting, but explains, [redacted]

[42] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Information on another direct meeting came from an Italian newspaper article that was translated by the CIA as:

> Saddam Husayn and Usama bin Ladin have sealed a pact. Faruk Hidjazi, the former Director of the Iraqi Secret Services and now the country's Ambassador to Turkey, held a secret meeting with the extremist leader on 21 December.

The article contains direct quotes from Faruk Hijazi, but does not specify the source of the information. *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* stated this information as "[a] press report from 1998 alleges Hijazi [Faruk Hidjazi in the article] visited Sudan to meet bin Ladin as early as June 1994"

([redacted]) Information on two other direct meetings comes from an FBI interrogation of Wali Khan, an al-Qaida associate. [redacted]

Abu Hajir, himself, was subsequently taken into custody and *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* stated, "in his debriefings, Abu Hajir has not yet claimed any past or continuing ties to Iraqi intelligence or mentioned returning to Iraq since he left in the late 1980s and repudiated his Iraqi citizenship." When asked about follow-up on this intelligence, the CIA answered, "The only reporting we have linking Abu Hajir to Iraq comes from Wali Khan [redacted]

([redacted]) [redacted] The intelligence cited in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* of "at least [redacted] direct meetings" was based on raw reports from foreign sources, an FBI interview and an Italian news article.

[redacted]

[redacted]

A DIA analyst described collection on contacts as:

([redacted])

The CIA discussed these meetings as possible contacts between the Iraqi regime and al-Qaida and did not draw any further conclusions attempting to characterize the content of the meetings.

N. Training of al-Qaida by Iraq

(U) *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* contained the following summary judgments regarding Iraq's provision of training to al-Qaida:

> Regarding the Iraq–al-Qa'ida relationship, reporting from sources of varying reliability points to . . . incidents of training . . . .
>
> The most disturbing aspect of the relationship is the dozen or so reports of varying reliability mentioning the involvement of Iraq or Iraqi nationals in al-Qa'ida's efforts to obtain CBW training.

As in the case of contacts between Iraq and al-Qaida, the intelligence reporting on training also was of varying reliability and contradictory. Concern over the reliability of sources was also reflected in DCI's September 17,2002, testimony to the Committee:

> There is evidence that Iraq provided al-Qaida with various kinds of training – combat, bomb-making, and [chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear] CBRN. Although Saddam did not endorse al-Qaida's overall agenda and was suspicious of Islamist movements in general, he was apparently not averse, under certain circumstances, to enhancing bin Ladin's operational capabilities. As with much of the information on the overall relationship, details on training are [redacted] from sources of varying reliability.

(U) The DCI subsequently testified about Iraqi training of al-Qaida in an open hearing before the Committee on February 11,2003:

[redacted]

[redacted]

Iraq has in the past provided training in document forgery and bomb-making to al-Qaida. It has also provided training in poisons and gases to two al-Qaida associates. One of these associates characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful.

The DCI's unclassified, February 2003 testimony addressed "training in poisons and gases" which "comes to us from credible and reliable sources." The DCI's classified, September 2002 testimony addressed "evidence that Iraq provided al-Qaida with various kinds of training" of which "details on training are from sources of varying reliability." The DCI's unclassified testimony did not include source descriptions, which could have led the recipients of that testimony to interpret that the CIA believed the training had definitely occurred.

Due to concern over al-Qaida's interest in WMD, the CIA assessments in *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* concentrated on the intelligence reports regarding possible Iraqi assistance to al-Qaida's chemical and biological weapons (CBW) programs. Reporting on Iraq's potential CBW training of al-Qaida came from three sources:

- Detainee [redacted]
- A dozen additional reports from varying sources, and
- reporting about activity at the Salman Pak training facility.

([redacted]) **1.** [redacted]

([redacted]) [redacted]

In the September 2002 limited-distribution version of *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* the CIA assessed, "The general pattern that emerges is of al-Qa'ida's enduring interest in acquiring chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) expertise from Iraq."

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

([redacted])

[redacted]

([redacted])

[redacted]

2. Additional Reports from Varying Sources

Twelve reports received [redacted] from sources that the CIA described as having varying reliability, cited Iraq or Iraqi national involvement in al-Qaida's CBW efforts. The CIA noted that most of these reports involved discussions of offers or plans for training. The reports did not state whether any of the training initiatives had been implemented. *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* also noted, "in about half of the reports, we cannot determine if the Iraqi nationals mentioned had any relationship with the Baghdad government or were expatriate or free-lance scientists or engineers." Additionally, *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* noted, two of the reports appeared to have been based on hearsay and four of the reports were

[43] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

simple declarative accusations with no substance or detail to help corroborate them. The CIA explained these inconsistencies in the discussion of the reporting.

(U) 3. Reporting about Activity at Salman Pak

(U) The Salman Pak facility outside Baghdad was an unconventional warfare training facility used by the IIS and Saddam Hussein's Fedayeen troops to train its officers for counterterrorism operations against regime opponents. The facility contained a village mockup for urban combat training and a derelict commercial aircraft. *Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism* explained that uncorroborated reports since 1999 have alleged "that Baghdad has sponsored a variety of conventional and mostly rudimentary instruction for al-Qa'ida at the Salman Pak Unconventional Warfare Training Facility outside Baghdad." The reports came from that "training at this camp includes paramilitary exercises, such as running long distances daily and self-defense tactics." *Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism* also stated, "these reports are part of a larger body of reporting over the past decade that ties Salman Pak to Iraqi surrogate groups." The Committee was not provided with reports that showed that Iraq trained Palestinian extremist groups and other Arabs of various nationalities at the Salman Pak facility for potential surrogate terror operations. However, a senior CIA analysts stated "We had [sources] talking about Salman Pak and training at Salman Pak and funding for Palestinian groups." The CIA did not rule out the possibility that Iraq trained known al-Qaida operatives or could have trained an Arab al-Qaida member without having knowledge that the terrorist was an al-Qaida member.

In *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* the CIA provided additional explanation of the sources of the information, noting that, "press and reporting about al-Qa'ida activity at Salman Pak– –surged after 11 September." The CIA determined, "that at least one defector, whose story appeared in *Vanity Fair* magazine, had embellished and exaggerated his access." Additionally, other sources only repeated information provided by the defector, and also lacked first-hand access to the information. Committee staff asked both CIA and DIA analysts whether any al-Qaida operatives or other sources have confirmed Salman Pak training allegations, and the unanimous response was that none have reported knowledge of any training. A DIA analyst told Committee staff, "The Iraqi National Congress (INC) has been pushing information for a long time about Salman Pak and training of al-Qa'ida." [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

O. The Use of Iraq as a Safehaven

(U) Iraqi Support for Terrorism contained the following summary statements regarding Iraq's provision of safehaven (The CIA used the term "providing safehaven" to describe both active assistance and passive acquiescence to the presence of al-Qaida in Iraq) to terrorist groups, in general, and al-Qaida specifically:

> Iraq continues to be a safehaven, transit point, or operational node for groups and individuals who direct violence against the United States . . . .
>
> Regarding the Iraq–al-Qaida relationship, reporting from sources of varying reliability points to . . . discussions of Iraqi safehaven for Usama bin Ladin dating from the early 1990s . . . .
>
> We assess that 100 to 200 al-Qaida members and associates have relocated to Kurdish-controlled northeastern Iraq . . . .
>
> A variety of reporting indicates that senior al-Qaida terrorist planner al-Zarqawi was in Baghdad between May-July 2002 under an assumed identity.

(U) The CIA did not assert in any of its assessments that Iraq had committed to a formal arrangement permitting al-Qaida members to transit and live within Iraq. Instead, the CIA considered the intelligence reporting on discussions about safehaven between Iraq and al-Qaida and on the presence of individuals the CIA assessed to be al-Qaida members or associates in Iraq. The CIA assessed that Iraq was "aware of the general nature and scope of the activity taking place there [in Iraq]."

(U) The CIA based its assessment regarding Iraq's provision of safehaven to al-Qaida on the following information and presumptions:

- Intelligence reports on discussions between Iraq and al-Qaida regarding safehaven,
- Iraqi regime's likely knowledge of al-Qaida presence in northeastern Iraq; and
- Presence of al-Qaida associate Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi in Baghdad in the summer of 2002, and

[redacted]

[redacted]

1. Discussions of Safehaven

Iraqi ***Support for*** *Terrorism* noted generally, "A variety of reporting indicates that senior al-Qaida leaders and Iraqi officials have discussed safehaven in Iraq." The intelligence reporting provided by the CIA in support of this assessment was primarily intelligence reports and press reports on discussions between the two groups. [redacted][44] A CTC operational summary from April 13, 1999, notes four other intelligence reports mentioning Saddam Hussein's standing offer of safehaven to Usama bin Ladin.[45] [redacted][47] The last report included in the CTC summary was a HUMINT report on [redacted] an offer of safehaven from Saddam Hussein [redacted].[48] According to a press report from the Italian Milan Corriere Della Sera dated September 17, 1998, an Iraqi delegation to the Sudan agreed to accept Usama bin Ladin should he no longer be permitted to stay in Afghanistan. Another press report from the Paris Arabic newspaper Al-Watan Al-'Arabi dated January 1, 1999, stated that an Iraqi delegation visited Usama bin Ladin in the summer of 1998 and "bin Ladin tried to feel the Iraqi official's pulse about the possibility of being received in Baghdad" should he be expelled from Afghanistan. According to this press report, however, the Iraqi

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44 [redacted]

45 [redacted]

46 [redacted]

47 [redacted]

48 [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

envoy was not authorized to offer safehaven to bin Ladin and instead returned the discussion to the possibility of cooperation.[49]

2. Iraqi Regime Knowledge of al-Qaida Presence in Northeastern Iraq

([redacted]) In *Iraqi Support for Terrorism,* the CIA noted:

> intelligence and reporting confirm that al-Qaida fighters began to relocate to Kurdish-controlled northeastern Iraq after the Afghanistan campaign began in the fall of 2001, hosted in an area controlled by a local Kurdish extremist group, Ansar al-Islam.

([redacted]) [redacted] in the Kurdish-controlled regions of northeastern Iraq. [redacted] Additionally, the CIA also cited two HUMINT reports [redacted] which provided the CIA with understanding into al-Qaida activities in the region. [redacted]

([redacted]) Regarding the Iraqi regime's likely knowledge of the al-Qaida presence in northeastern Iraq, in *Iraqi Support to Terrorism,* the CIA noted,

> Baghdad probably has a window into al-Qaida activities [redacted] was identified as an IIS associate by [redacted] detainees [redacted]

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[49] [redacted].

[redacted]

[redacted]

([redacted]) [redacted] The CIA also stated, "Baghdad reportedly has had contacts with AI, [redacted]" Nevertheless, the CIA judged that, given the various reports which indicated Iraqi intelligence operatives were active in the northeast as well as the rest of the country, "it would be difficult for al-Qaida to maintain an active, long-term presence in Iraq without alerting the authorities or obtaining their acquiescence."

3. Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi in Baghdad

([redacted]) In *Iraq Support for Terrorism,* the CIA noted:

> A variety of reporting indicates that senior al-Qaida terrorist planner al-Zarqawi was in Baghdad [redacted]. A foreign government service asserted that the IIS knew where al-Zarqawi was located despite Baghdad's claims that it could not find him.

([redacted]) [redacted] now working closely with al-Qaida, were also in Baghdad in the summer of 2002. The CIA also provided the Committee with a finished analytic product [redacted], which discussed their support of al-Zarqawi's network from Baghdad during that period.

[redacted]

[redacted]

As indicated in Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism, the Iraqi regime was, at a minimum, aware of al-Zarqawi's presence in Baghdad in 2002 because a foreign government service passed information regarding his whereabouts to Iraqi authorities in June 2002. Despite Iraq's pervasive security apparatus and its receipt of detailed information about al-Zarqawi's possible location, however, Iraqi Intelligence told the foreign government service it could not locate al-Zarqawi. [redacted].

([redacted]) [redacted] al-Zarqawi and his network were operating both in Baghdad and in the Kurdish-controlled region of Iraq. The HUMINT reporting indicated that the Iraqi regime certainly knew that al-Zarqawi was in Baghdad because a foreign government service gave that information to Iraq. Though the intelligence reports established the presence of al-Zarqawi in Baghdad during 2002 and the activities of his network in other areas of Iraq during 2002 and 2003 [redacted].

P. Operational Cooperation Between Iraq and al-Qaida

(U) Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism contained the following summary regarding operational cooperation between Iraq and al-Qaida:

> We have no credible information that Baghdad had foreknowledge of the 11 September attacks or any other al-Qaida strike, but we continue to pursue all leads. We also are assessing Baghdad's possible role in the current al-Qaida related activity in Iraq.

The CIA expressed concern in its assessments regarding the grave threat posed to U.S. security by operational cooperation between Iraq and al-Qaida. Due to limited reporting on the subject, however, the CIA refrained from asserting that the Iraqi regime and al-Qaida were cooperating on terrorist operations. DCI Tenet, in his testimony before the Committee, summarized the intelligence reporting on Iraqi-al-Qaida operational cooperation stating, "These sources do not describe Iraqi complicity in, control over, or authorization of specific terrorist attacks carried out by al-Qaida."

[redacted]

[redacted]

As the DCI's statement indicated, the CIA did not have credible intelligence reporting which suggested Iraq had operational control over al-Qaida. The CIA had no [redacted] credible reporting on the leadership of either the Iraqi regime or al-Qaida, which would have enabled it to better define a cooperative relationship, if any did in fact exist. As a result, the CIA refrained from asserting that Iraq and al-Qaida had cooperated on terrorist attacks. Instead, in Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism, the CIA judged, "al-Qaida, including Bin Ladin personally, and Saddam were leery of close cooperation," but that the "mutual antipathy of the two would not prevent tactical, limited cooperation."

(U) The CIA did provide assessments on certain instances in which the Iraqi regime and al-Qaida were alleged to have cooperated in terrorist attacks including:

- The 1993 World Trade Center bombing,
- The September 11th attacks, and
- The Foley assassination.

Although there are provocative elements in each instance, the CIA analysts also identified information that cast doubt on operational cooperation between Iraq and al-Qaida in these terrorist attacks.

1. 1993 World Trade Center Bombing

(U) In both Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism and Iraq and al-Qaida: Interpreting a Murky Relationship, the CIA reviewed the possible involvement by Iraq in the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. The alleged involvement was based upon three connections to Iraq that surfaced during the investigation of individuals involved in the attack. First, Ramzi Yousef, the leader of the attack, entered the U.S. on a phony Iraqi passport and fled the U.S. with Kuwaiti documentation that Iraq may have been able to provide following its 1990-91 occupation of that country. The CIA found that stolen Iraqi passports were common at this time, however, and there was no indication that Iraq had used Kuwaiti documentation in any other intelligence operation. Second, Abdul Rahman Yasin, a fugitive from the attack, is of Iraqi descent, and in 1993, he fled to Iraq with Iraqi assistance. Iraq held Yasin in custody since that time, explaining that it feared the U.S. would misrepresent Yasin's role in the attack to implicate Iraq. The CIA has not provided any additional information to the Committee regarding Yasin or his involvement in this attack, and his whereabouts currently are unknown by the CIA. Third, convicted bomber Mohammed Salameh, had a maternal uncle who held a post in Palestinian Authority leader Yassir Arafat's Fatah organization while it had offices in Iraq. Iraq allowed

[redacted]

[redacted]

Salameh's Palestinian uncle to emigrate to the West Bank in 1995, however, something the CTC analysts judged the regime would not have been expected to do if he had been involved in the 1993 World Trade Center attacks.

2. The September 11th Attacks

Two alleged Iraqi connections to the September 11,2001, attacks were reviewed in all the analytical products concerning Iraq's links to terrorism and al-Qaida. The first connection to the attack involved Ahmed Hikmat Shakir, an Iraqi national, who facilitated the travel of one of the September 11 hijackers to Malaysia in January 2000. [redacted] A foreign government service reported that Shakir worked for four months as an airport facilitator in Kuala Lumpur at the end of 1999 and beginning of 2000. Shakir claimed he got this job through Ra'ad al-Mudaris, an Iraqi Embassy employee.[50] [redacted] Another source claimed that al-Mudaris was a former IIS officer." The CIA judged in Iraqi *Support for* Terrorism, however, that al-Mudaris' [redacted] that the circumstances surrounding the hiring of Shakir for this position did not suggest it was done on behalf of the IIS.

(U) The CIA's reluctance to draw a conclusion with regard to Shakir was reasonable based on the limited intelligence available and the analysts' familiarity with the IIS.

The second alleged Iraqi connection to the September 11 attacks was the widely-publicized report from the Czech government to the U.S. that meetings took place between September 11 hijacker Muhammed Atta and the IIS chief in Prague, Ahmed Khalil Ibrahim Samir al-Ani. The CIA judged that other evidence indicated that these meetings likely never occurred. According to Iraqi *Support for* Terrorism, "various reports put Atta in Prague [redacted] between late 1994 and the spring of 2001." [redacted] The CIA has provided the Committee no further information that Atta met with IIS officials [redacted]

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[50] (U) [redacted]

[51] (U) [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

([redacted]) [redacted]. Photographs of the alleged October 1999 meeting were initially thought to be of Atta and al-Ani, but subsequent photo analysis by the CIA was inconclusive. Moreover, information [redacted] and press interviews of Atta's family show that he was in Egypt visiting his family during this period in October 1999.

[redacted][52] [redacted] Committee staff also interviewed FBI analysts regarding these alleged meetings, and the analysts stated that they agreed with the CIA assessment and had no further information suggesting or disproving that the meetings had taken place.

3. The Foley Assassination

The CIA also looked into the possibility that the Iraqi regime was involved in the al-Zaraawi network murder of USAID official Laurence Foley in Amman. Jordan in 2002. [redacted] two suspects in the Foley murder, indicated that Iraqi territory may have been used to facilitate travel and the supply weapons to the al-Zarqawi group in Jordan. But, neither of the two suspects provided any information on links between al-Zarqawi and the Iraqi regime. [redacted] one of the two suspects in the Foley murder stated that al-Zarqawi directed and financed the operations of the cell before, during, and after his stint in Baghdad between May and July 2002. The other suspect mentioned that weapons for their operations in Jordan had come from an unspecified place in Iraq. [redacted] an associate of Foley's killer left Jordan to join al-Zarqawi in Iraq after the murder to obtain weapons and explosives for future operations. Both of the suspects [redacted] mentioned that one member of the al-Zarqawi network traveled repeatedly between regime-controlled Iraq and Syria after March 2002.

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[52] [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

The intelligence reporting on the Foley assassination available at the time of the January 2003 publication of *Iraqi Supportfor Terrorism* does not indicate Iraqi government complicity in this attack. A later intelligence report received on February 11,2003, from a source [redacted] The CIA has not provided the Committee with any further information on whether the Iraqi regime was directly involved in this assassination.

Q. Iraq's Use of Terrorist Strikes in the Event of War with the United States

(U) The CIA assessed that:

> If Saddam Hussein concludes that a US attack to destroy his regime is inevitable and imminent, he is likely to feel less constrained in his use of terrorism. At that point he could turn to his own intelligence services, Palestinian surrogates, or al-Qa'ida to attack US interests.
>
> The most potentially lethal option would be to couple Iraq's biological weapons capacity with an effort by his intelligence services, his Palestinian surrogates, or perhaps al-Qaida to disseminate agents.

Based upon these assessments, the CIA determined the following possible outcomes:

- Saddam could use any or all of three major terrorist[54] options to strike the United States . . . .
- Saddam is most likely to use the IIS in any planned terrorist attack . . . .
- Saddam could turn to a small number of operatives from his surrogate groups–whether members of established groups or rogue Palestinians–to undertake CBW operations if the IIS [Iraqi Intelligence Service] were to fail or he wanted plausible deniability . . . .
- Saddam might decide that only an organization such as al-Qa'ida–with its worldwide reach, an extensive terrorist infrastructure, and which is already

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[53] [redacted]

[54] The Iraqi Intelligence Service, Palestinian surrogates, or al-Qaida.

[redacted]

[redacted]

> engaged in a life-and-death struggle with America–could meet his requirements for anti-US terrorism.

(U) No specific intelligence reports were provided by the CIA to support these conclusions. Because the CIA had no contemporaneous reporting upon which to base its assessment, analysts relied upon analytical judgement, and the citation the CIA provided was "background & analysis." The CIA provided this explanation for the citation: "[background and analysis] is used as a source description when a specific judgment or analysis is based on a large, varied, and mostly historical body of reporting. It is usually widely known information." A senior CTC collections officer commented during interview that:

> We had one gap that we were struggling with. That was more the broader strategic plans of Saddam Hussein in terms of the use of WMD as a terrorist weapon. We were very concerned about it, but we did not have much reporting . . . . We ended up having to do more reasoned logic in terms of working through the scenarios to make judgements about if he would turn that over to terrorist groups, when he would turn it over to terrorist groups, and then how they might use it.

The CIA included an explanation of the lack of information on Saddam Hussein's intentions in the Scope Note of Iraqi *Support for* Terrorism:

> Our access to Saddam's intelligence services–the organizers of Baghdad's most recent lethal operations–remains hampered [redacted].

To reach these judgments, the CIA took into consideration:

- Saddam Hussein's past use of terrorism,
- The decision-making environment in Iraq, and
- Iraq's weapons capabilities.

1. Saddam Hussein's Past Use of Terrorism

(U) As mentioned earlier in this report, Saddam Hussein had attempted to conduct terrorist attacks during the 1991 Gulf War using his own intelligence operatives and Palestinian

[redacted]

[redacted]

surrogates. In the earlier section of this report entitled *Terrorist Activities Conducted by the IIS*, the Committee staff referred to terrorist attempts in Manila and Jakarta that were conducted by IIS operatives. In the section entitled *Support for Regional Terrorist Groups*, the Committee staff referred to P operatives [redacted] in an exp iv d car who were arrested by a foreign government. Moreover, current intelligence indicated that the IIS continued to case targets for attacks in the event of war. The Deputy Director of the Office of Terrorism Analysis in CTC commented that:

> . . . when we started this we had a backdrop that was pretty solid on saying Saddam is willing to deal with bad guys and has been doing it for a long time. And he has an intelligence service that has targeted us in the past. We had some information about support for Islamist groups connected with the Arab-Israeli conflict. I think this is significant because I do believe there is a worthwhile debate to have on the ideology of Saddam, but I would also say, coming at this from an aggressive terrorist perspective, we did have a baseline to tell us that he had tried to work on relationship with groups we would identify as Islamist . . . .

2. The Decision-Making Environment in Iraq

The CIA also based its assessment on the decision-making environment in Iraq. The CIA judged that Iraq would likely conduct attacks if Saddam Hussein felt war was imminent, and noted that he would refrain from carrying out attacks until he felt his regime's existence was threatened.

3. Iraq's Weapons Capabilities

The CIA analysts contemplated Iraq's weapons capabilities, and determined whether or not any of them could be employed in terrorist strikes. One delivery system in particular, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) appeared to have potential use in terrorist attacks. In *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* the CIA noted Iraq's interest in UAVs, and speculated that they could be used by terrorists to conduct attacks using CBW. The Committee reviewed the supporting intelligence reports which indicated Iraq sought to procure and test UAVs, and that the UAVs may have been intended for use in terrorist attacks. There is no specific information indicating how Iraq planned to use UAVs, or whether the regime had considered using them to conduct terrorist attacks. Nevertheless, CIA analysts pointed out that if Saddam Hussein supplied UAVs to al-Qaida or other terrorists, it would greatly enhance the terrorists'

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capabilities. The UAV issue more comprehensively under the WMD section titled: Delivery Systems: Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Missiles.

R. Iraqi Links to Terrorism Conclusions

(U) Conclusion 90. The Central Intelligence Agency's assessment that **Saddam** Hussein was most likely to use his own intelligence service operatives to conduct attacks was reasonable, and turned out to be accurate.

[redacted]

(U) Conclusion 91. The Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) assessment that Iraq had maintained ties to several secular Palestinian terrorist groups and with the **Mujahidin** e-**Khalq** was supported by the intelligence. The CIA was also reasonable in judging that Iraq appeared to have been reaching out to more effective terrorist groups, such as Hizballah and **Hamas,** and might have intended to employ such surrogates in the event of war.

[redacted]

(U) Conclusion 92. The Central Intelligence Agency's examination of contacts, training, safehaven and operational cooperation as indicators of a possible Iraq–al-Qaida relationship was a reasonable and objective approach to the question.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Conclusion 93. The Central Intelligence Agency reasonably assessed that there were likely several instances of contacts between Iraq and al-Qaida throughout the **1990s,** but that these contacts did not add up to an established formal relationship.

[redacted]

Conclusion 94. The Central Intelligence Agency reasonably and objectively assessed in ***Iraqi Support for Terrorism*** that the most problematic area of contact between Iraq and al-Qaida were the **reports** of training in the use of non-conventional **weapons,** specifically chemical and biological weapons. [redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Conclusion 95. The Central Intelligence Agency's assessment on safehaven – that al-Qaida or associated operatives were present in Baghdad and in northeastern Iraq in an area under Kurdish control – was reasonable.

[redacted]

(U) Conclusion 96. The Central Intelligence Agency's assessment that to date there was no evidence proving Iraqi complicity or assistance in an al-Qaida attack was reasonable and objective. No additional information has emerged to suggest otherwise.

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) Conclusion 97. The Central Intelligence Agency's judgment that **Saddam** Hussein, if sufficiently desperate, might employ terrorists with a global reach – al-Qaida – to conduct terrorist attacks in the event of war, was reasonable. No information has emerged thus far to suggest that **Saddam** did try to employ al-Qaida in conducting terrorist attacks.

[redacted]

(U) Conclusion 98. The Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) assessments on Iraq's links to terrorism were widely disseminated, though an early version of a key CIA assessment was disseminated only to a limited list of cabinet members and some subcabinet officials in the Administration.

[redacted]

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