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**WE DON'T WANT THE SMOKING GUN TO BE A MUSHROOM CLOUD:
INTELLIGENCE ON IRAQ'S WMD**

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Abstract

In the second half of 2002, when the US intelligence community was tasked to prepare a National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq's WMD capacities, the administration had been already been saying for over six months that Iraq under Saddam posed an intolerable risk that the US was determined to address. In other words, intelligence was catching up with policy. Moreover, the administration's determination to proceed in the face of widespread opposition meant that the stakes in terms of US credibility and prestige were seen in Washington as having become dauntingly large. In the event, the intelligence community slid over the fact that it had too few 'dots' to make confident judgments on WMD in Iraq.

We Don't Want the Smoking Gun to be a Mushroom Cloud: Intelligence on Iraq's WMD

Ron Huisken

1. Introduction

America's Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), George Tenet, observed in February 2004 that the business of intelligence 'deals with the unclear, the unknown, the deliberately hidden' and that in this business 'you are almost never completely wrong or completely right'. On Iraq's weapons of mass destruction (WMD), however, despite that country being a priority intelligence target since 1990 and probably the highest priority target in 2001-2002, the US intelligence community is seen as having come perilously close to getting it completely wrong. David Kay, shortly after resigning as co-head of the Iraq Survey Group in January 2004, put it very succinctly: 'We were almost all wrong'. Increasing numbers of people close to the issue had been coming to this conclusion over the weeks and months since April 2003 when it became possible to begin to verify the intelligence picture, but had been countered by the argument that the investigation was incomplete. By the time David Kay summed it up almost no one in Washington had the appetite to contest his conclusion.

This paper looks into the several explanations that have emerged, both specific and generic, for so glaring an intelligence 'failure'.

There is another dimension to this question that is important but is not the particular focus of this paper. For the general public, the picture of what to expect in the way of WMD in Iraq was painted not by intelligence assessments but by characterisations of those assessments by the political leadership. There can be no dispute that the political leadership in the US (and in the UK and Australia) presented the intelligence as more crisp, emphatic and unqualified than was in fact the case. Some contend that this is a legitimate means of making their case as forcefully as possible. I disagree. Donald Rumsfeld's dictum, that everyone is entitled to their own opinion but not to their own facts, applies also to political leaders.

The political leadership certainly has the responsibility of deciding what, if anything, needs to be done about intelligence assessments of any particular issue, but it also has an obligation to characterise as accurately as possible the size of the leap it is making, and why. In the case of Iraq, the intelligence picture was presented in a manner that minimised the policy leap being

made and left a stronger impression than was warranted that the picture left little room for manoeuvre.

It is not difficult to illustrate this practice. In an Oval Office interview with Bush on 8 February 2004, the NBC's Jim Russett reminded the President that Cheney, Powell and Rumsfeld had all at various times prior to the war said that there was 'no doubt' that Iraq possessed WMD and that he himself had said that 'The Iraq regime is a threat of unique urgency' and 'Saddam Hussein is a threat that we must deal with as quickly as possible'.¹ Just three days earlier however, George Tenet, in an address at Georgetown University, stated that 'They [the analysts] never said there was an imminent threat'. Similarly, Jim Russett's full quote of Rumsfeld was 'no doubt, we know where the weapons are'. But the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, Admiral Jacoby, told reporters in June 2003 that as of September 2002, 'we could not reliably pin down ... locations or production that was underway at a specific location at that point in time'.²

In other words, the intelligence community was implicated in the 'necessity' to seek a definitive outcome on Iraq as soon as possible and by force if necessary to a greater extent than its assessments warranted.³

This paper also focuses on the United States. Particularly in the case of Australia, but to a significant extent also the UK, the intelligence picture on Iraq's WMD was based overwhelmingly on US data. Australia's Parliamentary inquiry into this issue estimated that 97 percent of the intelligence available to agencies in Australia came from partner agencies abroad.⁴ Moreover, each of the Australian agencies has strong bilateral relations with their counterparts abroad. The importance of these institutional links can be inferred from the fact that qualitative differences in assessments and presentation between ONA and DIO detected by the Parliamentary inquiry parallel those in Washington between the CIA and DIA.⁵

2. Background

Iraq under Saddam Hussein was in the WMD business in a big way through 1991. In the broadest terms, Iraq aspired to leadership of the Arab world, an enterprise focused to a significant extent on confronting Israel and containing the rival aspirant for regional dominance, Iran. It was an open secret that Israel had acquired nuclear weapons in the mid 1970s, and the challenge from Iran had been transformed by that country's Islamic revolution in 1979.

Whatever ambitions Iraq may have had for nuclear weapons in the late 1970s and early 1980s were set back in 1981 by Israel's spectacular pre-emptive strike on its major reactor at Osirak. On the other hand, Iraq's possession of chemical weapons (CW) was put beyond doubt when it began to use them in 1983 in the war with Iran and, infamously, against its own civilians in the town of Halabjah. When coalition forces gathered in 1990 to reverse Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait, Iraq unquestionably had a significant capacity to produce and deliver CW. It was also strongly suspected of having a biological weapons (BW) program and of having launched (or re-launched) a nuclear weapons program, although western intelligence was pretty confident that this program was many years from possible fruition.

All of this was confirmed after the ceasefire and the arrival of UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspectors whose job it was to oversee and verify the elimination of WMD stocks and the means of manufacturing them, as well as of ballistic missiles with a range in excess of 150 km. The story is broadly familiar and will not be reviewed in detail here.

Inspectors found a nuclear weapons program rather more vigorous than intelligence had suggested but which, even in the best of circumstances, was still 1-2 years away from even a single explosive device. The regime adamantly denied ever having been in the BW business but was comprehensively exposed in 1995 with the defection of Saddam's son-in-law who gave a detailed account of an extensive program up to 1991 (but who also insisted that it had been dismantled and destroyed by Iraq immediately after the war).

By 1995, this blatant instance of deceit confirmed the general experience of the UN inspectors. The Iraqi regime never saw it as in its interests to be genuinely cooperative and to re-assure the UN that it was in full compliance with the terms of the ceasefire. It quickly became, and remained, a confrontational game of 'cat and mouse', of hide and seek. Records were 'lost', key personnel could not be located, access to facilities was delayed while material was removed, often visibly, and so on.

The continuous presence of inspectors over seven years, coupled with a severe sanctions regime, did result in a measure of confidence that Iraq was no longer a significant threat to its neighbours. On the other hand, the manner in which this had been accomplished left little confidence that Iraq no longer aspired to WMD and could be trusted to remain compliant with its international obligations. Despite this, international solidarity on inspections, and particularly the sanctions regime, began to fray, led by

France and Russia. Iraq naturally took advantage of these differences to press for closure on the 1991 war, including an end to sanctions.

There was a near crisis early in late 1997 through to early 1998 with the US, UK and Australia gearing up to resume hostilities to compel Iraq to continue to cooperate with UN inspections. In December 1998, a similar stand-off could not be resolved. The UN inspectors were withdrawn ahead of four days of intensive bombing by the US and the UK of facilities believed to pose the greatest risk of a reconstituted WMD program. The UN Security Council continued to characterise Iraq as in material breach of its obligations, and stood up a new inspection organisation, the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC). Iraq, however, resisted the re-introduction of inspectors, and there was no consensus to force it to do so. Sanctions remained in place, and the US and UK continued to enforce the no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq, but UN inspectors did not return until November 2002.

The final report from the UNSCOM inspection process (1991-1998) was both impressive and re-assuring in terms of what had been found and destroyed under their supervision and in terms of the unilateral disarmament by Iraqis that they had been able to verify. But it was not a tidy picture. Iraq had been at war almost continuously between 1981 and 1991; its WMD and long-range missile programs were naturally conducted in great secrecy, including the deception of foreign suppliers and extensive use of 'black market' channels; and it endeavoured systematically to frustrate the work of the UN inspectors. Almost inevitably, the inspectors came across snippets of evidence concerning imports of raw materials (for CW, for example), production figures (for some BW agents) or stockpiles of WMD munitions that they could not confidently account for. Accordingly, UNSCOM said in 1999 that they could not exclude the possibility that Iraq still had some proscribed items, including Al Hussein missiles (range 600 km), some 6,500 chemical munitions and bulk CW agent, and growth media for BW (especially anthrax).⁶ These did not necessarily exist but they might, as they could not be fully accounted for when estimating production, imports, use in combat, and destruction since 1991.

In the US, the cumulative frustrations of the UNSCOM years, and indications from the end of 1997 that inspections might prove unsustainable, provoked an open letter to President Clinton from an influential group associated with the Project for the New American Century. This letter, dated 26 January 1998 called on the President to change US policy objectives on Iraq from containment to the removal of Saddam's regime. Six of the authors

of this letter – notably Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Armitage – went on to senior positions in the Bush administration.

Later that year, there was an even more telling indicator of the depth of feeling in the US towards Iraq. On 5 October 1998, with strong bipartisan support, the House of Representatives passed the Iraq Liberation Act. The Senate endorsed the Act unanimously on 7 October, and President Clinton signed it into Law on 31 October 1998. The Iraq Liberation Act declared:

It should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime.

During the four years (December 1998 to November 2002) without UN inspectors in Iraq, the CIA's regular unclassified assessments of WMD and long-range missile developments around the world did not indicate any significant resurgence in Iraq's capacities. It was 'assumed' or considered 'likely' that Iraq was endeavouring to reconstitute its WMD infrastructure. None of these reports through the first half of 2002 suggested that Iraq had resumed production of either CW or BW. Much the same was true with respect to nuclear weapons.⁷ It has to be allowed that unclassified reports to Congress might be rather misleading as a benchmark of views within the intelligence community. A knowledgeable observer has suggested that this is in fact the case. Kenneth Pollack, a former CIA analyst and official in the National Security Council through 2001, recalls that in the late 1990s the presumption that Iraq remained committed to WMD, the absence of inspectors, and a growing body of defector reports about reconstituted programs, resulted in growing anxiety in the intelligence community. He considers that the October 2002 NIE tracks rather closely what the Clinton administration was told in *verbal* briefings. Pollack also confirmed that the focus of concern was always nuclear weapons even though they were the least imminent WMD capability.⁸

September 11, 2001

Then came September 11. As Donald Rumsfeld was to remark much later, this led the US to view everything, including entrenched issues like Iraq, in a new light. September 11 was a watershed for the US, the most devastating attack on the homeland since Pearl Harbor in 1941. It was an event that traumatised America and transfixed the world. On the one hand, all but a very few states seemed to realise instinctively that, regardless of their views about America, they could not get to where they wanted to go

unless this new form of terrorism was decisively checked. The hours and days following the attacks saw the more or less spontaneous assembly around Washington of an essentially global coalition against international terrorism. It was a stunning illustration of America's extraordinary stock of goodwill, admiration and respect, or of what is now often called 'soft power'. In the United States, on the other hand, the attacks led to a potent fusion of the war against terrorism and the neo-conservative vision of the purposes to which America's unprecedented power should now be put. Iraq emerged as the test-bed for converting this vision into reality.

As noted, a number of the authors of the letter to President Clinton urging a definitive solution to the Iraq question now held senior positions in the Bush administration. Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz in particular tried from the outset to manoeuvre the Iraq question to the top of the administration's agenda. There was a good deal of sympathy, but none of the schemes advanced – for example, occupying southern Iraq – were deemed to be politically viable.

In the shock and bewilderment of September 11, it was another story however. Some of the President's inner circle presumed Iraqi involvement in the attacks. And we know from Bob Woodward that the President was convinced of this by 17 September, ordering that plans be drawn up for an eventual attack on Iraq in parallel with what became operation *Enduring Freedom* against al Qaeda and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan.⁹ As early as 26 November 2001, President Bush publicly warned Saddam that he had to let UN inspectors back in. When asked what would happen if Saddam said 'no', Bush checked himself and said only: 'He'll find out'.¹⁰ This was also the occasion on which the President unilaterally expanded the targets in the war against terror to include 'dangerous' regimes seeking to acquire WMD, although he insisted that this had always been his intention.

The administration's determination to make Iraq the next target after Afghanistan in the war on terror was reinforced graphically in January 2002 with President Bush's characterisation of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as an 'axis of evil'. A more concrete indication of serious intent came on 16 February 2002, when the President authorised the CIA to prepare to assist an eventual military operation to oust Saddam, including the conduct of operations inside Iraq. Pursuant to this authorisation, a CIA team entered Iraq in July 2002, with the primary purpose of recruiting a network of informants.¹¹

The one thing that would have made direct action against Iraq an open and shut case – evidence of involvement in the attacks on September 11 or of high-level collaboration between the Iraqi regime and al Qaeda – failed to materialise. Despite this, the administration had postulated as the supreme threat the intersection of terrorism and technology, specifically a future September 11 with WMD. And the administration had made it plain since late 2001, and probably even more forcefully within its ranks than to the outside world, that it regarded regime change in Iraq as the key first step toward eliminating this threat.

On the other hand, by April 2002, both the US and UK governments were alluding to intelligence dossiers on Iraq's WMD programs that would be delivered to the UN Security Council at the appropriate time. In the event, the US did not do so until Powell gave his dramatic briefing to the UN Security Council on 5 February 2003 (see Appendix B). It is important to note, however, that on the occasions in the first half of 2002 when consideration was given to releasing the US dossier, the media was carefully 'backgrounded' not to expect any 'smoking gun'. Officials made clear that the force of the dossier lay in the cumulative picture it painted; a picture that had only one plausible explanation: Iraq had never lost its appetite for WMD and now clearly had to be regarded as back in the business of making or trying to make them.¹²

The British, on the other hand, made their assessment public on 24 September 2002. The assessment soon became the focus of controversy on a number of grounds, not least the prominence it gave to a claim that Iraq could launch a CBW attack within 45 minutes of an order from Saddam Hussein. President Bush cited the claim twice in the following days but then dropped it from his presentations.¹³

In October 2002, however, the CIA completed its National Intelligence Estimate on Iraq's WMD, a classified document of some 90 pages that remained the foundation stone of the administration's case for urgent and definitive action to disarm Iraq. A few pages of this document were declassified in July 2003 as surprise and concern mounted at the failure to find any trace of what had been portrayed as a significant arsenal (see Appendix A).

The NIE stressed the 'lack of specific information', and on several key issues one or other agency recorded strong dissenting views. But the thrust of the document was clear: Iraq was back in the WMD business. In contrast to the characterisation of assessments earlier in 2002 as circumstantial and devoid of smoking guns, the key judgements in the NIE suggested rather strongly that there were smoking guns to be found. Iraq was now assessed

to have resumed production of CW – but at lower rates than before the 1991 war – and to have stocked up to 500 tons of CW agent, most of it produced in the preceding year. Similarly, Iraq was assessed to have resumed the production and weaponisation of BW, but in this case most elements of its program were considered to be larger and more advanced than before the 1991 war. Finally, the NIE stated that ‘most agencies’ assess that Iraq began re-constituting its nuclear weapon program after UN inspectors left at the end of 1998, that it could build a weapon within a year if it obtained fissile material from abroad or by 2007–2009 if it had to make this material itself.

In sum, there seems little doubt that the October 2002 NIE represented a significant leap in the intelligence community’s views on the certainty of the threat from Iraq’s WMD, and on the scale of that threat. This considerable leap in the dimensions of the threat from Iraq’s WMD seems to have only two possible explanations: either there was a surge in intelligence on Iraq’s programs or the US intelligence community was ‘stretching’ what it had. The discussion to follow will seek to shed some light on these issues.

3. The Bubble Bursts

It was the operational forces and the military teams engaged in the initial systematic search for WMD that were the first to be puzzled and then disillusioned.¹⁴ Moreover, being ‘consumers’ of intelligence rather than responsible for generating it, and being so far away from Washington, the military began to speak rather frankly to the media in Iraq from late April 2003 onwards. Journalists were told of extremely precise ‘intelligence’ – a particular room at a particular address and a characterisation of what would be found there – that essentially without exception produced absolutely nothing.

A little background is in order. At the command level, the US armed forces appear to have taken the WMD threat seriously. In the Gulf War of 1991, Iraq’s possession of CW and the means to deliver them was not an intelligence assessment but an operational reality. They had been used quite extensively over the period 1983–1988 in Iraq’s war with Iran and, in one infamous case in 1988, against Iraqi Kurds in the town of Halabja. The fact that Iraq chose not to use them against coalition forces was a relief but also had a credible explanation. Coalition forces had the limited (UN) objective of liberating Kuwait. Moreover, the then US Secretary of State had one meeting with Iraq’s Foreign Minister, Tariq Aziz, believed to have been specifically concerned with deterring Iraq’s use of CW through indicating how this would affect America’s conduct of the coming war. There was much speculation that Baker had threatened retaliation with nuclear

weapons. It seems rather more likely, however, that Baker signalled that the use of CW would lead the US to ignore the UN mandate for coalition forces and invade Iraq to depose Saddam and his regime.

In 2002, Iraq's WMD were more of a probability than a certainty but the objective was now regime change, or at least forceful disarmament which everyone recognised to be the same thing. In October 2002, the CIA made the common-sense assessment that deterrence of Iraq's use of WMD would be weakest when the regime sensed that all was lost. At that point, it could be expected to use them against coalition forces and/or transfer them to groups like al Qaeda for terrorist strikes. Some went further to warn that, even in the absence of a political decision to proliferate WMD to terrorist groups, the inevitable chaos following the regime's demise would be a period of high risk for the leakage of WMD to third parties. In the eyes of many observers, this assessment is hard to reconcile with the modest and uncoordinated WMD search effort mounted behind advancing coalition forces. It is even harder to reconcile with the apparent decision not to interfere with the epidemic of looting, including the destruction of possibly critical records, that took place as the regime crumbled.

In any event, at the end of May 2003, the Commander of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Lieutenant General James Conway, had this to say from Baghdad:

It was a surprise to me then, it remains a surprise to me now, that we have not uncovered weapons. ...We've been to virtually every ammunition supply point between the Kuwait border and Baghdad, but they are simply not there. ...What the regime was intending to do in terms of its use of the weapons, we thought we understood — or we certainly had our best guess, our most dangerous, our most likely courses of action that the intelligence folk were giving us. We were simply wrong. But whether or not we were wrong at the national level, I think, still very much remains to be seen.¹⁵

4. Explaining the Absence of WMD

All three members of the coalition that invaded Iraq in March 2003 have had, or have underway, multiple investigations into the apparent complete absence, certainly of chemical or biological weapons, but perhaps also of capacities to produce these weapons. The current head of the Iraq Survey Group, Charles Duelfer, told Congress in March 2004 that he had refocused the work of the group to try and determine what Saddam's 'intentions' had

been, a quite drastic lowering of the bar from a state with capabilities that posed an imminent threat to the United States and its allies and friends.¹⁶

One can be certain that the full explanation for the intelligence 'failure' that eventually takes shape will be multi-dimensional. This is certainly what emerges from a close examination of the public record. At various points in the pre-war period, and even more so, naturally, since the war, members of the US intelligence community have offered insights that help to explain how the intelligence picture of Iraq diverged so radically from the reality observed after the invasion.

A Lack of Hard Data?

We saw earlier that officials in the Clinton administration recall *oral* intelligence briefings with judgements not dissimilar to those eventually set out in the NIE in October 2002. The practice in the first half of 2002, also mentioned above, of cautioning the media not to expect too much from the intelligence dossier on Iraq suggests that what the intelligence community was prepared to submit in the way of formal written judgements on Iraq's WMD was more qualified than the concerns it was prepared to express orally. In other words, there was considerable anxiety but, it seems, comparatively little hard evidence to support it.

These signals that the intelligence picture was not cut and dried seem to have stopped in September 2002. From October 2002, the administration had the NIE as its new benchmark. The administration had also set itself two political objectives on 4 September 2002: securing authorisation first from the US Congress and then the UN Security Council to use force against Iraq if it would not disarm voluntarily. Political pronouncements on Iraq's capacities routinely became more unequivocal. As noted in the introduction, this was to an important extent a matter of political licence. The public record since September 11 is laced with complaints from US intelligence officials, necessarily unidentified, that political statements went beyond what intelligence could support. These complaints initially focused more on the question of ties between the Iraqi regime and al Qaeda, a linkage that, rather like uranium from Africa, the administration continued to infer despite the failure to find any evidence to support it.¹⁷ Later, however, these complaints extended also to some of the things being said about Iraq's WMD capacities.

It does seem to have been the case, however, that the October 2002 NIE on Iraq presented a more sharply defined picture on WMD than the intelligence community had previously been prepared to sign off on. The

logical explanation would be that the intelligence community intensified its focus on Iraq following September 11 and found the evidence confirming their suspicions, indeed expectations, that Iraq again had an active and advanced WMD program. This explanation is supported by a statement submitted to the *Washington Post* on 8 August 2003 by CIA Director George Tenet in which he stated that intelligence on Iraq had become stronger in recent years, particularly with respect to BW and long-range missiles (see Appendix C).

This assertion was rather odd as press reports in July 2003 referred to a just-completed internal CIA review of pre-war intelligence which found that the evidence collected by the CIA and other agencies after 1998 was mostly fragmentary and often inconclusive.¹⁸ It was therefore no particular surprise that, in a public address on 5 February 2004, Tenet took the opportunity to qualify his August statement rather significantly:

After the UN inspectors left in 1998, we made an aggressive effort to penetrate Iraq. Our record was mixed. While we had voluminous reporting, the major judgments reached (in the October 2002 NIE) were based on a narrower band of data.

(see Appendix D)

This matches an observation from an intelligence official that when UN inspectors left, 'it was like losing your GPS guidance' (a reference to the satellite navigation system at the heart of the 'smart bomb').¹⁹ It has been widely observed, and officially acknowledged, that the US lacked good human sources (or HUMINT) close to the Iraqi leadership. The UN inspectors acted as a surrogate for this missing HUMINT because, at least in broad terms, they could confirm or discount some of the leads thrown up by technical intelligence assets like satellite photography and intercepted electronic transmissions.

Ironically enough, President Bush himself belatedly picked up just how under-whelming and contestable the intelligence case was. Although he had been in the vanguard of talking up the threat, we can accept assurances that he had not actually studied the NIE. Bob Woodward, however, relates that, after listening to a dress rehearsal of a possible declassified briefing on 21 December 2002, Bush turned to George Tenet and said: 'I've been told all this intelligence about having WMD, and this is the best we've got?'²⁰ Bush, of course, eventually tasked Colin Powell to present the briefing to the Security Council in February 2003. The President's reaction to the first cut emphasised the challenge in making a fundamentally circumstantial case genuinely

compelling and persuasive. This, in turn, contributed to a willingness to allow Powell to reveal intelligence capabilities to an extent that astonished most observers.

To fill the gap left by the withdrawal of the inspectors, the US began to rely more heavily on defectors and on the community of Iraqi exiles who had, or claimed to have, current links with members of the regime. It would appear that a good deal of this HUMINT came from or via the Iraq National Congress, headed by Ahmed Chalabi. Chalabi was closely linked to Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz at the Pentagon, and was appointed to the Interim Governing Council after Saddam fell. And from July 2002, as noted earlier, CIA operatives inside Iraq began to build up their own network of informants. The veracity of intelligence from such sources is notoriously difficult to assess. One of the higher art forms in the intelligence game is to find ways of discriminating between real information and deliberate disinformation, or information that the source judges you want to hear and therefore sees possible advantage in providing.

It is now apparent that there were some serious lapses in procedure in this regard. At a general level, the Pentagon established the Office of Special Plans (OSP) in October 2002, a small intelligence assessment unit specifically intended to counter the suspicion that the major agencies had prejudices (for example, that Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden were ideologically incompatible) that could lead to critical signals being overlooked. The OSP remained outside the net assessment process presided over by the CIA, and it had close links to Ahmed Chalabi and the Iraq National Congress. One reputable journalist has gone so far as to assess that, by the end of 2002, the OSP rivaled the CIA and the DIA as the President's main source of intelligence on Iraq's WMD and its possible links to al Qaeda.²¹ As the intelligence debacle unfolded, the possibility that the Iraq National Congress had duped US intelligence with bogus information to advance its own interests in the removal of Saddam began to be taken more seriously. Chalabi's fall from favour took a particularly ominous turn in May 2004 when reports appeared that the CIA had 'hard evidence' that Chalabi had passed classified US information to Iran. Potentially even more humiliating, perhaps, is the fear that Iran was the ultimate source of much of the new HUMINT on Iraq's WMD.²²

More specifically, a key source on one of the most specific intelligence 'dots' – mobile BW laboratories – was never even interviewed by US intelligence officials. The information was provided by German intelligence and accepted on faith. Indeed, it seems that no effort was made even to establish the full identity of this person, a step that might have revealed that

he was the brother of a senior aide to Ahmed Chalabi. A second source on the same question was known to the DIA. This source was considered of doubtful reliability, but his reporting was inadvertently passed on to analysts in other agencies without this caveat, allowing these analysts to conclude that they had reliable, multi-source data.

Although this second lapse may have been no more than a bureaucratic glitch, in the CIA a comparable problem has been identified as a procedural fault that contributed to some of the harder assessments arrived at. The CIA analyses intelligence and coordinates community-wide assessments, but it also collects intelligence, primarily through informers. To minimise the risk of compromising these sources, it has been long-standing practice (ie, from the Cold War days) to tell the analytical community as little as possible about them. A review of the recent experience on Iraq has revealed several instances where analysts mistakenly believed that weapon data had been confirmed by multiple sources when in fact it had come from a single source. In other instances, analysts assumed that intelligence had come from a reliable source with direct knowledge only to discover later either that the source was of unknown reliability or that the source was relaying information from other parties that the agency knew little about. This practice has now been ended.²³

Inherited Assumptions and Mirror-Imaging

A joint investigation by the House and Senate intelligence committees has already concluded that a contributing factor to the embarrassment on Iraq was a failure (presumably in 2001-2002) to challenge inherited assumptions. Iraq had pursued WMD with great determination, had used CW, and had doggedly complicated the efforts of UN inspectors to find and destroy these capabilities. When the issue came to a new peak in the charged atmosphere after September 11, it was already being presumed that Iraq had exploited the absence of inspectors to get back into the WMD business. The items that UNSCOM had been unable to account for became the baseline capability. Iraq's history of deception (plus some evidence that it continued to practise these techniques) was seen both as confirming the existence of a revived program and allowing the inference that it was larger than what could be 'seen'. Thus, the October 2002 NIE said: 'We assess that we are seeing only a portion of Iraq's WMD efforts...'

The possibility that the dearth of hard data might mean that little or nothing was actually going on was not seriously entertained. Shortly after resigning as head of the Iraq Survey Group in January 2004, David Kay observed that the system should, but didn't, have a way for analysts to say

that there was insufficient information to make a judgement.²⁴ On the other hand, it might be closer to the truth to acknowledge that saying 'we don't know' in 2002 was not a politically viable option.

A contention that surfaced repeatedly in the lead up to the war was that Saddam would not be trying to deceive if he did not have something to hide. That was considered illogical. This is sometimes called 'mirror-imaging', or assuming that the opponent operates with similar standards and motives to your own, and reasons in much the same way that you do. And it is a phenomenon that bitter experience has taught intelligence and policy communities everywhere to try to be alert to.

It is not hard in fact to find other plausible explanations for Saddam's observed behaviour. Moreover, there is little doubt that the intelligence community was aware of them. For example, given Saddam's strenuous efforts, including through the acquisition of WMD, to make Iraq into a regional hegemon, it can reasonably be inferred that for reasons of personal pride and national honour (probably indistinguishable for Saddam) he would attach the highest importance to not being seen as bowing meekly to the dictates of the (western) international community. Further, it would be quite plausible to argue that Saddam would see political and military value in other states continuing to believe that Iraq still possessed some WMD capacities. Further still, Saddam probably viewed perceptions of a residual capability as a useful internal discipline. It was known, for example, that, beyond the ghastly incident at Halabjah, in 1999 Saddam surrounded a troublesome Shiite town with troops in white protective clothing, and the unrest ceased.

This is not to suggest that possibilities such as these should have been given equal weight. But one could have expected some indication that they had been considered, particularly as the evidence pointing to renewed production and stockpiling was quite fragile. As far as one can tell from the public record (including the declassified portions of the NIE), this was not the case.

We know from the public record that snippets of suggestive technical intelligence were particularly influential in confirming and consolidating the view that Iraq was re-building a significant WMD capability. George Tenet has acknowledged, for example, that analysts remained sceptical about new production of CW until satellite photography showed what appeared to be shipments of materials from ammunition sites.²⁵ In the Security Council on 5 February 2003, Powell exhibited satellite photography that seemed to show CW sites being cleansed prior to a visit by UN inspectors.

And, in early 2003, both Bush and Rumsfeld cited intercepts suggesting that Saddam was delegating authority to use CW to selected Republican Guard commanders.

There was a comparable experience in the British intelligence community. Brian Jones was the head of the group of analysts in the Defence Intelligence Staff dealing with WMD in 2002. He has said since his retirement in 2003 that the claim that Iraq could deploy CBW in 45 minutes was pivotal because it was the best recent evidence, albeit inferential, that Iraq actually possessed these weapons. The UK source was considered reliable but he was relaying information from a primary source of unknown reliability. Jones' group continued to insist that the body of evidence available to them on old stocks and on new production and storage was not strong and that any assessment that Iraq possessed a CBW capability in some form needed to be carefully caveated. Rather surprisingly, he claims that he was informed that special intelligence, seen only by a select group of very senior officials and too sensitive to be shared with analysts, overturned these reservations.²⁶ Jones was not informed about, nor did he speculate on, where this special intelligence was coming from.²⁷

It is now acknowledged that many of these signals could well have been ruses to fuel the impression of a more significant capability than Iraq actually possessed. David Kay has gone one step further. From interviews with Iraqi scientists and other sources, he said that the Iraq Survey Group had concluded that, from 1997-98, the governance of Iraq had become quite dysfunctional, a development missed by US intelligence.²⁸ They were told that Saddam took personal control of the WMD effort, setting goals that were utterly unfeasible given the thoroughness with which facilities and equipment had been destroyed and the impossibility (because of sanctions) of replacing them. The penalties for refusal to try and for failure to succeed were such that the scientists simulated activity (possibly triggering some intelligence signals), provided false progress reports, and diverted surplus funds. Thus we have the bizarre possibility that Saddam wanted to exaggerate what he thought he had and was acquiring, but had even less than he thought.

If there were WMD, where did they go?

It was mentioned earlier that the October 2002 NIE had a section dealing with when Iraq might use its WMD. These judgements, all prefaced as being low-confidence assessments, included the following:

[Saddam] probably would use CBW when he perceived he irretrievably had lost control of the military and security situation; and

Saddam, if sufficiently desperate, might decide that only an organization such as al-Qaida ... would perpetrate the type of terrorist attacks he would hope to conduct.

A third variant of these judgements was aired in the debate before the war (but not taken up in the NIE). This was the possibility that individual senior Iraqis privy to the whereabouts of the WMD might, in the chaos of regime disintegration, make off with some WMD or know-how related to them in order to engage in private proliferation. This concern re-surfaced immediately after the major fighting was over. The initial inspection effort run by the Pentagon was quickly revealed as far too small and poorly coordinated.²⁹ Also, it soon became apparent that the orgy of looting that coalition forces either opted or were instructed not to prevent was to an important extent purposeful, targeting paper and electronic records at military sites, industrial complexes and offices. Former UN inspector (and future co-head of the ISG) David Kay said in April 2003:

They've increased the proliferation threat. And they've made it more difficult to ever unravel what really happened.³⁰

These considerations, particularly unauthorised proliferation, underscore the importance of determining what happened to whatever WMD weapons, agents and production capacities may have been present in Iraq.

Within a month of the invasion, press reports were citing western intelligence officials who believed that Iraq had gone to great lengths to destroy or dismantle its WMD and the means to make them before the UN inspectors returned in November 2002. An early informant, a scientist who claimed to have worked in Iraq's CW program, said that stockpiles of banned weapons had been gradually destroyed since 1995, although some had been transferred secretly to Syria.³¹ This scientist also claimed that in recent times the work in Iraq had been confined to small R&D projects and that equipment related to these programs was being destroyed up to the eve of the war.³² These observations are consistent with David Kay's view that the US community failed to recognise that Iraq had all but abandoned its efforts to produce large quantities of CBW after the Gulf War in 1991.³³

If there was a systematic effort to dismantle and destroy weapons and production capacities in the second half of 2002, US intelligence appears to have missed it. For the technical intelligence gathering assets, this activity

might have been difficult to distinguish from efforts to hide these capacities. On the other hand, we know that by this time the US was receiving considerable HUMINT. It can be inferred from disclosures by the initial military inspectors that a good deal of this HUMINT pointed in some detail at the precise location of prohibited weapons. As far as one can tell from the public record, however, none of this HUMINT reported evidence of a decision by the regime to leave no 'smoking guns'. In view of the most recent revelations about Ahmed Chalabi and the connections to Iran noted above, this is not particularly surprising.

On 24 April 2003, President Bush for the first time raised the possibility that Iraq had destroyed rather than hidden its WMD. His National Security Adviser, Condoleezza Rice, went in a somewhat different direction a few days later. Rice speculated that emerging evidence pointed to the absence of assembled weapons and that what remained to be found was production capabilities dispersed or combined with production lines for civilian products and intended as a 'just in time' WMD capability.³⁴ This rather sophisticated alternative to the picture set out in the NIE, one posited after just three weeks or so of a modest and reportedly disjointed inspection effort, raises the question of whether this had been an alternative thesis, another way of interpreting the 'dots' of intelligence, in the lead up to the war. Kenneth Pollack reports that it was.³⁵

In June 2003, an Iraqi nuclear scientist led American military personnel to a cache of documents and some components of a centrifuge for uranium enrichment buried in the garden of his house since 1991. This was taken, by the IAEA, as further confirmation of its view that Iraq had not reconstituted its nuclear program and, by the administration, as evidence of its continuing intent to do so.³⁶

We cannot yet rule out the possibility that some of Iraq's WMD and/or the means or know-how to make them have, intentionally or unintentionally, made their way into other hands over the period 1991-2003. It is also possible that remaining weapons or agent ready to be weaponised were destroyed prior to the re-introduction of inspectors in November 2002, or even up to the eve of the war, along with the means to make them.

On the other hand, it is also entirely possible that Iraq had neither WMD nor anything that could be credibly described as capacities to make them in the lead up to the war. Moreover, it is likely that many in the intelligence community recognised this as a real possibility.

Intelligence that wasn't: two vignettes

It is illuminating to relate the saga of two specific claims about Iraq's WMD – Iraq's purported effort to acquire uranium from Africa, particularly Niger, and the existence of mobile (track-mounted) laboratories for the production of biological weapon agents. Both stories illustrate some of the themes developed above: a lack of hard data, a pre-disposition to 'reach' for convincing evidence, and a preparedness to accept supportive HUMINT uncritically. They also provide some glimpses into how slippery the intelligence game can be. Although these episodes can now be related quite briefly, the manner in which the information came out, in bits and pieces and mostly backwards, is a rather complex story.

(a) Iraq's Nuclear Program: Importing Uranium from Niger

Snippets of intelligence in late 2001 and early 2002 concerning Iraqi efforts to purchase uranium from Niger attracted the attention of Vice-President Cheney who asked that the matter be followed up.³⁷

The State Department and the CIA dispatched a retired former Ambassador to Niger, Joseph Wilson, to that country in February 2002 to look into the reports. Wilson concluded that the reports were without substance. The CIA disseminated this conclusion to the other US agencies and the White House but without any details on how it had been reached: it simply reported that officials in Niger denied the reports.³⁸

In September 2002 the CIA obtained, via an Italian journalist, correspondence between officials from Iraq and Niger concerning the purchase of uranium. It would appear that the CIA quickly concluded that the documents were suspect. This can be inferred from the fact that it shared its doubts on Iraq's efforts to acquire uranium from Africa (Somalia and Congo were also being mentioned) with the British who had included this allegation in their own draft dossier on Iraqi WMD. The British, however, insisted they had other intelligence that they could not share with the US (because the source country so specified) and included it in the dossier they published later in September 2002.

The CIA also stuck to its guns. Its National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iraq, completed in October 2002 (but which remained wholly classified until June 2003) said 'most agencies' assessed that Iraq began reconstituting its nuclear weapon program after UNSCOM inspectors left in December 1998, but uranium from Africa was not listed in the indications supporting this judgement. Similarly, it insisted that any reference to uranium purchases be deleted from a Presidential speech on 7 October 2002 and also from a 20

December 2002 speech to the Security Council by the US Ambassador to the UN.

In his State of the Union speech on 28 January 2003, however, the President cited British intelligence on Iraqi efforts to obtain uranium from Africa to support the charge that Iraq still intended to acquire nuclear weapons. The story on how this occurred began to break in May 2003 as the press learned of the Wilson mission in February 2002, and then of the CIA's acquisition of the documents in September 2002. By July, the White House officially acknowledged that the reference should not have been included. After considerable dissembling, which involved CIA Director Tenet initially taking the blame, it was acknowledged by officials working for Condoleezza Rice that the CIA had requested that no reference whatsoever be made to this issue. This included citing British intelligence to support the reference. Standards for the inclusion of such material in a Presidential speech are properly rather high. The CIA would not support its inclusion because it had little confidence in its own information, and had not seen the British intelligence. Despite this evidence of wrangling over the text of the State of the Union speech, in the days immediately before and after it was delivered, several senior figures – Powell, Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz and Rice – cited the information in speeches and statements. In a contrary development, however, Powell looked more closely at the evidence as he prepared for his briefing to the Security Council on 5 February 2003, and rejected it as too weak.

In the meantime, on 27 January 2003, the day before the State of the Union, the UN nuclear inspector, El Baradei, reported that no prohibited activities had thus far been found at Iraq's former nuclear sites. He also reported that aluminium tubes intercepted by the US on July 2002 were considered not suitable for uranium enrichment centrifuges (a judgement shared by most intelligence agencies in the US and the UK).³⁹ The following week, on 4 February, the US passed the documents on Niger to the IAEA (some three months after the IAEA had first requested them).

In his final report to the Security Council on 8 March 2003, El Baradei confirmed his earlier judgement that no evidence had been found of a re-constituted nuclear weapon. He added that the IAEA had quickly determined that the Niger documents were bogus.

Looking back on this little saga, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the administration, or specifically the White House, determined that the spectre of an Iraqi nuclear weapon had to be kept alive. Two of the three key indicators of a revived nuclear weapons program – the rebuilding of key facilities and the importation of aluminium tubes – had been debunked.

Uranium from Niger (or somewhere in Africa) was all that was left. A piece of intelligence deemed very early to be of doubtful credibility simply could not be suppressed and hung around for more than 12 months. There can be little doubt that the White House knew of the CIA preference to exclude all reference to this issue from the President's speech but made the independent assessment that it could defend a reference linked to British intelligence. And the willingness to fly with so few feathers probably stemmed from the judgement that a nuclear threat had a great deal more traction in Congressional and public circles than the less well understood chemical and biological weapons. After all, for the signature phrase of the case against Iraq it is hard to go past 'we don't want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud.'

(b) Mobile Biological Weapon Laboratories

In early May 2003, the Pentagon announced that it may have found a mobile biological weapon production unit in a vehicle seized by Kurdish fighters in northern Iraq on 19 April. At the end of May, reflecting a 'likely' assessment by the CIA and DIA, President Bush told a reporter for Polish TV that 'we found biological laboratories ... They're illegal. But for those who say we haven't found the banned manufacturing devices or banned weapons, they're wrong, we found them.'⁴⁰

Mobile BW agent production facilities had figured prominently in Colin Powell's presentation to the Security Council on 5 February 2003. He displayed detailed drawings of how the trucks were configured, indicating that the sources included eye-witnesses or HUMINT in the jargon. The former Soviet Union had developed such vehicles during the Cold War, adding to the general plausibility of the intelligence. In addition, the original UN weapon inspectors, frustrated at not finding the strongly suspected BW program, wrote an internal report in 1992 speculating that Iraq may have resorted to small, mobile facilities that could be readily dispersed or hidden.⁴¹

On the same day that Bush said in Poland that 'we found them', Powell told reporters in Washington that 'everything I presented on 5 February, I can tell you, there was good sourcing for, was not politicised, it was solid information'.⁴²

Unfortunately, further technical assessment of the vehicle seized in Iraq began to throw up doubts. In fact, assessments began to lean toward the claim from Iraqi sources that these vehicles in fact produced hydrogen to fill balloons that artillery units used to assist targeting. On 5 February 2004, some ten months after the vehicle was seized, George Tenet stated in a

public address at Georgetown University that there was no consensus in the intelligence community on the purpose of the vehicle.

More significantly, he went on to say that ‘we are finding discrepancies in some claims made by human sources about mobile biological weapons production before the war’. The following month, the *Washington Post* learned that US intelligence officials had not in fact spoken directly to one of the two Iraqis who had provided the intelligence. The intelligence from this individual had come to the US via Germany. Moreover, this source, ironically code-named ‘Curveball’, turned out to be the brother of an aide to Ahmed Chalabi. The second source was known to DIA and already ‘flagged’ as unreliable. Regrettably, however, this caution was not disseminated together with the information he provided, inclining analysts to the view they had confirmation from multiple sources.⁴³

This was too much for Powell. He had told the world on 5 February 2003 that his briefing on Iraq’s WMD was confined to instances based on solid, multi-sourced intelligence. And, in his own judgement, the bioweapon trucks were the most dramatic revelation that he presented. Speaking to reporters on his plane on 2 April 2004, he said: ‘Now, if the sources fell apart, then we need to find out how we’ve gotten ourselves in that position. I’ve had discussions with the CIA about it.’⁴⁴

A hypothesis to fit the facts

In an interim report on the ISG to Congressional intelligence committees on 2 October 2003, David Kay pointed to evidence of:

A clandestine network of laboratories and facilities ... suitable for preserving BW expertise, BW capable facilities and continuing R&D.

Multiple sources with varied access and reliability have told ISG that Iraq did not have a large, on-going, centrally controlled CW program after 1991.

Iraqi scientists and senior government officials ... have told ISG that Saddam Hussein remained firmly committed to acquiring nuclear weapons ... but, to date, we have not uncovered evidence that Iraq undertook significant post-1998 steps to actually build nuclear weapons or produce fissile material.⁴⁵

Kenneth Pollack, amongst others, has offered a broad explanation of this outcome that runs roughly as follows.⁴⁶ In the initial period after the Gulf War, Iraq did aspire to hoodwink UNSCOM and retain a full capacity

to quickly resume its WMD effort. This applied especially to CW and BW. The critical elements of its nuclear weapon effort were relatively large and visible, highly specialised and therefore difficult to disguise. UNSCOM was pretty confident that this program had been comprehensively dismantled.

The Iraqi calculus changed in 1995-96. The comprehensive exposure of its BW program by Saddam's son-in-law was a major contributing factor. This revelation naturally eroded confidence within UNSCOM and made it harder in the Security Council to sell the line that sanctions on Iraq could soon be lifted with the inspection effort transitioning to a more benign monitoring exercise. With UNSCOM re-energised, probably more inclined to allow intelligence from 'member states' to focus its inspections, and the irreducible risk of further well-placed defectors, Iraq faced the real prospect of periodic exposures continually extending the sanctions regime. It therefore elected to give higher priority to ending the sanctions through reducing all its WMD programs to essentially latent capabilities and genuinely minimising the risk of further exposures.

The earlier discussion allows a speculative extension of this hypothesis to 2002. Even if Iraq endeavoured to launch a concerted effort to re-constitute its programs after the inspectors left in December 1998, on-going sanctions and, particularly, the cumulative impact of sanctions presented formidable difficulties. Recall the evidence collected by the ISG that the governance of Iraq became increasingly dysfunctional over this period. This does not preclude a directive from Saddam to cleanse Iraq of incriminating evidence in the period prior to renewed inspections in November 2002, but it leaves rather open what, if anything, of substance existed at this point to be cleansed.

One outstanding issue is the strongly held view that the looting rampage following the regime's collapse disguised the deliberate destruction of records at locations of prime interest from the standpoint of WMD. Who might have orchestrated this, and why? There are at least two plausible explanations. It might have been among Saddam's last directives and intended to further ensure that the US would have a hard time justifying its invasion on the grounds of a WMD threat. Alternatively, some of the key managers of WMD programs, whether current or past, might have preferred to erase or obscure these linkages rather than rely simply on the contention that they had no choice.

5. An initial Assessment

This investigation into the saga of Iraq's WMD permits some reasonably confident answers to a couple of particularly important questions. The first of these is whether there was a failure of US intelligence? The simple answer

is 'yes' in the sense that nothing like what the intelligence community said it could 'see' — let alone the bigger program that it said should be inferred — has been found, and by the end of 2003 no one had the courage any longer to suggest that it would be. This is consequential enough in itself. Any loss of confidence in the capacities or the integrity of the US intelligence community — whether in terms of collection or assessment and whether domestically or among prospective foreign partners — will be a factor that could complicate the political management of future crises.

There is, however, another probable dimension to this 'failure' that is more damaging still. The allegation — made frequently around the world, including Australia — that the invasion of Iraq was clearly based on a lie is, in itself, a simplistic and unfair resort to the benefits of hindsight. This allegation has veracity only to the extent that it can be demonstrated that the intelligence community did know then what it knows now but failed to adequately qualify its assessments. This investigation does indeed suggest strongly that there were other schools of thought in the intelligence community not simply on how the dots *could* be connected but in fact on how they *should* be connected. Moreover, there are strong indications that the basic procedures and disciplines of the tradecraft of intelligence were loosened and that the strict separation between intelligence and policy broke down. Intelligence supportive of the desired assessment was filtered in, sometimes without being properly tested, and other information filtered out. To put it bluntly, the US intelligence community does appear to have done its best to provide an assessment of Iraq's WMD capabilities that supported the need for early, definitive action to remove those capabilities. The community's assessment only went part of the way. The political leadership still felt it needed to engage in considerable freelancing and 'sexing-up' of the threat portrayed in the October 2002 NIE. But the intelligence community had both manipulated the dots and stretched its interpretation of the dots to portray Iraq as, beyond all reasonable doubt, back in the WMD business in a serious way.

The Wider Context: Intelligence followed Policy

To this point, the analysis has focused on what happened and, to the extent possible, on how it happened. What has yet to be adequately addressed is why it happened. The explanation is necessarily more speculative but, in my view, it lies essentially in the political climate in which the intelligence community operated after September 11. The Bush administration had a great deal riding on Iraq and events conspired to make the intelligence on Iraq's WMD of singular importance. Political expectations of the intelligence community were correspondingly high.

A key factor was that US intelligence had missed September 11. It had picked up a lot of 'chatter' about a major al Qaeda attack, but had missed the fact that the targets would be inside the United States, and had lacked the imagination to anticipate the 'weapons' that would be used. By and large, the community has not been blamed for this failure, but it remained an awful legacy in the lead up to Iraq.

The administration had postulated as the new supreme threat to the United States the intersection of terrorism and technology, specifically a future September 11 with WMD. By early in 2002, the administration had committed itself to the objective of regime change in Iraq as the key first step toward eliminating this threat. We know that Iraq was in the frame alongside al Qaeda and the Taliban in the immediate aftermath of September 11. For several key members of Bush's inner circle, the working hypothesis was that Iraq had been involved in the attacks, either directly or as an accessory through an association with al Qaeda. Bush was apparently persuaded of this view – which may have been hope as much as conviction – but elected to defer striking Iraq until evidence of its involvement emerged.

Although no such evidence turned up – then or since – the administration never wavered, and seeking to direct the international coalition against terrorism toward regime change in Iraq became a consuming preoccupation. The definition of the 'enemy' in the war on terror that the international coalition had accepted was unilaterally expanded to include rogue states seeking to acquire WMD; the President and others began to allude very clearly to what became the doctrine of pre-emption; and, harking back to the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998, the administration began to say openly that it was US policy to secure regime change in Iraq.

In short, by early in 2002, the administration had staked America's credibility on regime change in Iraq. There can be little doubt that the intelligence community, already burdened with the legacy of September 11, was fully aware of just how much the administration had riding on its position on Iraq.

It is likely, however, that the administration saw even more than this resting on regime change in Iraq. Notwithstanding the campaign rhetoric in 2000 about a more humble America, a preoccupation with grand strategy was the hallmark of the Bush administration from the outset. It brought a quite distinctive perspective to bear on the significance for the United States of the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union. It was a perspective that declared that the US should not be reticent about the fact that it was by far the most powerful state the world had ever experienced. It

was a perspective that declared that the US had the interests, the capacity and the duty to take charge, to embrace the fact that it could no longer view itself merely as the first among equals. And it was a perspective that declared that, not only was US pre-eminence unchallenged, but that it should be a priority for the US to ensure that it remained unchallengeable.

This outlook on the world inevitably shaped the approach on Iraq rather profoundly. Beyond the more immediate problems associated with Iraq, the demonstratively inconclusive nature of the 1991 Gulf War was seen as a strategic liability, a major blemish on the image the United States needed to project of a power that no one should dare to cross. Regime change in Iraq had a double appeal. It would be going back to correct an old mistake — in the President's case, his father's mistake — and at the same time would represent an opportunity to make a graphic statement for the future on US power and purpose. These considerations played into the strategy for defeating the Iraqi armed forces and ousting Saddam Hussein, a strategy that would demonstrate that the US could defeat even major regional threats with an extraordinary economy of military effort. To the grand strategists — and these came to include the President — this was the defining issue in the Bush Doctrine, a doctrine intended to set the stage for an indefinite period of US pre-eminence. Backing off or in any way acknowledging that US power had its limits was seen as ruinous.

This predisposition toward grand strategy was clearly apparent as Washington's full case for regime change in Iraq was laid out in the days before the invasion. Beyond links to international terrorism, a resurgent WMD program and a record of appalling domestic brutality, the Bush administration also presented a democratic Iraq as a trigger for the transformation of the wider Arab world toward democracy and economic development. Evidence of this thinking began to emerge from Republican think-tanks in mid-2002. It was grand strategy in its boldest form and was nestled in the ferment of the security debate at the time as leveraging the liberation of Iraq into a bold strike at the root causes of terrorism. It was a thesis that most US allies and friends viewed with alarm. They were already profoundly sceptical about bringing the Iraq issue to the boiling point with al Qaeda and Afghanistan half done and the Israeli-Palestinian dispute blossoming into total war. Seeming to look beyond these crises as mere preludes to the main game seemed to be hubris of the first order, and further evidence of just how decisively the United States had stepped up into a world of its own.

The Bush administration was presumably fully aware that formally adding so grand and far-reaching a strategic objective to the case for regime

change in Iraq would compound the already formidable difficulties it was encountering in the United Nations. This rationale remained in the wings, so to speak, until barely three weeks before the war. In a speech at the American Enterprise Institute on 26 February 2003, President Bush offered a comprehensive picture of Iraq without Saddam Hussein and the positive influence it would exert over the wider region. It would be reasonable to infer that, by the end of February 2003, the administration felt that it had little to lose as far as Security Council endorsement for the use of force against Iraq was concerned.

It should be clear where this discussion is headed. Over the course of the 12 months or so after September 11, the intelligence community would have become acutely conscious that the political and strategic load its assessments on Iraq carried had been made incalculably large.

There was a final development that would have sharpened this sense of responsibility even further. By July/August 2002, the evaporation of international support for the apparent US determination to move directly against Iraq began to be reflected in domestic opinion polls. This development, in turn, encouraged the Congress to re-assert its prerogatives on foreign and security policy. Put bluntly, the administration had failed to this point to conflate Iraq into the wider war against terrorism.

The outcome, of course, was Bush's announcement on 4 September 2002 that the US would take its case to the Security Council. He also conceded that Congressional authorisation to use force to defeat international terrorism did not extend to Iraq and committed the administration to securing new authority for this purpose.

For the US Congress, the central question was whether Iraq posed a clear threat to the security of the United States. The central question in the UN was the state of Iraq's compliance with Security Council resolutions on WMD and long-range missiles. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz rather famously observed after the war that WMD had particular prominence largely because it was the one strand of the case for action against Iraq that all elements of the US bureaucracy could agree on.⁴⁷

It should be added that it was also the strand — the others being support for terrorism and gross abuse of human rights — that could most readily support a case for urgent action. Involvement in the September 11 attacks and a relationship with al Qaeda had turned out to be dead-ends. The humanitarian case against the Iraqi regime was compelling, and it has been fully confirmed since the invasion. But no real effort was made to present this as a primary or stand-alone rationale for regime change. To the contrary,

it was presented as a beneficial consequence of possible action that would be necessary for selfish national security reasons. In addition, it underpinned the fateful thesis that coalition forces would be greeted with 'rose petals and chocolates', and that both the war and post-war stabilisation could be accomplished with an economy of force that would send a sobering message to anyone else inclined to challenge the United States.

Recalling this insider's view of the substantive importance of WMD does not affect the point being made here. The failure to get Iraq swept up as part of the broad response to September 11 and the consequent need to take the case for regime change directly to Congress and the UN meant, in practice, greater reliance on the intelligence estimate of Iraq's WMD capabilities supporting its characterisation as an imminent threat. This relative shift in the burden of proof for regime change in Iraq would not have been lost on the intelligence community.

President Bush claimed on a number of occasions that the US (and its allies and the UN) had looked at the intelligence on Iraq and seen a threat. This discussion suggests that it is more accurate to say that the causality ran the other way. It suggests that, in the second half of 2002, intelligence was catching up with policy, and doing so in circumstances where the administration had literally everything invested in its policy.

6. Conclusions

As foreshadowed at the outset, a number of factors contributed to the 'intelligence failure' on Iraq's WMD. A major part of the blame rests with the Iraqi regime. It had developed and produced chemical and biological weapons, and made a serious effort to get a nuclear weapon. It had also established that it regarded these weapons, not as a deterrent of last resort, but as capabilities that it would use or threaten to use to achieve its political goals. Finally, Iraq opted deliberately to leave some doubt about its status with respect to WMD. Regarding Iraq with some suspicion with respect to WMD was wholly sensible, and every major intelligence community in the world was so inclined. It should be recalled that Security Council Resolution 1441, passed unanimously on 8 November 2002, declared Iraq *at that time* to be in material breach of its obligations to the UN. In all these ways, the Iraqi regime was deeply complicit in sealing its own fate.

At the same time, an intelligence capability exists to probe behind deception. It exists to provide early warning of guilt when innocence is being proclaimed, but also to suggest bluff when guilt is being signalled. The use of force invariably results in new problems and governments need to be confident that the problem they think they face outweighs even the

worst possible outcomes of war. The intention to use force pre-emptively ups the stakes in this regard quite dramatically.

In the case of Iraq, the political decision to regard that country as an urgent threat that had to be addressed by force if necessary was made long before the intelligence community was tasked to pull together its definitive assessment of the scale and imminence of this threat. This in itself meant that the intelligence community was responding in circumstances where that most powerful of drivers, American credibility, was considered to have already been put on the line.

Even this, however, was not all that America had invested in its decision to remove Saddam. Regime change in Iraq was also intended as a definitive statement of America's ability and determination to project its unique position as the most powerful state since the Roman Empire into the indefinite future, that the 'Bush doctrine' was not a lofty ambition but an objective fact.

Finally, the Bush administration could not bring the Iraq issue to a clear decision point on the basis of September 11, possible links to al Qaeda, and inconclusive compliance with Security Council resolutions on WMD. By the time the intelligence community was tasked to prepare its NIE on Iraq, the policy arena had shifted to the Congress and the UN and whether or not Iraq actually had or was about to get WMD, especially nuclear weapons, loomed as the pivotal consideration.

The fact that the US intelligence community proclaimed a threat that did not exist is a matter of deep concern. It will permanently colour assessments of whether the invasion of Iraq in March 2003 was justified. It begs the question whether the crisis might have taken a different course politically and diplomatically, avoiding the deep divisions with major allies and friends, and the sharp depletion of America's invaluable aura of legitimacy and leadership. As Colin Powell acknowledged in February 2004, 'the absence of a [WMD] stockpile changes the political calculus'.⁴⁸ It is also likely to have profound implications over time for the structure and internal workings of the US intelligence community as lawmakers seek new checks and balances to minimise the risk of misses like September 11 in 2001 and fictitious hits like Iraq's WMD in 2002.⁴⁹ This reform process can be expected to look closely at the nexus between the intelligence and policy worlds in Washington. Whether it was prevailed upon or itself felt obligated, it remains the case that the intelligence community slid over the fact that it had insufficient information to come to confident judgements about WMD in Iraq. In the words of a former CIA executive, 'it was knowable but not known that we did not have enough dots on Iraq'.⁵⁰

Insulating intelligence from policy or, more accurately, striking an effective balance between access to but distance from the policy world, has always been and will always be inherently imperfect. In the case of Iraq in 2002/03, however, the insulation failed rather completely, and with consequences that have and will change the course of the 21st century.

A unipolar world order, with the United States as by far the most comprehensively powerful state, will be with us for a long time yet. It is also the case that the United States has a remarkable capacity to change course, to refresh itself and to recover lost ground. And there can be little doubt that most of the players that matter around the world want to see the US back in the business of offering effective leadership. America's shoes are far too big for anyone else to want to step into them. At the present moment, however, one senses that, because of the attitudes and instincts that culminated in the lonely invasion of Iraq, the United States will not, for some years to come, be the force that it could have been. Moreover, much of the ground lost in terms of shaping developments in key areas, not least East Asia, will not be recoverable.

Notes

- ¹ The transcript of this interview was printed in the *New York Times* on 8 February 2004 under the title, 'Bush Interview on 'Meet the Press''.
- ² Dana Priest & Walter Pincus, 'Bush Certainty on Arms Went Beyond Analysts' Views', *Washington Post*, 7 June 2003.
- ³ For a closer look at this issue see Joseph Cirincione, Jessica T. Matthews, George Perkovich, 'WMD in Iraq: evidence and implications', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2004; and John Prados, 'Iraq: A Necessary War?', *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, May/June 2003.
- ⁴ Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD, *Intelligence on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Canberra, December 2003, p.46.
- ⁵ Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD, *Intelligence on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Canberra, December 2003, pp.52-54.
- ⁶ This information has been conveniently summarised in the report of the Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD, *Intelligence on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Appendix D, p.109-121.
- ⁷ For a closer look at this issue, see Joseph Cirincione, Jessica T. Matthews, and George Perkovich, 'WMD in Iraq: evidence and implications', Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, January 2004; and John Prados, 'Iraq: A Necessary War?', *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, May/June 2003.
- ⁸ See Kenneth Pollack, 'Spies, Lies, and Weapons: What Went Wrong', *The Atlantic online*, January/February 2004; and 'Weapons of Misperception', an interview with Kenneth Pollack in *The Atlantic*, 13 January 2004.
- ⁹ Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, (New York, Simon & Schuster, 2002) p.99.
- ¹⁰ The full transcript of this informal press conference appeared in the *Washington Post*, 26 November 2001.
- ¹¹ William Hamilton, 'Bush Began to Plan War Three Months After 9/11', *Washington Post*, 17 April 2004.
- ¹² For additional commentary on this issue, see the authors, *The Road To War On Iraq*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No.148, Strategic & Defence Studies Centre, ANU, 2003.
- ¹³ Dana Milbank, 'White House Didn't Gain CIA Nod for Claim On Iraqi Strikes', *Washington Post*, 20 July 2003.
- ¹⁴ The primary effort was mounted by the Army's 75th Exploitation Task Force and its four mobile teams. There was also the Chemical and Biological Intelligence Support Team set up by DIA, a team from the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, and a covert Special Forces team called Task Force 20 that went in before hostilities were declared to find and prevent the use of CBW.
- ¹⁵ Greg Miller, 'Comments Revive Doubts Over Iraq's Weapons', *Los Angeles Times*, 30 May 2003.
- ¹⁶ Walter Pincus, 'No Breakthrough in Iraq WMD Search', *Washington Post*, 30 March 2004.

- ¹⁷ This practice appears to have been remarkably effective. Polls taken as late as March 2004 suggest that a majority of Americans still believe that Saddam's regime collaborated with al Qaeda.
- ¹⁸ James Risen, David E. Sanger & Thom Shanker, 'In Sketchy Data, White House Sought Clues to Gauge Threat', *New York Times*, 20 July 2003.
- ¹⁹ Risen, Sanger & Shanker, 'In Sketchy Data, White House Sought Clues to Gauge Threat', *New York Times*, 20 July 2003.
- ²⁰ Quoted in William Hamilton, 'Bush Began to Plan War Three Months After 9/11', *Washington Post*, 17 April 2004.
- ²¹ Seymour M. Hersh, 'Selective Intelligence', *The New Yorker*, 12 May 2003.
- ²² See Julian Borger, 'US intelligence fears Iran duped hawks into war', *Guardian Weekly*, 28 May 2004.
- ²³ Walter Pincus, 'CIA Alters Policy After Iraq Lapses', *Washington Post*, 12 February 2004.
- ²⁴ James Risen, 'Ex-Inspector Says CIA Missed Disarray in Iraq's Arms Program', *New York Times*, 26 January 2004.
- ²⁵ George Tenet, 'Tenet Defends Assessment of Iraqi Weapons', remarks prepared for delivery by Director of Central Intelligence, George J Tenet, at Georgetown University on 5 February 2004 (see Appendix D).
- ²⁶ Jones' article, dated 4 February 2004, is available at <http://argument.independent.co.uk/low>.
- ²⁷ As far as the author is aware, there has been no indication that Australia also received such 'special intelligence'.
- ²⁸ James Risen, 'Ex-Inspector Says CIA Missed Disarray in Iraqi Arms Program', *New York Times*, 26 January 2004.
- ²⁹ Judith Miller, 'A Chronicle of Confusion in the Hunt for Hussein's Weapons', *New York Times*, 20 July 2003.
- ³⁰ Cited in Bob Drogin, 'Concern Grows Over Weapon Hunt', *Los Angeles Times*, 27 April 2003.
- ³¹ One report, by an Indian analyst, suggests that some of this material was transferred from Syria to Pakistan with the assistance of Dr A.Q. Khan. See B. Raman, 'A.Q. Khan Shifted Iraq's WMD To Pakistan?', South Asia Analysis Group, Paper No.916, 7 February 2004.
- ³² Judith Miller, 'Illicit Arms Kept Till Eve of War, an Iraqi Scientist is Said to Assert', *New York Times*, 21 April 2003.
- ³³ James Risen, 'Ex-Inspector Says CIA Missed Disarray in Iraqi Arms Program', *New York Times*, 26 January 2004.
- ³⁴ Marion Wilkenson, 'Vilified Weapon Inspectors May Have Got It Right', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 1 May 2003.
- ³⁵ Pollack, 'Spies Lies, and Weapons: What Went Wrong', *The Atlantic online*, January/February 2004.

- ³⁶ David E. Sanger, 'Iraqi Says Hussein Planned to Revive the Nuclear Program Dismantled in 1991', *New York Times*, 27 April 2003.
- ³⁷ Nicholas D. Kristof, 'Missing in Action: Truth', *New York Times*, 6 May 2003.
- ³⁸ Walter Pincus, 'CIA Did Not Share Doubt on Iraq Data', *Washington Post*, 12 June 2003.
- ³⁹ Walter Pincus, 'Bush Faced Dwindling Data on Iraq Nuclear Bid', *Washington Post*, 16 July 2003.
- ⁴⁰ Greg Miller, 'Comments Revive Doubts Over Iraq's Weapons', *Los Angeles Times*, 30 May 2003.
- ⁴¹ Bob Drogin and Greg Miller, 'How the Weapon Evidence Crumbled', *Los Angeles Times*, 28 March 2004.
- ⁴² Greg Miller, 'Comments Revive Doubts Over Iraq's Weapons', *Los Angeles Times*, 30 May 2003.
- ⁴³ Walter Pincus, 'Experts Say US Never Spoke to Source of Tip on Bioweapons', *Washington Post*, 5 March 2004.
- ⁴⁴ Glen Kessler, 'Powell Shows Doubts', *New York Newsday*, 4 March 2004.
- ⁴⁵ Statement by David Kay on the Interim Progress Report on the Activities of the Iraq Survey Group (ISG) before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Washington DC, 2 October 2003.
- ⁴⁶ Pollack, 'Lies, Spies, and Weapons: What Went Wrong', *The Atlantic online*, January/February 2004.
- ⁴⁷ Paul Wolfowitz, Interview with Sam Tannenhaus, *Vanity Fair*, 9 May 2003. Available at www.defenselink.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi.
- ⁴⁸ See extracts from an interview with Colin Powell in 'The Right Thing to Do', *Washington Post*, 3 February 2004.
- ⁴⁹ For an excellent exposition on the substantive dilemmas, and on the political and bureaucratic difficulties associated with this objective, see Richard K. Betts, 'The New Politics of Intelligence: Will Reforms Work This Time?', *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2004, pp.2-5.
- ⁵⁰ John MacGaffin, former deputy director for operations at the CIA, cited in Gordon Corera, 'Radical Reform Required in US Intelligence Community', *Jane's Intelligence Review*, April 2004, p. 44.

APPENDIX A

Key Judgments (from October 2002 NIE) Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction

(Declassified 18 July 2003)

We judge that Iraq has continued its weapons of mass destruction (WMD) programs in defiance of UN resolutions and restrictions. Baghdad has chemical and biological weapons as well as missiles with ranges in excess of UN restrictions; if left unchecked, it probably will have a nuclear weapon during this decade. (See INR alternative view at the end of these Key Judgments.)

We judge that we are seeing only a portion of Iraq's WMD efforts, owing to Baghdad's vigorous denial and deception efforts. Revelations after the Gulf war starkly demonstrate the extensive efforts undertaken by Iraq to deny information. We lack specific information on many key aspects of Iraq's WMD programs.

Since inspections ended in 1998, Iraq has maintained its chemical weapons effort, energized its missile program, and invested more heavily in biological weapons; in the view of most agencies, Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program.

- Iraq's growing ability to sell oil illicitly increases Baghdad's capabilities to finance WMD programs; annual earnings in cash and goods have more than quadrupled, from \$580 million in 1998 to about \$3 billion this year.
- Iraq has largely rebuilt missile and biological weapons facilities damaged during Operation *Desert Fox* and has expanded its chemical and biological infrastructure under the cover of civilian production.
- Baghdad has exceeded UN range limits of 150 km with its ballistic missiles and is working with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which allow for a more lethal means to deliver biological and, less likely, chemical warfare agents.
- Although we assess that Saddam does not yet have nuclear weapons or sufficient material to make any, he remains intent on acquiring them. Most agencies assess that Baghdad started reconstituting its nuclear program about the time that UNSCOM inspectors departed – December 1998.

How quickly Iraq will obtain its first nuclear weapon depends on when it acquires sufficient weapons-grade fissile material.

- If Baghdad acquires sufficient fissile material from abroad, it could make a nuclear weapon within several months to a year.
- Without such material from abroad, Iraq probably would not be able to make a weapon until 2007 to 2009, owing to inexperience in building and operating centrifuge facilities to produce highly enriched uranium and challenges in procuring the necessary equipment and expertise.
 - Most agencies believe that Saddam's personal interest in and Iraq's aggressive attempts to obtain high-strength aluminum tubes for centrifuge rotors – as well as Iraq's attempts to acquire magnets, high-speed balancing machines, and

machine tools – provide compelling evidence that Saddam is reconstituting a uranium enrichment effort for Baghdad’s nuclear weapons program. (DOE agrees that reconstitution of the nuclear program is underway but assesses that the tubes probably are not part of the program.)

- Iraq’s efforts to re-establish and enhance its cadre of weapons personnel as well as activities at several suspect nuclear sites further indicate that reconstruction is underway.
- All agencies agree that about 25,000 centrifuges based on tubes of the size Iraq is trying to acquire would be capable of producing approximately two weapons’ worth of highly enriched uranium per year.
- In a much less likely scenario, Baghdad could make enough fissile material for a nuclear weapon by 2005 to 2007 if it obtains suitable centrifuge tubes this year and has all the other materials and technological expertise necessary to build production-scale uranium enrichment facilities.

We assess that Baghdad has begun renewed production of mustard, sarin, GF (cyclosarin), and VX; its capability probably is more limited now than it was at the time of the Gulf War, although VX production and agent storage life probably have been improved.

- An array of clandestine reporting reveals that Baghdad has procured covertly the types and quantities of chemicals and equipment sufficient to allow limited CW agent production hidden within Iraq’s legitimate chemical industry.
- Although we have little specific information on Iraq’s CW stockpile, Saddam probably has stocked at least 100 metric tons (MT) and possibly as much as 500 MT of CW agents – much of it added in the last year.
- The Iraqis have experience in manufacturing CW bombs, artillery rockets, and projectiles. We assess that they possess CW bulk fills for SRBM warheads, including for a limited number of covertly stored Scuds, possibly a few with extended ranges.

We judge that all key aspects - R&D, production, and weaponization - of Iraq’s offensive BW program are active and that most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf war.

- We judge Iraq has some lethal and incapacitating BW agents and is capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax, for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives.
 - Chances are even that smallpox is part of Iraq’s offensive BW program.
 - Baghdad probably has developed genetically engineered BW agents.
- Baghdad has established a large-scale, redundant, and concealed BW agent production capability.
 - Baghdad has mobile facilities for producing bacterial and toxin BW agents; these facilities can evade detection and are highly survivable. Within three to six months* these units probably could produce an amount of agent equal to the total that Iraq produced in the years prior to the Gulf War.

Iraq maintains a small missile force and several development programs, including for a UAV probably intended to deliver biological warfare agent.

- Gaps in Iraqi accounting to UNSCOM suggest that Saddam retains a covert force of up to a few dozen Scud-variant SRBMs with ranges of 650 km to 900 km.

- Iraq is deploying its new al-Samoud and Ababil-100 SRBMs, which are capable of flying beyond the UN-authorized 150-km range limit; Iraq has tested an al-Samoud variant beyond 150 km — perhaps as far as 300 km.
- Baghdad's UAVs could threaten Iraq's neighbors, US forces in the Persian Gulf, and if brought close to, or into the United States, the US Homeland.
 - An Iraqi UAV procurement network attempted to procure commercially available route planning software and an associated topographic database that would be able to support targeting of the United States, according to analysis of special intelligence.
 - The Director, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance, US Air Force, does not agree that Iraq is developing UAVs primarily intended to be delivery platforms for chemical and biological warfare (CBW) agents. The small size of Iraq's new UAV strongly suggests a primary role of reconnaissance, although CBW delivery is an inherent capability.
- Iraq is developing medium-range ballistic missile capabilities, largely through foreign assistance in building specialized facilities, including a test stand for engines more powerful than those in its current missile force.

We have low confidence in our ability to assess when Saddam would use WMD.

- Saddam could decide to use chemical and biological warfare (CBW) preemptively against US forces, friends, and allies in the region in an attempt to disrupt US war preparations and undermine the political will of the Coalition.
- Saddam might use CBW after an initial advance into Iraqi territory, but early use of WMD could foreclose diplomatic options for stalling the US advance.
- He probably would use CBW when he perceived he irretrievably had lost control of the military and security situation, but we are unlikely to know when Saddam reaches that point.
- We judge that Saddam would be more likely to use chemical weapons than biological weapons on the battlefield.
- Saddam historically has maintained tight control over the use of WMD; however, he probably has provided contingency instructions to his commanders to use CBW in specific circumstances.

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 cause for making war.

Iraq probably would attempt clandestine attacks against the US Homeland if Baghdad feared an attack that threatened the survival of the regime was imminent or unavoidable, or possibly for revenge. Such attacks — more likely with biological than chemical agents — probably would be carried out by special forces or intelligence operatives.

- The Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) probably has been directed to conduct clandestine attacks against US and Allied interests in the Middle East in the event the United States takes action against Iraq. The IIS probably would be the primary means by which Iraq would attempt to conduct any CBW attacks on the US Homeland, although we have no specific intelligence information that Saddam's regime has directed attacks against US territory.

Saddam, if sufficiently desperate, might decide that only an organization such as al-Qa'ida – with worldwide reach and extensive terrorist infrastructure, and already engaged in a life-or-death struggle against the United States – would perpetrate the type of terrorist attack that he would hope to conduct.

- In such circumstances, he might decide that the extreme step of assisting the Islamist terrorists in conducting a CBW attack against the United States would be his last chance to exact vengeance by taking a large number of victims with him.

State/INR Alternative View of Iraq's Nuclear Program

The Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research (INR) believes that Saddam continues to want nuclear weapons and that available evidence indicates that Baghdad is pursuing at least a limited effort to maintain and acquire nuclear weapon-related capabilities. The activities we have detected do not, however, add up to a compelling case that Iraq is currently pursuing what INR would consider to be an integrated and comprehensive approach to acquire nuclear weapons. Iraq may be doing so, but INR considers the available evidence inadequate to support such a judgment. Lacking persuasive evidence that Baghdad has launched a coherent effort to reconstitute its nuclear weapons program, INR is unwilling to speculate that such an effort began soon after the departure of UN inspectors or to project a timeline for the completion of activities it does not now see happening. As a result, INR is unable to predict when Iraq could acquire a nuclear device or weapon.

In INR's view, Iraq's efforts to acquire aluminum tubes is central to the argument that Baghdad is reconstituting its nuclear weapons program, but INR is not persuaded that the tubes in question are intended for use as centrifuge rotors. INR accepts the judgment of technical experts at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) who have concluded that the tubes Iraq seeks to acquire are poorly suited for use in gas centrifuges to be used for uranium enrichment and finds unpersuasive the arguments advanced by others to make the case that they are intended for that purpose. INR considers it far more likely that the tubes are intended for another purpose, most likely the production of artillery rockets. The very large quantities being sought, the way the tubes were tested by the Iraqis, and the atypical lack of attention to operational security in the procurement efforts are among the factors, in addition to the DOE assessment, that lead INR to conclude that the tubes are not intended for use in Iraq's nuclear weapon program.

Confidence Levels for Selected Key Judgments in This Estimate

High Confidence:

- Iraq is continuing, and in some areas expanding, its chemical, biological, nuclear and missile programs contrary to UN resolutions.
- We are not detecting portions of these weapons programs.
- Iraq possesses proscribed chemical and biological weapons and missiles.
- Iraq could make a nuclear weapon in months to a year once it acquires sufficient weapons-grade fissile material.

Moderate Confidence:

- Iraq does not yet have a nuclear weapon or sufficient material to make one but is likely to have a weapon by 2007 to 2009. (see INR alternative view).

Low Confidence:

- When Saddam would use weapons of mass destruction.
- Whether Saddam would engage in clandestine attacks against the US Homeland.

- Whether in desperation Saddam would share chemical or biological weapons with al-Qa'ida.

[...]

Uranium Acquisition. Iraq retains approximately two-and-a-half tons of 2.5 percent enriched uranium oxide, which the IAEA permits. This low-enriched material could be used as a feed material to produce enough HEU for about two nuclear weapons. The use of enriched feed material also would reduce the initial number of centrifuges that Baghdad would need by about half. Iraq could divert this material – the IAEA inspects it only once a year – and enrich it to weapons grade before a subsequent inspection discovered it was missing. The IAEA last inspected this material in late January 2002.

Iraq has about 550 metric tons of yellowcake¹ and low-enriched uranium at Tuwaitha, which is inspected annually by the IAEA. Iraq also began vigorously trying to procure uranium ore and yellowcake; acquiring either would shorten the time Baghdad needs to produce nuclear weapons.

- A foreign government service reported that, as of early 2001, Niger planned to send several tons of 'pure uranium' (probably yellowcake) to Iraq. As of early 2001, Niger and Iraq reportedly were still working out arrangements for this deal, which would be for up to 500 tons of yellowcake. We do not know the status of this arrangement.
- Reports indicate that Iraq also has sought uranium ore from Somalia and possibly the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We cannot confirm whether Iraq successfully succeeded in acquiring uranium ore and/or yellowcake from these sources. Reports suggest Iraq is shifting from domestic mining and milling of uranium to foreign acquisition. Iraq possesses significant phosphate deposits, from which uranium had been chemically extracted before Operation *Desert Storm*. Intelligence information on whether nuclear-related phosphate mining and/or processing has been reestablished is inconclusive, however.

Annex A

Iraq's Attempts to Acquire aluminum Tubes

(This excerpt from a longer view includes INR's position on the African uranium issue)

INR's Alternative View: Iraq's Attempts to Acquire Aluminum Tubes

Some of the specialized but dual-use items being sought are, by all indications, bound for Iraq's missile program. Other cases are ambiguous, such as that of a planned magnet-production line whose suitability for centrifuge operations remains unknown. Some efforts involve non-controlled industrial material and equipment – including a variety of machine tools – and are troubling because they would help establish the infrastructure for a renewed nuclear program. But such efforts (which began well before the inspectors departed) are not clearly linked to a nuclear end-use. Finally, the claims of Iraqi pursuit of natural uranium in Africa are, in INR's assessment, highly dubious.

* [Corrected per Errata sheet issued in October 2002]

1 - A refined form of natural uranium

Source:

http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/library/reports/2002/nie_iraq_october2002.htm; accessed 1 June 2004

APPENDIX B

Remarks to the United Nations Security Council

Secretary Colin L. Powell

New York City

February 5, 2003

SECRETARY POWELL: Thank you, Mr President. Mr President and Mr Secretary General, distinguished colleagues, I would like to begin by expressing my thanks for the special effort that each of you made to be here today. This is an important day for us all as we review the situation with respect to Iraq and its disarmament obligations under UN Security Council Resolution 1441.

Last November 8, this Council passed Resolution 1441 by a unanimous vote. The purpose of that resolution was to disarm Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction. Iraq had already been found guilty of material breach of its obligations stretching back over 16 previous resolutions and 12 years.

Resolution 1441 was not dealing with an innocent party, but a regime this Council has repeatedly convicted over the years.

Resolution 1441 gave Iraq one last chance, one last chance to come into compliance or to face serious consequences. No Council member present and voting on that day had any illusions about the nature and intent of the resolution or what serious consequences meant if Iraq did not comply.

And to assist in its disarmament, we called on Iraq to cooperate with returning inspectors from UNMOVIC and IAEA. We laid down tough standards for Iraq to meet to allow the inspectors to do their job.

This Council placed the burden on Iraq to comply and disarm, and not on the inspectors to find that which Iraq has gone out of its way to conceal for so long. Inspectors are inspectors; they are not detectives.

I asked for this session today for two purposes. First, to support the core assessments made by Dr Blix and Dr ElBaradei. As Dr Blix reported to this Council on January 27, 'Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance, not even today, of the disarmament which was demanded of it.'

And as Dr ElBaradei reported, Iraq's declaration of December 7 'did not provide any new information relevant to certain questions that have been outstanding since 1998.'

My second purpose today is to provide you with additional information, to share with you what the United States knows about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, as well as Iraq's involvement in terrorism, which is also the subject of Resolution 1441 and other earlier resolutions.

I might add at this point that we are providing all relevant information we can to the inspection teams for them to do their work.

The material I will present to you comes from a variety of sources. Some are US sources and some are those of other countries. Some of the sources are technical, such as intercepted telephone conversations and photos taken by satellites. Other sources are people who have risked their lives to let the world know what Saddam Hussein is really up to.

I cannot tell you everything that we know, but what I can share with you, when combined with what all of us have learned over the years, is deeply troubling. What you will see is an accumulation of facts and disturbing patterns of behavior. The facts and Iraq's behavior demonstrate that Saddam Hussein and his regime have made no effort to disarm, as required by the international community.

Indeed, the facts and Iraq's behavior show that Saddam Hussein and his regime are concealing their efforts to produce more weapons of mass destruction.

Let me begin by playing a tape for you. What you are about to hear is a conversation that my government monitored. It takes place on November 26th of last year, on the day before United Nations teams resumed inspections in Iraq. The conversation involves two senior officers, a colonel and a brigadier general from Iraq's elite military unit, the Republican Guard.

AUDIO [The tape was played.]

SECRETARY POWELL: Let me pause and review some of the key elements of this conversation that you just heard between these two officers.

First, they acknowledge that our colleague Mohammed ElBaradei is coming, and they know what he's coming for and they know he's coming the next day. He's coming to look for things that are prohibited. He is expecting these gentlemen to cooperate with him and not hide things.

But they're worried. We have this modified vehicle. What do we say if one of them sees it? What is their concern? Their concern is that it's something they should not have, something that should not be seen.

The general was incredulous: "You didn't get it modified. You don't have one of those, do you?"

"I have one."

"Which? From where?"

"From the workshop. From the Al-Kindi Company."

"What?"

"From Al-Kindi."

"I'll come to see you in the morning. I'm worried you all have something left."

"We evacuated everything. We don't have anything left."

Note what he says: "We evacuated everything. We didn't destroy it. We didn't line it up for inspection. We didn't turn it into the inspectors. We evacuated it to make sure it was not around when the inspectors showed up. I will come to you tomorrow."

The Al-Kindi Company. This is a company that is well known to have been involved in prohibited weapons systems activity.

Let me play another tape for you. As you will recall, the inspectors found 12 empty chemical warheads on January 16th. On January 20th, four days later, Iraq promised the

inspectors it would search for more. You will now hear an officer from Republican Guard headquarters issuing an instruction to an officer in the field. Their conversation took place just last week, on January 30.

AUDIO [The tape was played.]

SECRETARY POWELL: Let me pause again and review the elements of this message.

“They are inspecting the ammunition you have, yes?”

“Yes. For the possibility there are forbidden ammo.”

“For the possibility there is, by chance, forbidden ammo?”

“Yes.”

“And we sent you a message yesterday to clean out all the areas, the scrap areas, the abandoned areas. Make sure there is nothing there. Remember the first message: evacuate it.”

This is all part of a system of hiding things and moving things out of the way and making sure they have left nothing behind.

You go a little further into this message and you see the specific instructions from headquarters: “After you have carried out what is contained in this message, destroy the message because I don’t want anyone to see this message.”

“Okay.”

“Okay.”

Why? This message would have verified to the inspectors that they have been trying to turn over things. They were looking for things, but they don’t want that message seen because they were trying to clean up the area, to leave no evidence behind of the presence of weapons of mass destruction. And they can claim that nothing was there and the inspectors can look all they want and they will find nothing.

This effort to hide things from the inspectors is not one or two isolated events. Quite the contrary: this is part and parcel of a policy of evasion and deception that goes back 12 years, a policy set at the highest levels of the Iraqi regime.

We know that Saddam Hussein has what is called ‘a Higher Committee for Monitoring the Inspection Teams’. Think about that. Iraq has a high-level committee to monitor the inspectors who were sent in to monitor Iraq’s disarmament – not to cooperate with them, not to assist them, but to spy on them and keep them from doing their jobs.

The committee reports directly to Saddam Hussein. It is headed by Iraq’s Vice President, Taha Yasin Ramadan. Its members include Saddam Hussein’s son, Qusay.

This committee also includes Lieutenant General Amir al-Sa’di, an advisor to Saddam. In case that name isn’t immediately familiar to you, General Sa’di has been the Iraqi regime’s primary point of contact for Dr Blix and Dr ElBaradei. It was General Sa’di who last fall publicly pledged that Iraq was prepared to cooperate unconditionally with inspectors. Quite the contrary, Sa’di’s job is not to cooperate; it is to deceive, not to disarm, but to undermine the inspectors; not to support them, but to frustrate them and to make sure they learn nothing.

We have learned a lot about the work of this special committee. We learned that just prior to the return of inspectors last November, the regime had decided to resume what we heard called “the old game of cat-and-mouse”.

For example, let me focus on the now famous declaration that Iraq submitted to this Council on December 7th. Iraq never had any intention of complying with this Council's mandate. Instead, Iraq planned to use the declaration to overwhelm us and to overwhelm the inspectors with useless information about Iraq's permitted weapons so that we would not have time to pursue Iraq's prohibited weapons. Iraq's goal was to give us in this room, to give those of us on this Council, the false impression that the inspection process was working.

You saw the result. Dr Blix pronounced the 12,200-page declaration 'rich in volume' but 'poor in information and practically devoid of new evidence'. Could any member of this Council honestly rise in defense of this false declaration?

Everything we have seen and heard indicates that instead of cooperating actively with the inspectors to ensure the success of their mission, Saddam Hussein and his regime are busy doing all they possibly can to ensure that inspectors succeed in finding absolutely nothing.

My colleagues, every statement I make today is backed up by sources, solid sources. These are not assertions. What we are giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence. I will cite some examples, and these are from human sources.

Orders were issued to Iraq's security organizations, as well as to Saddam Hussein's own office, to hide all correspondence with the Organization of Military Industrialization. This is the organization that oversees Iraq's weapons of mass destruction activities. Make sure there are no documents left which would connect you to the OMI.

We know that Saddam's son, Qusay, ordered the removal of all prohibited weapons from Saddam's numerous palace complexes. We know that Iraqi government officials, members of the ruling Ba'ath Party and scientists have hidden prohibited items in their homes. Other key files from military and scientific establishments have been placed in cars that are being driven around the countryside by Iraqi intelligence agents to avoid detection.

Thanks to intelligence they were provided with, the inspectors recently found dramatic confirmation of these reports. When they searched the homes of an Iraqi nuclear scientist, they uncovered roughly 2,000 pages of documents. You see them here being brought out of the home and placed in UN hands. Some of the material is classified and relates to Iraq's nuclear program.

Tell me, answer me: Are the inspectors to search the house of every government official, every Ba'ath Party member and every scientist in the country to find the truth, to get the information they need to satisfy the demands of our Council?

Our sources tell us that in some cases the hard drives of computers at Iraqi weapons facilities were replaced. Who took the hard drives? Where did they go? What is being hidden? Why?

There is only one answer to the why: to deceive, to hide, to keep from the inspectors.

Numerous human sources tell us that the Iraqis are moving not just documents and hard drives, but weapons of mass destruction, to keep them from being found by inspectors. While we were here in this Council chamber debating Resolution 1441 last fall, we know from sources that a missile brigade outside Baghdad was dispersing rocket launchers

and warheads containing biological warfare agent to various locations, distributing them to various locations in western Iraq.

Most of the launchers and warheads had been hidden in large groves of palm trees and were to be moved every one to four weeks to escape detection.

We also have satellite photos that indicate that banned materials have recently been moved from a number of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction facilities.

Let me say a word about satellite images before I show a couple. The photos that I am about to show you are sometimes hard for the average person to interpret, hard for me. The painstaking work of photo analysis takes experts with years and years of experience, poring for hours and hours over light tables. But as I show you these images, I will try to capture and explain what they mean, what they indicate, to our imagery specialists.

Let's look at one. This one is about a weapons munition facility, a facility that holds ammunition at a place called Taji. This is one of about 65 such facilities in Iraq. We know that this one has housed chemical munitions. In fact, this is where the Iraqis recently came up with the additional four chemical weapons shells.

Here you see 15 munitions bunkers in yellow and red outlines. The four that are in red squares represent active chemical munitions bunkers.

How do I know that? How can I say that? Let me give you a closer look. Look at the image on the left. On the left is a close-up of one of the four chemical bunkers. The two arrows indicate the presence of sure signs that the bunkers are storing chemical munitions. The arrow at the top that says 'security' points to a facility that is a signature item for this kind of bunker. Inside that facility are special guards and special equipment to monitor any leakage that might come out of the bunker. The truck you also see is a signature item. It's a decontamination vehicle in case something goes wrong. This is characteristic of those four bunkers. The special security facility and the decontamination vehicle will be in the area. If not at any one of them or one of the other, it is moving around those four, and it moves as needed to move, as people are working in the different bunkers.

Now look at the picture on the right. You are now looking at two of those sanitized bunkers. The signature vehicles are gone, the tents are gone. It's been cleaned up. And it was done on the 22nd of December as the UN inspection team is arriving, and you can see the inspection vehicles arriving in the lower portion of the picture on the right.

The bunkers are clean when the inspectors get there. They found nothing.

This sequence of events raises the worrisome suspicion that Iraq had been tipped off to the forthcoming inspections at Taji. As it did throughout the 1990s, we know that Iraq today is actively using its considerable intelligence capabilities to hide its illicit activities. From our sources, we know that inspectors are under constant surveillance by an army of Iraqi intelligence operatives. Iraq is relentlessly attempting to tap all of their communications, both voice and electronics. I would call my colleagues' attention to the fine paper that the United Kingdom distributed yesterday which describes in exquisite detail Iraqi deception activities.

In this next example, you will see the type of concealment activity Iraq has undertaken in response to the resumption of inspections. Indeed, in November of 2002, just when the inspections were about to resume, this type of activity spiked. Here are three examples.

At this ballistic missile site on November 10th, we saw a cargo truck preparing to move ballistic missile components.

At this biological weapons-related facility on November 25th, just two days before inspections resumed, this truck caravan appeared – something we almost never see at this facility, and we monitor it carefully and regularly.

At this ballistic missile facility, again, two days before inspections began, five large cargo trucks appeared, along with a truck-mounted crane, to move missiles.

We saw this kind of housecleaning at close to 30 sites. Days after this activity, the vehicles and the equipment that I've just highlighted disappear and the site returns to patterns of normalcy. We don't know precisely what Iraq was moving, but the inspectors already knew about these sites so Iraq knew that they would be coming.

We must ask ourselves: Why would Iraq suddenly move equipment of this nature before inspections if they were anxious to demonstrate what they had or did not have?

Remember the first intercept in which two Iraqis talked about the need to hide a modified vehicle from the inspectors. Where did Iraq take all of this equipment? Why wasn't it presented to the inspectors?

Iraq also has refused to permit any U-2 reconnaissance flights that would give the inspectors a better sense of what's being moved before, during and after inspections. This refusal to allow this kind of reconnaissance is in direct, specific violation of operative paragraph seven of our Resolution 1441.

Saddam Hussein and his regime are not just trying to conceal weapons; they are also trying to hide people. You know the basic facts. Iraq has not complied with its obligation to allow immediate, unimpeded, unrestricted and private access to all officials and other persons, as required by Resolution 1441. The regime only allows interviews with inspectors in the presence of an Iraqi official, a minder. The official Iraqi organization charged with facilitating inspections announced publicly and announced ominously, that, "Nobody is ready" to leave Iraq to be interviewed.

Iraqi Vice President Ramadan accused the inspectors of conducting espionage, a veiled threat that anyone cooperating with UN inspectors was committing treason.

Iraq did not meet its obligations under 1441 to provide a comprehensive list of scientists associated with its weapons of mass destruction programs. Iraq's list was out of date and contained only about 500 names despite the fact that UNSCOM had earlier put together a list of about 3,500 names.

Let me just tell you what a number of human sources have told us. Saddam Hussein has directly participated in the effort to prevent interviews. In early December, Saddam Hussein had all Iraqi scientists warned of the serious consequences that they and their families would face if they revealed any sensitive information to the inspectors. They were forced to sign documents acknowledging that divulging information is punishable by death.

Saddam Hussein also said that scientists should be told not to agree to leave Iraq; anyone who agreed to be interviewed outside Iraq would be treated as a spy. This violates 1441.

In mid-November, just before the inspectors returned, Iraqi experts were ordered to report to the headquarters of the Special Security Organization to receive counter-intelligence training. The training focused on evasion methods, interrogation resistance techniques, and how to mislead inspectors.

Ladies and gentlemen, these are not assertions. These are facts corroborated by many sources, some of them sources of the intelligence services of other countries.

For example, in mid-December, weapons experts at one facility were replaced by Iraqi intelligence agents who were to deceive inspectors about the work that was being done there. On orders from Saddam Hussein, Iraqi officials issued a false death certificate for one scientist and he was sent into hiding.

In the middle of January, experts at one facility that was related to weapons of mass destruction, those experts had been ordered to stay home from work to avoid the inspectors. Workers from other Iraqi military facilities not engaged in illicit weapons projects were to replace the workers who had been sent home. A dozen experts have been placed under house arrest — not in their own houses, but as a group at one of Saddam Hussein's guest houses.

It goes on and on and on. As the examples I have just presented show, the information and intelligence we have gathered point to an active and systematic effort on the part of the Iraqi regime to keep key materials and people from the inspectors, in direct violation of Resolution 1441.

The pattern is not just one of reluctant cooperation, nor is it merely a lack of cooperation. What we see is a deliberate campaign to prevent any meaningful inspection work.

My colleagues, Operative Paragraph 4 of UN Resolution 1441, which we lingered over so long last fall, clearly states that false statements and omissions in the declaration and a failure by Iraq at any time to comply with and cooperate fully in the implementation of this resolution shall constitute — the facts speak for themselves — shall constitute a further material breach of its obligation.

We wrote it this way to give Iraq an early test. Would they give an honest declaration and would they, early on, indicate a willingness to cooperate with the inspectors? It was designed to be an early test. They failed that test.

By this standard, the standard of this Operative Paragraph, I believe that Iraq is now in further material breach of its obligations. I believe this conclusion is irrefutable and undeniable.

Iraq has now placed itself in danger of the serious consequences called for in UN Resolution 1441. And this body places itself in danger of irrelevance if it allows Iraq to continue to defy its will without responding effectively and immediately.

This issue before us is not how much time we are willing to give the inspectors to be frustrated by Iraqi obstruction, but how much longer are we willing to put up with Iraq's non-compliance before we, as a Council, we as the United Nations say, "Enough. Enough".

The gravity of this moment is matched by the gravity of the threat that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pose to the world. Let me now turn to those deadly weapons programs and describe why they are real and present dangers to the region and to the world.

First, biological weapons. We have talked frequently here about biological weapons. By way of introduction and history, I think there are just three quick points I need to make. First, you will recall that it took UNSCOM four long and frustrating years to pry, to pry an admission out of Iraq that it had biological weapons. Second, when Iraq finally admitted having these weapons in 1995, the quantities were vast. Less than a teaspoon of dry anthrax, a little bit – about this amount. This is just about the amount of a teaspoon. Less than a teaspoonful of dry anthrax in an envelope shut down the United States Senate in the fall of 2001.

This forced several hundred people to undergo emergency medical treatment and killed two postal workers just from an amount, just about this quantity, that was inside of an envelope.

Iraq declared 8,500 liters of anthrax, but UNSCOM estimates that Saddam Hussein could have produced 25,000 liters. If concentrated into this dry form, this amount would be enough to fill tens upon tens upon tens of thousands of teaspoons. And Saddam Hussein has not verifiably accounted for even one teaspoonful of this deadly material. And that is my third point. And it is key. The Iraqis have never accounted for all of the biological weapons they admitted they had and we know they had.

They have never accounted for all the organic material used to make them. And they have not accounted for many of the weapons filled with these agents such as their R-400 bombs. This is evidence, not conjecture. This is true. This is all well documented.

Dr Blix told this Council that Iraq has provided little evidence to verify anthrax production and no convincing evidence of its destruction. It should come as no shock then that, since Saddam Hussein forced out the last inspectors in 1998, we have amassed much intelligence indicating that Iraq is continuing to make these weapons.

One of the most worrisome things that emerges from the thick intelligence file we have on Iraq's biological weapons is the existence of mobile production facilities used to make biological agents.

Let me take you inside that intelligence file and share with you what we know from eyewitness accounts. We have first-hand descriptions of biological weapons factories on wheels and on rails.

The trucks and train cars are easily moved and are designed to evade detection by inspectors. In a matter of months, they can produce a quantity of biological poison equal to the entire amount that Iraq claimed to have produced in the years prior to the Gulf War.

Although Iraq's mobile production program began in the mid-1990s, UN inspectors at the time only had vague hints of such programs. Confirmation came later, in the year 2000. The source was an eyewitness, an Iraqi chemical engineer who supervised one of these facilities. He actually was present during biological agent production runs. He was also at the site when an accident occurred in 1998. 12 technicians died from exposure to biological agents.

He reported that when UNSCOM was in country and inspecting, the biological weapons agent production always began on Thursdays at midnight, because Iraq thought UNSCOM would not inspect on the Muslim holy day, Thursday night through Friday.

He added that this was important because the units could not be broken down in the middle of a production run, which had to be completed by Friday evening before the inspectors might arrive again.

This defector is currently hiding in another country with the certain knowledge that Saddam Hussein will kill him if he finds him. His eyewitness account of these mobile production facilities has been corroborated by other sources.

A second source. An Iraqi civil engineer in a position to know the details of the program confirmed the existence of transportable facilities moving on trailers.

A third source, also in a position to know, reported in summer 2002 that Iraq had manufactured mobile production systems mounted on road-trailer units and on rail cars.

Finally, a fourth source. An Iraqi major who defected confirmed that Iraq has mobile biological research laboratories in addition to the production facilities I mentioned earlier.

We have diagrammed what our sources reported about these mobile facilities. Here you see both truck and rail-car mounted mobile factories. The description our sources gave us of the technical features required by such facilities is highly detailed and extremely accurate.

As these drawings, based on their description, show, we know what the fermentors look like. We know what the tanks, pumps, compressors and other parts look like. We know how they fit together, we know how they work, and we know a great deal about the platforms on which they are mounted.

As shown in this diagram, these factories can be concealed easily – either by moving ordinary looking trucks and rail-cars along Iraq’s thousands of miles of highway or track, or by parking them in a garage or a warehouse or somewhere in Iraq’s extensive system of underground tunnels and bunkers.

We know that Iraq has at least seven of these mobile, biological agent factories. The truck-mounted ones have at least two or three trucks each. That means that the mobile production facilities are very few – perhaps 18 trucks that we know of. There may be more. But perhaps 18 that we know of. Just imagine trying to find 18 trucks among the thousands and thousands of trucks that travel the roads of Iraq every single day.

It took the inspectors four years to find out that Iraq was making biological agents. How long do you think it will take the inspectors to find even one of these 18 trucks without Iraq coming forward as they are supposed to with the information about these kinds of capabilities.

Ladies and gentlemen, these are sophisticated facilities. For example, they can produce anthrax and botulinum toxin. In fact, they can produce enough dry, biological agent in a single month to kill thousands upon thousands of people. A dry agent of this type is the most lethal form for human beings.

By 1998, UN experts agreed that the Iraqis had perfected drying techniques for their biological weapons programs. Now Iraq has incorporated this drying expertise into these mobile production facilities.

We know from Iraq’s past admissions that it has successfully weaponized not only anthrax, but also other biological agents including botulinum toxin, aflatoxin and ricin.

But Iraq's research efforts did not stop there.

Saddam Hussein has investigated dozens of biological agents causing diseases such as gas gangrene, plague, typhus, tetanus, cholera, camelpox, and hemorrhagic fever. And he also has the wherewithal to develop smallpox.

The Iraqi regime has also developed ways to disperse lethal biological agents widely, indiscriminately into the water supply, into the air. For example, Iraq had a program to modify aerial fuel tanks for Mirage jets. This video of an Iraqi test flight obtained by UNSCOM some years ago shows an Iraqi F-1 Mirage jet aircraft. Note the spray coming from beneath the Mirage. That is 2,000 liters of simulated anthrax that a jet is spraying.

(VIDEO)

In 1995, an Iraqi military officer, Mujahid Saleh Abdul Latif told inspectors that Iraq intended the spray tanks to be mounted onto a MiG-21 that had been converted into an unmanned aerial vehicle, or UAV. UAVs outfitted with spray tanks constitute an ideal method for launching a terrorist attack using biological weapons.

Iraq admitted to producing four spray tanks, but to this day it has provided no credible evidence that they were destroyed, evidence that was required by the international community.

There can be no doubt that Saddam Hussein has biological weapons and the capability to rapidly produce more, many more. And he has the ability to disperse these lethal poisons and diseases in ways that can cause massive death and destruction.

If biological weapons seem too terrible to contemplate, chemical weapons are equally chilling. UNMOVIC already laid out much of this and it is documented for all of us to read in UNSCOM's 1999 report on the subject. Let me set the stage with three key points that all of us need to keep in mind. First, Saddam Hussein has used these horrific weapons on another country and on his own people. In fact, in the history of chemical warfare, no country has had more battlefield experience with chemical weapons since World War I than Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

Second, as with biological weapons, Saddam Hussein has never accounted for vast amounts of chemical weaponry: 550 artillery shells with mustard, 30,000 empty munitions and enough precursors to increase his stockpile to as much as 500 tons of chemical agents.

If we consider just one category of missing weaponry, 6,500 bombs from the Iran-Iraq War, UNMOVIC says the amount of chemical agent in them would be on the order of a thousand tons.

These quantities of chemical weapons are now unaccounted for. Dr Blix has quipped that, "Mustard gas is not marmalade. You are supposed to know what you did with it." We believe Saddam Hussein knows what he did with it and he has not come clean with the international community.

We have evidence these weapons existed. What we don't have is evidence from Iraq that they have been destroyed or where they are. That is what we are still waiting for.

Third point: Iraq's record on chemical weapons is replete with lies. It took years for Iraq to finally admit that it had produced four tons of the deadly nerve agent VX. A single drop of VX on the skin will kill in minutes. Four tons. The admission only came out after

inspectors collected documentation as a result of the defection of Hussein Kamel, Saddam Hussein's late son-in-law.

UNSCOM also gained forensic evidence that Iraq had produced VX and put it into weapons for delivery, yet to this day Iraq denies it had ever weaponized VX. And on January 27, UNMOVIC told this Council that it has information that conflicts with the Iraqi account of its VX program.

We know that Iraq has embedded key portions of its illicit chemical weapons infrastructure within its legitimate civilian industry. To all outward appearances, even to experts, the infrastructure looks like an ordinary civilian operation. Illicit and legitimate production can go on simultaneously or on a dime. This dual-use infrastructure can turn from clandestine to commercial and then back again.

These inspections would be unlikely, any inspections at such facilities would be unlikely, to turn up anything prohibited, especially if there is any warning that the inspections are coming. Call it ingenious or evil genius, but the Iraqis deliberately designed their chemical weapons programs to be inspected. It is infrastructure with a built-in alibi.

Under the guise of dual-use infrastructure, Iraq has undertaken an effort to reconstitute facilities that were closely associated with its past program to develop and produce chemical weapons. For example, Iraq has rebuilt key portions of the Tareq State Establishment. Tareq includes facilities designed specifically for Iraq's chemical weapons program and employs key figures from past programs.

That's the production end of Saddam's chemical weapons business. What about the delivery end? I'm going to show you a small part of a chemical complex called Al Musayyib, a site that Iraq has used for at least three years to transship chemical weapons from production facilities out to the field. In May 2002, our satellites photographed the unusual activity in this picture.

Here we see cargo vehicles are again at this trans-shipment point, and we can see that they are accompanied by a decontamination vehicle associated with biological or chemical weapons activity. What makes this picture significant is that we have a human source who has corroborated that movement of chemical weapons occurred at this site at that time. So it's not just the photo and it's not an individual seeing the photo. It's the photo and then the knowledge of an individual being brought together to make the case.

This photograph of the site taken two months later, in July, shows not only the previous site which is the figure in the middle at the top with the bulldozer sign near it; it shows that this previous site, as well as all of the other sites around the site, have been fully bulldozed and graded. The topsoil has been removed. The Iraqis literally removed the crust of the earth from large portions of this site in order to conceal chemical weapons evidence that would be there from years of chemical weapons activity.

To support its deadly biological and chemical weapons programs, Iraq procured items from around the world using an extensive clandestine network. What we know comes largely from intercepted communications and human sources who are in a position to know the facts.

Iraq's procurement efforts include: equipment that can filter and separate microorganisms and toxins involved in biological weapons; equipment that can be used to concentrate the agent; growth media that can be used to continue producing anthrax and botulinum

toxin; sterilization equipment for laboratories; glass-lined reactors and specialty pumps that can handle corrosive chemical weapons agents and precursors; large amounts of thionyl chloride, a precursor for nerve and blister agents; and other chemicals such as sodium sulfide, an important mustard agent precursor.

Now, of course, Iraq will argue that these items can also be used for legitimate purposes. But if that is true, why do we have to learn about them by intercepting communications and risking the lives of human agents?

With Iraq's well-documented history on biological and chemical weapons, why should any of us give Iraq the benefit of the doubt? I don't. And I don't think you will either after you hear this next intercept.

Just a few weeks ago we intercepted communications between two commanders in Iraq's Second Republican Guard Corps. One commander is going to give an instruction to the other. You will hear as this unfolds that what he wants to communicate to the other guy, he wants to make sure the other guy hears clearly to the point of repeating it so that it gets written down and completely understood. Listen.

(Transmission.) AUDIO

Let's review a few selected items of this conversation. Two officers talking to each other on the radio want to make sure that nothing is misunderstood. "Remove." "Remove." "The expression." "The expression." "The expression. I got it." "Nerve agents." "Nerve agents." "Wherever it comes up." "Got it, wherever it comes up." "In the wireless instructions." "In the instructions." "Correction, no, in the wireless instructions." "Wireless, I got it."

Why does he repeat it that way? Why is he so forceful in making sure this is understood? And why did he focus on wireless instructions? Because the senior officer is concerned that somebody might be listening. Well, somebody was.

"Nerve agents." "Stop talking about it." "They are listening to us." "Don't give any evidence that we have these horrible agents." But we know that they do and this kind of conversation confirms it.

Our conservative estimate is that Iraq today has a stockpile of between 100 and 500 tons of chemical weapons agent. That is enough agent to fill 16,000 battlefield rockets. Even the low end of 100 tons of agent would enable Saddam Hussein to cause mass casualties across more than 100 square miles of territory, an area nearly five times the size of Manhattan.

Let me remind you that — of the 122 mm chemical warheads that the UN inspectors found recently. This discovery could very well be, as has been noted, the tip of a submerged iceberg.

The question before us all, my friends, is when will we see the rest of the submerged iceberg?

(VIDEO)

Saddam Hussein has chemical weapons. Saddam Hussein has used such weapons. And Saddam Hussein has no compunction about using them again — against his neighbors and against his own people. And we have sources who tell us that he recently has

authorized his field commanders to use them. He wouldn't be passing out the orders if he didn't have the weapons or the intent to use them.

We also have sources who tell us that since the 1980s, Saddam's regime has been experimenting on human beings to perfect its biological or chemical weapons.

A source said that 1,600 death-row prisoners were transferred in 1995 to a special unit for such experiments. An eyewitness saw prisoners tied down to beds, experiments conducted on them, blood oozing around the victims' mouths, and autopsies performed to confirm the effects on the prisoners.

Saddam Hussein's humanity – inhumanity – has no limits.

Let me turn now to nuclear weapons. We have no indication that Saddam Hussein has ever abandoned his nuclear weapons program. On the contrary, we have more than a decade of proof that he remains determined to acquire nuclear weapons.

To fully appreciate the challenge that we face today, remember that in 1991 the inspectors searched Iraq's primary nuclear weapons facilities for the first time, and they found nothing to conclude that Iraq had a nuclear weapons program. But, based on defector information, in May of 1991, Saddam Hussein's lie was exposed. In truth, Saddam Hussein had a massive clandestine nuclear weapons program that covered several different techniques to enrich uranium, including electromagnetic isotope separation, gas centrifuge and gas diffusion.

We estimate that this illicit program cost the Iraqis several billion dollars. Nonetheless, Iraq continued to tell the IAEA that it had no nuclear weapons program. If Saddam had not been stopped, Iraq could have produced a nuclear bomb by 1993, years earlier than most worst case assessments that had been made before the war.

In 1995, as a result of another defector, we find out that, after his invasion of Kuwait, Saddam Hussein had initiated a crash program to build a crude nuclear weapon, in violation of Iraq's UN obligations. Saddam Hussein already possesses two out of the three key components needed to build a nuclear bomb. He has a cadre of nuclear scientists with the expertise and he has a bomb design.

Since 1998, his efforts to reconstitute his nuclear program have been focused on acquiring the third and last component: sufficient fissile material to produce a nuclear explosion. To make the fissile material, he needs to develop an ability to enrich uranium. Saddam Hussein is determined to get his hands on a nuclear bomb.

He is so determined that he has made repeated covert attempts to acquire high-specification aluminum tubes from 11 different countries, even after inspections resumed. These tubes are controlled by the Nuclear Suppliers Group precisely because they can be used as centrifuges for enriching uranium.

By now, just about everyone has heard of these tubes and we all know that there are differences of opinion. There is controversy about what these tubes are for. Most US experts think they are intended to serve as rotors in centrifuges used to enrich uranium. Other experts, and the Iraqis themselves, argue that they are really to produce the rocket bodies for a conventional weapon, a multiple rocket launcher.

Let me tell you what is not controversial about these tubes. First, all the experts who have analyzed the tubes in our possession agree that they can be adapted for centrifuge use.

Second, Iraq had no business buying them for any purpose. They are banned for Iraq.

I am no expert on centrifuge tubes, but this is an old army trooper. I can tell you a couple things.

First, it strikes me as quite odd that these tubes are manufactured to a tolerance that far exceeds US requirements for comparable rockets. Maybe Iraqis just manufacture their conventional weapons to a higher standard than we do, but I don't think so.

Second, we actually have examined tubes from several different batches that were seized clandestinely before they reached Baghdad. What we notice in these different batches is a progression to higher and higher levels of specification, including in the latest batch an anodized coating on extremely smooth inner and outer surfaces.

Why would they continue refining the specifications? Why would they continue refining the specification, go to all that trouble for something that, if it was a rocket, would soon be blown into shrapnel when it went off?

The high-tolerance aluminum tubes are only part of the story. We also have intelligence from multiple sources that Iraq is attempting to acquire magnets and high-speed balancing machines. Both items can be used in a gas centrifuge program to enrich uranium.

In 1999 and 2000, Iraqi officials negotiated with firms in Romania, India, Russia and Slovenia for the purchase of a magnet production plant. Iraq wanted the plant to produce magnets weighing 20 to 30 grams. That's the same weight as the magnets used in Iraq's gas centrifuge program before the Gulf War.

This incident, linked with the tubes, is another indicator of Iraq's attempt to reconstitute its nuclear weapons program.

Intercepted communications from mid-2000 through last summer showed that Iraq front companies sought to buy machines that can be used to balance gas centrifuge rotors. One of these companies also had been involved in a failed effort in 2001 to smuggle aluminum tubes into Iraq.

People will continue to debate this issue, but there is no doubt in my mind. These illicit procurement efforts show that Saddam Hussein is very much focused on putting in place the key missing piece from his nuclear weapons program, the ability to produce fissile material.

He also has been busy trying to maintain the other key parts of his nuclear program, particularly his cadre of key nuclear scientists. It is noteworthy that over the last 18 months Saddam Hussein has paid increasing personal attention to Iraq's top nuclear scientists, a group that the government-controlled press calls openly his 'nuclear mujaheddin'. He regularly exhorts them and praises their progress. Progress toward what end?

Long ago, the Security Council, this Council, required Iraq to halt all nuclear activities of any kind.

Let me talk now about the systems Iraq is developing to deliver weapons of mass destruction, in particular Iraq's ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles, UAVs.

First, missiles. We all remember that, before the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein's goal was missiles that flew not just hundreds, but thousands, of kilometers. He wanted to strike not only his neighbors, but also nations far beyond his borders.

While inspectors destroyed most of the prohibited ballistic missiles, numerous intelligence reports over the past decade from sources inside Iraq indicate that Saddam Hussein retains a covert force of up to a few dozen Scud-variant ballistic missiles. These are missiles with a range of 650 to 900 kilometers.

We know from intelligence and Iraq's own admissions that Iraq's alleged permitted ballistic missiles, the al-Samoud II and the Al-Fatah, violate the 150-kilometer limit established by this Council in Resolution 687. These are prohibited systems.

UNMOVIC has also reported that Iraq has illegally imported 380 SA-2 rocket engines. These are likely for use in the al-Samoud II. Their import was illegal on three counts: Resolution 687 prohibited all military shipments into Iraq; UNSCOM specifically prohibited use of these engines in surface-to-surface missiles; and finally, as we have just noted, they are for a system that exceeds the 150-kilometer range limit. Worst of all, some of these engines were acquired as late as December, after this Council passed Resolution 1441.

What I want you to know today is that Iraq has programs that are intended to produce ballistic missiles that fly over 1,000 kilometers. One program is pursuing a liquid fuel missile that would be able to fly more than 1,200 kilometers. And you can see from this map, as well as I can, who will be in danger of these missiles.

As part of this effort, another little piece of evidence, Iraq has built an engine test stand that is larger than anything it has ever had. Notice the dramatic difference in size between the test stand on the left, the old one, and the new one on the right. Note the large exhaust vent. This is where the flame from the engine comes out. The exhaust vent on the right test stand is five times longer than the one on the left. The one on the left is used for short-range missiles. The one on the right is clearly intended for long-range missiles that can fly 1,200 kilometers.

This photograph was taken in April of 2002. Since then, the test stand has been finished and a roof has been put over it so it will be harder for satellites to see what's going on underneath the test stand.

Saddam Hussein's intentions have never changed. He is not developing the missiles for self-defense. These are missiles that Iraq wants in order to project power, to threaten and to deliver chemical, biological — and if we let him — nuclear warheads.

Now, unmanned aerial vehicles, UAVs. Iraq has been working on a variety of UAVs for more than a decade. This is just illustrative of what a UAV would look like. This effort has included attempts to modify for unmanned flight the MiG-21 and, with greater success, an aircraft called the L-29.

However, Iraq is now concentrating not on these airplanes but on developing and testing smaller UAVs such as this. UAVs are well suited for dispensing chemical and biological weapons. There is ample evidence that Iraq has dedicated much effort to developing and testing spray devices that could be adapted for UAVs.

And in the little that Saddam Hussein told us about UAVs, he has not told the truth. One of these lies is graphically and indisputably demonstrated by intelligence we collected on June 27th last year.

According to Iraq's December 7th declaration, its UAVs have a range of only 80 kilometers. But we detected one of Iraq's newest UAVs in a test flight that went 500 kilometers nonstop on autopilot in the racetrack pattern depicted here.

Not only is this test well in excess of the 150 kilometers that the United Nations permits, the test was left out of Iraq's December 7th declaration. The UAV was flown around and around and around in this circle, so that its 80-kilometer limit really was 500 kilometers, unrefueled and on autopilot – violative of all of its obligations under 1441.

The linkages over the past ten years between Iraq's UAV program and biological and chemical warfare agents are of deep concern to us. Iraq could use these small UAVs, which have a wingspan of only a few meters, to deliver biological agents to its neighbors or, if transported, to other countries, including the United States.

My friends, the information I have presented to you about these terrible weapons and about Iraq's continued flaunting of its obligations under Security Council Resolution 1441 links to a subject I now want to spend a little bit of time on, and that has to do with terrorism.

Our concern is not just about these illicit weapons; it's the way that these illicit weapons can be connected to terrorists and terrorist organizations that have no compunction about using such devices against innocent people around the world.

Iraq and terrorism go back decades. Baghdad trains Palestine Liberation Front members in small arms and explosives. Saddam uses the Arab Liberation Front to funnel money to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers in order to prolong the Intifadah. And it's no secret that Saddam's own intelligence service was involved in dozens of attacks or attempted assassinations in the 1990s.

But what I want to bring to your attention today is the potentially much more sinister nexus between Iraq and the al-Qaida terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations and modern methods of murder. Iraq today harbors a deadly terrorist network headed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an associate and collaborator of Usama bin Laden and his al-Qaida lieutenants.

Zarqawi, Palestinian born in Jordan, fought in the Afghan war more than a decade ago. Returning to Afghanistan in 2000, he oversaw a terrorist training camp. One of his specialties, and one of the specialties of this camp, is poisons.

When our coalition ousted the Taliban, the Zarqawi network helped establish another poison and explosive training center camp, and this camp is located in northeastern Iraq. You see a picture of this camp.

The network is teaching its operatives how to produce ricin and other poisons. Let me remind you how ricin works. Less than a pinch – imagine a pinch of salt – less than a pinch of ricin, eating just this amount in your food, would cause shock, followed by circulatory failure. Death comes within 72 hours and there is no antidote. There is no cure. It is fatal.

Those helping to run this camp are Zarqawi lieutenants operating in northern Kurdish areas outside Saddam Hussein's controlled Iraq. But Baghdad has an agent in the most senior levels of the radical organization Ansar al-Islam that controls this corner of Iraq. In 2000, this agent offered al-Qaida safe haven in the region.

After we swept al-Qaida from Afghanistan, some of those members accepted this safe haven. They remain there today.

Zarqawi's activities are not confined to this small corner of northeast Iraq. He traveled to Baghdad in May of 2002 for medical treatment, staying in the capital of Iraq for two months while he recuperated to fight another day.

During his stay, nearly two dozen extremists converged on Baghdad and established a base of operations there. These al-Qaida affiliates based in Baghdad now coordinate the movement of people, money and supplies into and throughout Iraq for his network, and they have now been operating freely in the capital for more than eight months.

Iraqi officials deny accusations of ties with al-Qaida. These denials are simply not credible. Last year, an al-Qaida associate bragged that the situation in Iraq was 'good', that Baghdad could be transited quickly.

We know these affiliates are connected to Zarqawi because they remain, even today, in regular contact with his direct subordinates, including the poison cell plotters. And they are involved in moving more than money and materiel. Last year, two suspected al-Qaida operatives were arrested crossing from Iraq into Saudi Arabia. They were linked to associates of the Baghdad cell and one of them received training in Afghanistan on how to use cyanide.

From his terrorist network in Iraq, Zarqawi can direct his network in the Middle East and beyond. We in the United States, all of us, the State Department and the Agency for International Development, we all lost a dear friend with the cold-blooded murder of Mr Laurence Foley in Amman, Jordan, last October. A despicable act was committed that day — the assassination of an individual whose sole mission was to assist the people of Jordan. The captured assassin says his cell received money and weapons from Zarqawi for that murder. After the attack, an associate of the assassin left Jordan to go to Iraq to obtain weapons and explosives for further operations. Iraqi officials protest that they are not aware of the whereabouts of Zarqawi or of any of his associates. Again, these protests are not credible. We know of Zarqawi's activities in Baghdad. I described them earlier.

Now let me add one other fact. We asked a friendly security service to approach Baghdad about extraditing Zarqawi and providing information about him and his close associates. This service contacted Iraqi officials twice and we passed details that should have made it easy to find Zarqawi. The network remains in Baghdad. Zarqawi still remains at large, to come and go.

As my colleagues around this table and as the citizens they represent in Europe know, Zarqawi's terrorism is not confined to the Middle East. Zarqawi and his network have plotted terrorist actions against countries including France, Britain, Spain, Italy, Germany and Russia. According to detainees, Abu Atiya, who graduated from Zarqawi's terrorist camp in Afghanistan, tasked at least nine North African extremists in 2001 to travel to Europe to conduct poison and explosive attacks.

Since last year, members of this network have been apprehended in France, Britain, Spain and Italy. By our last count, 116 operatives connected to this global web have been arrested. The chart you are seeing shows the network in Europe.

We know about this European network and we know about its links to Zarqawi because the detainees who provided the information about the targets also provided the names of members of the network. Three of those he identified by name were arrested in France last December. In the apartments of the terrorists, authorities found circuits for explosive devices and a list of ingredients to make toxins.

The detainee who helped piece this together says the plot also targeted Britain. Later evidence again proved him right. When the British unearthed the cell there just last month, one British police officer was murdered during the destruction of the cell.

We also know that Zarqawi's colleagues have been active in the Pankisi Gorge, Georgia, and in Chechnya, Russia. The plotting to which they are linked is not mere chatter. Members of Zarqawi's network say their goal was to kill Russians with toxins.

We are not surprised that Iraq is harboring Zarqawi and his subordinates. This understanding builds on decades-long experience with respect to ties between Iraq and al-Qaida. Going back to the early and mid-1990s when bin Laden was based in Sudan, an al-Qaida source tells us that Saddam and bin Laden reached an understanding that al-Qaida would no longer support activities against Baghdad. Early al-Qaida ties were forged by secret high-level intelligence service contacts with al-Qaida — secret Iraqi intelligence high-level contacts with al-Qaida.

We know members of both organizations met repeatedly and have met at least eight times at very senior levels since the early 1990s. In 1996, a foreign security service tells us that bin Laden met with a senior Iraqi intelligence official in Khartoum and later met the director of the Iraqi intelligence service.

Saddam became more interested as he saw al-Qaida's appalling attacks. A detained al-Qaida member tells us that Saddam was more willing to assist al-Qaida after the 1998 bombings of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Saddam was also impressed by al-Qaida's attacks on the USS COLE in Yemen in October 2000.

Iraqis continue to visit bin Laden in his new home in Afghanistan. A senior defector, one of Saddam's former intelligence chiefs in Europe, says Saddam sent his agents to Afghanistan sometime in the mid-1990s to provide training to al-Qaida members on document forgery.

From the late 1990s until 2001, the Iraqi Embassy in Pakistan played the role of liaison to the al-Qaida organization.

Some believe, some claim, these contacts do not amount to much. They say Saddam Hussein's secular tyranny and al-Qaida's religious tyranny do not mix. I am not comforted by this thought. Ambition and hatred are enough to bring Iraq and al-Qaida together, enough so that al-Qaida could learn how to build more sophisticated bombs and learn how to forge documents, and enough so that al-Qaida could turn to Iraq for help in acquiring expertise on weapons of mass destruction.

And the record of Saddam Hussein's cooperation with other Islamist terrorist organizations is clear. Hamas, for example, opened an office in Baghdad in 1999 and Iraq has hosted

conferences attended by Palestine Islamic Jihad. These groups are at the forefront of sponsoring suicide attacks against Israel.

Al-Qaida continues to have a deep interest in acquiring weapons of mass destruction. As with the story of Zarqawi and his network, I can trace the story of a senior terrorist operative telling how Iraq provided training in these weapons to al-Qaida. Fortunately, this operative is now detained and he has told his story. I will relate it to you now as he, himself, described it.

This senior al-Qaida terrorist was responsible for one of al-Qaida's training camps in Afghanistan. His information comes firsthand from his personal involvement at senior levels of al-Qaida. He says bin Laden and his top deputy in Afghanistan, deceased al-Qaida leader Muhammad Atif, did not believe that al-Qaida labs in Afghanistan were capable enough to manufacture these chemical or biological agents. They needed to go somewhere else. They had to look outside of Afghanistan for help.

Where did they go? Where did they look? They went to Iraq. The support that this detainee describes included Iraq offering chemical or biological weapons training for two al-Qaida associates beginning in December 2000. He says that a militant known as Abdallah al-Iraqi had been sent to Iraq several times between 1997 and 2000 for help in acquiring poisons and gasses. Abdallah al-Iraqi characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful.

As I said at the outset, none of this should come as a surprise to any of us. Terrorism has been a tool used by Saddam for decades. Saddam was a supporter of terrorism long before these terrorist networks had a name, and this support continues. The nexus of poisons and terror is new. The nexus of Iraq and terror is old. The combination is lethal.

With this track record, Iraqi denials of supporting terrorism take their place alongside the other Iraqi denials of weapons of mass destruction. It is all a web of lies.

When we confront a regime that harbors ambitions for regional domination, hides weapons of mass destruction, and provides haven and active support for terrorists, we are not confronting the past; we are confronting the present. And unless we act, we are confronting an even more frightening future.

And, friends, this has been a long and a detailed presentation and I thank you for your patience, but there is one more subject that I would like to touch on briefly, and it should be a subject of deep and continuing concern to this Council: Saddam Hussein's violations of human rights.

Underlying all that I have said, underlying all the facts and the patterns of behavior that I have identified, is Saddam Hussein's contempt for the will of this Council, his contempt for the truth, and, most damning of all, his utter contempt for human life. Saddam Hussein's use of mustard and nerve gas against the Kurds in 1988 was one of the 20th century's most horrible atrocities. Five thousand men, women and children died. His campaign against the Kurds from 1987 to 1989 included mass summary executions, disappearances, arbitrary jailing and ethnic cleansing, and the destruction of some 2,000 villages.

He has also conducted ethnic cleansing against the Shia Iraqis and the Marsh Arabs whose culture has flourished for more than a millennium. Saddam Hussein's police state ruthlessly eliminates anyone who dares to dissent. Iraq has more forced

disappearance cases than any other country – tens of thousands of people reported missing in the past decade.

Nothing points more clearly to Saddam Hussein's dangerous intentions and the threat he poses to all of us than his calculated cruelty to his own citizens and to his neighbors. Clearly, Saddam Hussein and his regime will stop at nothing until something stops him.

For more than 20 years, by word and by deed, Saddam Hussein has pursued his ambition to dominate Iraq and the broader Middle East using the only means he knows: intimidation, coercion and annihilation of all those who might stand in his way. For Saddam Hussein, possession of the world's most deadly weapons is the ultimate trump card, the one he must hold to fulfill his ambition.

We know that Saddam Hussein is determined to keep his weapons of mass destruction, is determined to make more. Given Saddam Hussein's history of aggression, given what we know of his grandiose plans, given what we know of his terrorist associations, and given his determination to exact revenge on those who oppose him, should we take the risk that he will not someday use these weapons at a time and a place and in a manner of his choosing, at a time when the world is in a much weaker position to respond?

The United States will not and cannot run that risk for the American people. Leaving Saddam Hussein in possession of weapons of mass destruction for a few more months or years is not an option, not in a post-September 11th world.

My colleagues, over three months ago, this Council recognized that Iraq continued to pose a threat to international peace and security, and that Iraq had been and remained in material breach of its disarmament obligations.

Today, Iraq still poses a threat and Iraq still remains in material breach. Indeed, by its failure to seize on its one last opportunity to come clean and disarm, Iraq has put itself in deeper material breach and closer to the day when it will face serious consequences for its continued defiance of this Council.

My colleagues, we have an obligation to our citizens. We have an obligation to this body to see that our resolutions are complied with. We wrote 1441 not in order to go to war. We wrote 1441 to try to preserve the peace. We wrote 1441 to give Iraq one last chance.

Iraq is not, so far, taking that one last chance.

We must not shrink from whatever is ahead of us. We must not fail in our duty and our responsibility to the citizens of the countries that are represented by this body.

Thank you, Mr President.

Source:

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2003/17300pf.htm>; accessed 1 June 2004

APPENDIX C

Written Statement from CIA Director Tenet

8 August 2003

The following is a four page written statement by CIA Director George J. Tenet, as submitted to The Washington Post, in which he defends the National Intelligence Estimate prepared in October under his supervision.

A great deal has been said and written about the 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction. Much of this commentary has been misinformed, misleading, and just plain wrong. It is important to set the record straight. Let me make three points.

- We stand by the judgements in the NIE.
- The NIE demonstrates consistency in our judgments over many years and are based on a decade's worth of work. Intelligence is an iterative process and as new evidence becomes available we constantly reevaluate.
- We encourage dissent and reflect it in alternative views.

* * *

We stand behind the judgments of the NIE as well as our analyses on Iraq's programs over the past decade. Those outside the process over the past ten years and many of those commenting today do not know, or are misrepresenting, the facts. We have a solid, well-analyzed and carefully written account in the NIE and the numerous products before it.

After David Kay and others finish their efforts - after we have exploited all the documents, people and sites in Iraq - we should and will stand back to professionally review where we are - but not before.

The history of our judgments on Iraq's weapons programs is clear and consistent. On biological weapons and missiles our data got stronger in recent years. We have had a solid historical foundation and new data that have allowed us to make judgments and attribute high confidence in specific areas. And we had numerous credible sources, including many who provided information after 1998. When inspectors were pushed out in 1998, we did not sit back. Rather, we significantly increased our collection efforts throughout the Intelligence Community. In other words, despite what many read in the media that the NIE is based on nothing - no sources, no understanding of complicated procurement networks, etc. - the fact is we made significant professional progress.

The National Intelligence Estimate remains the Intelligence Community's most authoritative product. The process by which we produce NIEs - including the one on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction - has been honed over nearly 30 years. It is a process that is designed to provide policymakers in both the executive and the legislative branches with our best judgments on the most crucial national security issues. This process is designed to produce coordinated judgments - but not to the exclusion of differing views or without exposing uncertainties. During coordination, agencies send representatives who are actively engaged and change NIE drafts to reflect better the views of the experts

in their respective agencies. It is an open and vigorous process that allows for dissent to be registered by individual agencies in the final product. Indeed, alternative views are encouraged. Finally, the NIE is reviewed by the directors of US intelligence agencies composing the DCI-chaired National Foreign Intelligence Board, including in this case, CIA, DIA, INR, NSA, DOE, and NIMA. This rigorous NIE process has served this nation well.

Building upon ten years of analysis, intelligence reporting, and inspections that had to fight through Iraq's aggressive denial and deception efforts, including phony and incomplete data declarations to the UN and programs explicitly designed with built-in cover stories, the Intelligence Community prepared the NIE on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. In it we judged that the entire body of information over that ten years made clear that Saddam had never abandoned his pursuit of weapons of mass destruction.

Nuclear program. Shortly after the Gulf war of 1990-91 the International Atomic Energy Agency and the US Intelligence Community were surprised at how much more advanced Iraq's program was prior to the war than had been judged previously. In fact, the IAEA's 1996 report indicated that Iraq could have completed its first nuclear device by as early as late 1992 had the program not been derailed by the Gulf war. Intelligence analysts reevaluated Iraq's nuclear program in 1994 and 1997 in light of the body of inspection revelations and seized documents and concluded that Iraq could have a nuclear weapon within a year of obtaining sufficient material and, if *unconstrained*, would take five to seven years with foreign assistance to produce enough fissile material. Those judgments, to which all agencies agreed, have remained consistent for years.

The NIE points out that, by 2002, all agencies assessed that Saddam did not yet have nuclear weapons or sufficient fissile material to make any, but never abandoned his nuclear weapons ambitions. Moreover, most agencies believed that Iraq's attempts to obtain high-strength aluminium tubes for centrifuge rotors, magnets, high-speed balancing machines, and machine tools, as well as Iraq's efforts to enhance its cadre of weapons personnel and activities at several suspect nuclear sites, indicated that Iraq was reconstituting its nuclear weapons program. Saddam's personal interest in some of these efforts was also considered. DOE agreed that reconstitution was underway, but assessed that the tubes probably were not part of the program. INR assessed that Baghdad was pursuing at least a limited effort to acquire nuclear weapon-related capabilities, but not an integrated and comprehensive approach to acquire nuclear weapons; INR was not persuaded that the tubes were intended for the nuclear program. All other agencies, including DOE, assessed that Iraq probably would not have a weapon until 2007 to 2009, consistent with the decade-old judgment of Iraq needing five to seven years to develop a weapons-grade uranium enrichment capability if freed from constraints. These judgments and the six elements upon which the reconstitution judgment was based were agreed to by those agencies during coordination of the NIE and at the meeting of the heads of all the intelligence agencies before publication.

- We note yet again that uranium acquisition was not part of this judgment. Despite all the focus in the media, it was *not* one of the six elements upon which the judgment was based. Why not? Because Iraq already had significant quantities of uranium.
- Also, it is noteworthy that although DOE assessed that the tubes probably were not part of Iraq's nuclear program, DOE *agreed* that reconstitution was underway. Obviously, the tubes were not central to DOE's view on reconstitution.

Even though the tubes constituted only one of the six elements underpinning the other agencies' judgment on reconstitution, I will discuss it briefly. We need to point out that DOE is not the only agency that has experts on the issue. CIA has centrifuge and rocket experts. The National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC) – the US military's center for analysis of foreign conventional weaponry – has battlefield rocket experts. These experts, along with those from DOE, were involved in the NIE process and their views were recorded. All agencies agreed that the tubes *could be used* to build gas centrifuges for a uranium enrichment program, so we are talking about differences in agency views about *intent*.

- CIA, DIA, and NSA believed the tubes were intended for that purpose.
- DOE believed they probably were not part of the nuclear program and that conventional military uses were more plausible.
- INR was not persuaded that the tubes were intended for use as centrifuge rotors and considered artillery rockets as the most likely purpose.
- NGIC believed that these tubes were poor choices for rocket motor bodies.

Not surprisingly, the Iraqis went to great lengths to mask their intentions across the board, including in their efforts to acquire tubes with increasingly higher sets of specifications. Thus, the fact that we had alternative views on the issue would be expected. But the NIE went to great lengths to spell out those views. Many reading these alternative views, however, almost certainly recalled how far Iraq had come in the early 1990s toward a nuclear weapon without our knowledge, making all the factors leading us to the reconstitution judgment more important.

Biological Weapons. All agencies of the Intelligence Community since 1995 have judged that Iraq retained biological weapons and that the BW program continued. In 1999 we assessed Iraq had revitalized its program. New intelligence acquired in 2000 provided compelling information about Iraq's ongoing offensive BW activities, describing construction of mobile BW agent production plants – reportedly designed to evade detection – with the potential to turn out several hundred tons of unconcentrated BW agent per year. Thus, it was not a new story in 2002 when all agencies judged in the NIE that Iraq had biological weapons – that it had some lethal and incapacitating BW agents – and was capable of quickly producing and weaponizing a variety of such agents, including anthrax. We judged that most of the key aspects of Iraq's offensive BW program were more advanced than before the Gulf war.

Chemical Weapons. As early as 1994, all agencies assessed that Iraq could begin limited production of chemical agents almost immediately after UN sanctions, inspections and monitoring efforts were ended. By 1997, the Intelligence Community judged that Iraq was protecting a breakout capability to produce more weapons and agent quickly. We further assessed in 1997, that within months Iraq could restart full-scale production of sarin and that pre-*Desert Storm* agent production levels – including production of VX – could be achieved in two to three years. And so it was not a surprising story when all agencies judged in the NIE in 2002 that Baghdad possessed chemical weapons, had begun renewed production of mustard, sarin, cyclosarin, and VX and probably had at least 100 metric tons (MT) and possibly as much as 500 MT of CW agents, much of it added in the last year.

Delivery Systems. The Intelligence Community's assessment on the possibility of Iraq having a few covert Scuds has been consistent since at least 1995. As Iraq continued to develop its short-range missiles, we collected more data and by 1999 were able to begin determining that both missiles were capable of flying over 150 km. Also by 1999 we had noted that, according to multiple sources, Iraq was conducting a high priority program to convert jet trainer aircraft to lethal UAVs, likely intended for delivering biological agents. Again, not a new story for the NIE to judge that Iraq maintained a small missile force and several development programs, including a UAV that could deliver a biological warfare agent.

* * *

In sum, the NIE on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction was the product of years of reporting and intelligence collection, analyzed by numerous experts in several different agencies. Our judgments have been consistent on this subject because the evidence has repeatedly pointed to continued Iraqi pursuit of WMD and efforts to conceal that pursuit from international scrutiny. Modifications of our judgments have reflected new evidence, much of which was acquired because of our intensified collection efforts. Thus, noting that Saddam had continued to pursue weapons of mass destruction was not startling. That he probably was hiding weapons was not new. That he would seek means to improve his capabilities using alternative-use cover stories would have been expected. That we would have alternative views is respected as part of the process. We stand by the soundness and integrity of our process, and no one outside the Intelligence Community told us what to say or not to say in this Estimate.

As with any other topic addressed in an NIE, the acquisition of further evidence may confirm some of our judgments while calling others into question. Operation *Iraqi Freedom* obviously has opened a major new opportunity for learning about the WMD activities of Saddam Hussayn's regime. We have no doubt, however, that the NIE was the most reasonable, well-grounded, and objective assessment of Iraq's WMD programs that was possible at the time it was produced.

Source:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn/A35443-2003Aug8? language=printer;>
accessed 1 June 2004

APPENDIX D

Tenet Defends Assessments of Iraqi Weapons

Remarks as prepared for delivery by
Director of Central Intelligence, George J Tenet
at Georgetown University, February 5, 2004

Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction

I have come here today to talk to you – and to the American people – about something important to our nation and central to our future: how the United States intelligence community evaluated Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs over the past decade, leading to a National Intelligence Estimate in October of 2002.

I want to tell you about our information and how we reached our judgments.

I will tell you what I think – honestly and directly.

There are several reasons to do this: because the American people deserve to know, because intelligence has never been more important to the security of our country.

As a nation, we have over the past seven years been rebuilding our intelligence – with powerful capabilities – that many thought we would no longer need after the end of the Cold War. We have been rebuilding our Clandestine Service, our satellite and other technical collection, our analytical depth and expertise.

Both here and around the world, the men and women of American intelligence are performing courageously – often brilliantly – to support our military, to stop terrorism, and to break up networks of proliferation.

The risks are always high. Success and perfect outcomes are never guaranteed. But there is one unassailable fact – we will always call it as we see it. Our professional ethic demands no less.

To understand a difficult topic like Iraq takes patience and care. Unfortunately, you rarely hear a patient, careful – or thoughtful – discussion of intelligence these days.

But these times demand it, because the alternative – politicized, haphazard evaluation, without the benefit of time and facts – may well result in an intelligence community that is damaged, and a country that is more at risk.

The Nature of the Business

Before talking about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, I want to set the stage with a few words about intelligence collection and analysis – how they actually happen in the real world. This context is completely missing from the current public debate.

- By definition, intelligence deals with the unclear, the unknown, the deliberately hidden. What the enemies of the United States hope to deny, we work to reveal.
- The question being asked about Iraq in the starkest terms is: were we 'right' or were we 'wrong'?

- In the intelligence business, you are almost never completely wrong or completely right.

That applies in full to the question of Saddam's weapons of mass destruction. And, like many of the toughest intelligence challenges, when the facts of Iraq are all in, we will be neither completely right nor completely wrong.

As intelligence professionals, we go to where the information takes us. We fear no fact or finding, whether it bears us out or not. Because we work for high goals – the protection of the American people – we must be judged by high standards.

Let's turn to Iraq.

Reviewing the Record on Iraq

The History

Much of the current controversy centers on our prewar intelligence, summarized in the National Intelligence Estimate of October 2002. National Estimates are publications where the intelligence community as a whole seeks to sum up what we know about a subject, what we do not know, what we suspect may be happening, and where we differ on key issues.

This Estimate asked if Iraq had chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. We concluded that in some of these categories Iraq had weapons, and that in others – where it did not have them – it was trying to develop them.

Let me be clear: Analysts differed on several important aspects of these programs and those debates were spelled out in the Estimate.

They never said there was an 'imminent' threat. Rather, they painted an objective assessment for our policy-makers of a brutal dictator who was continuing his efforts to deceive and build programs that might constantly surprise us and threaten our interests.

No one told us what to say or how to say it.

How did we reach our conclusions? We had three streams of information – none perfect, but each important.

- First, Iraq's history. Everyone knew that Iraq had chemical and biological weapons in the 1980s and 1990s. Saddam Hussein used chemical weapons against Iran and his own people on at least 10 different occasions. He launched missiles against Iran, Saudi Arabia and Israel. And we couldn't forget that, in the early 1990s, we saw that Iraq was just a few years away from a nuclear weapon – this was no theoretical program. It turned out that we and the other intelligence services of the world had significantly underestimated his progress. And finally, we could not forget that Iraq lied repeatedly about its unconventional weapons.
- So, to conclude before the war that Saddam had no interest in rebuilding his WMD programs, we would have had to ignore his long and brutal history of using them.
- Our second stream of information was that the United Nations could not – and Saddam would not – account for all the weapons the Iraqis had: tons of chemical weapons precursors, hundreds of artillery shells and bombs filled with chemical or biological agents.

- We did not take this data on face value. We did take it seriously. We worked with the inspectors, giving them leads, helping them fight Saddam's deception strategy of 'cheat and retreat'.
- Over eight years of inspections, Saddam's deceptions — and the increasingly restrictive rules of engagement UN inspectors were forced to negotiate with the regime — undermined efforts to disarm him.
- To conclude before the war that Saddam had destroyed his existing weapons, we would have had to ignore what the UN and allied intelligence said they could not verify.
- The third stream of information came after the UN inspectors left Iraq in 1998. We gathered intelligence through human agents, satellite photos and communications intercepts.
- Other foreign intelligence services were clearly focused on Iraq and assisted in the effort. In intercepts of conversations and other transactions, we heard Iraqis seeking to hide prohibited items, worrying about their cover stories, and trying to procure items Iraq was not permitted to have.
- Satellite photos showed a pattern of activity designed to conceal movement of material from places where chemical weapons had been stored in the past.
- We also saw reconstruction of dual-purpose facilities previously used to make biological agents or chemical precursors.
- And human sources told us of efforts to acquire and hide materials used in the production of such weapons.
- And to come to conclusions before the war other than those we reached, we would have had to ignore all the intelligence gathered from multiple sources after 1998.

Did these strands of information weave into a perfect picture — could they answer every question? No — far from it. But, taken together, this information provided a solid basis on which to estimate whether Iraq did or did not have weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them. It is important to underline the word estimate, because not everything we analyze can be known to a standard of absolute proof.

The Estimate

Now, what exactly was in the October Estimate? Why did we say it? And what does the postwar evidence thus far show?

Before we start, let me be direct about an important fact — as we meet here today — the Iraq Survey Group is continuing its important search for weapons, people, and data.

And despite some public statements, we are nowhere near 85% finished. The men and women who work in that dangerous environment are adamant about that fact.

Any call that I make today is necessarily provisional. Why? Because we need more time and we need more data.

So, what did our estimates say?

Let's start with missile and other delivery systems for WMD. Our community said with high confidence that Saddam was continuing and expanding his missile programs, contrary to UN resolutions. He had missiles and other systems with ranges in excess of UN restrictions and was seeking missiles with even longer ranges.

What do we know today?

- Since the war, we have found an aggressive Iraqi missile program concealed from the international community.
- In fact, David Kay said just last fall that the Iraq Survey Group 'discovered sufficient evidence to date to conclude that the Iraqi regime was committed to delivery system improvements that would have, if Operation *Iraqi Freedom* had not occurred, dramatically breached UN restrictions placed on Iraq after the 1991 Gulf War'.
- We have also found that Iraq had plans and advanced design work for liquid-propellant missiles with ranges up to 1,000 km – activity that Iraq did not report to the UN and which could have placed large portions of the Middle East in jeopardy.
- We have confirmed that Iraq had new work underway on prohibited solid-propellant missiles that were also concealed from the UN.
- Significantly, the Iraq Survey Group has also confirmed prewar intelligence that Iraq was in secret negotiations with North Korea to obtain some of its most dangerous missile technology.
- My provisional bottom line today: On missiles, we were generally on target.

Let me turn to Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. The Estimate said that Iraq had been developing an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, probably intended to deliver biological warfare agents. Baghdad's existing Unmanned Aerial Vehicles could threaten its neighbors, US forces in the Persian Gulf and – if a small Unmanned Aerial Vehicle was brought close to our shores – the United States itself.

What do we know today?

The Iraq Survey Group found that two separate groups in Iraq were working on a number of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle designs that were hidden from the UN until Iraq's Declaration of December 2002. Now we know that important design elements were never fully declared.

The question of intent – especially regarding the smaller Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – is still out there. But we should remember that the Iraqis flight-tested an aerial biological weapon spray system intended for a large Unmanned Aerial Vehicle.

A senior Iraqi official has now admitted that their two large Unmanned Aerial Vehicles – one developed in the early '90s and the other under development in late 2000 – were intended for the delivery of biological weapons.

My provisional bottom line today: We detected the development of prohibited and undeclared Unmanned Aerial Vehicles. But the jury is still out on whether Iraq intended to use its newer, smaller Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to deliver biological weapons.

Let me turn to the nuclear issue. In the Estimate, all agencies agreed that Saddam Hussein wanted nuclear weapons. Most were convinced that he still had a program and,

if he obtained fissile material, he could have a weapon within a year. But we detected no such acquisition.

- We made two judgments that get overlooked these days: We said that Saddam did not have a nuclear weapon and probably would have been unable to make one until 2007 to 2009.
- Most agencies believed that Saddam had begun to reconstitute his nuclear program, but they disagreed on a number of issues, such as which procurement activities were designed to support his nuclear program. But let me be clear: Where there were differences, the Estimate laid out the disputes clearly.

So, what do we know today?

- David Kay told us last fall that, ‘... the testimony we have obtained from Iraqi scientists and senior government officials should clear up any doubts about whether Saddam still wanted to obtain nuclear weapons’.
- Keep in mind that no intelligence agency thought that Iraq’s efforts had progressed to the point of building an enrichment facility or making fissile material. We said that such activities were a few years away. Therefore it is not surprising that the Iraq Survey Group has not yet found evidence of uranium enrichment activities.
- Regarding prohibited aluminum tubes — a debate laid out extensively in the Estimate and one that experts still argue over — were they for uranium enrichment or conventional weapons? We have additional data to collect and more sources to question.
- Moreover, none of the tubes found in Iraq so far match the high-specification tubes Baghdad sought and may never have received the amounts needed. Our aggressive interdiction efforts may have prevented Iraq from receiving all but a few of these prohibited items.
- My provisional bottom line today: Saddam did not have a nuclear weapon. He still wanted one and Iraq intended to reconstitute a nuclear program at some point. But we have not yet found clear evidence that the dual-use items Iraq sought were for nuclear reconstitution. We do not yet know if any reconstitution efforts had begun, but we may have overestimated the progress Saddam was making.

Let me turn to biological weapons. The Estimate said Baghdad had them, and that all key aspects of an offensive program — research and development, production and weaponization — were still active, and most elements were larger, and more advanced than before the first Gulf War.

We believed that Iraq had lethal biological weapon agents, including anthrax, which it could quickly produce and weaponize for delivery by bombs, missiles, aerial sprayers, and covert operatives. But we said we had no specific information on the types or quantities of weapons, agent, or stockpiles at Baghdad’s disposal.

What do we know today?

- Last fall the Iraq Survey Group uncovered ‘significant information — including research and development of biological weapons-applicable organisms, the involvement of the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) in possible biological weapons activities, and deliberate concealment activities’. All of this suggests that Iraq, after

1996, further compartmentalized its program and focused on maintaining smaller, covert capabilities that could be activated quickly to surge the production of biological weapon agents.

- The Iraq Survey Group found a network of laboratories and safe houses controlled by Iraqi intelligence and security services that contained equipment for chemical and biological research and a prison laboratory complex possibly used in human testing for biological weapon agents, that were not declared to the UN.
- It also appears that Iraq had the infrastructure and the talent to resume production – but we have yet to find that it actually did so, nor have we found weapons. Until we get to the bottom of the role played by the Iraqi security services – which were operating covert labs – we will not know the full extent of the program.
- Let me also talk about the trailers discovered in Iraq last summer. We initially concluded that they resembled trailers described by a human source for mobile biological warfare agent production. There is no consensus within our intelligence community today over whether the trailers were for that use or if they were used for the production of hydrogen. Everyone agrees that they are not ideally configured for either process, but could be made to work in either mode.
- To give you some idea of the contrasting evidence we wrestle with, some of the Iraqis involved in making the trailers were told that they were intended to produce hydrogen for artillery units. But an Iraqi artillery officer says they never used these types of systems and that the hydrogen for artillery units came in canisters from a fixed production facility. We are trying to get to the bottom of this story.
- And I must tell you that we are finding discrepancies in some claims made by human sources about mobile biological weapons production before the war. Because we lack direct access to the most important sources on this question, we have as yet been unable to resolve the differences.
- My provisional bottom line today: Iraq intended to develop biological weapons. Clearly, research and development work was underway that would have permitted a rapid shift to agent production if seed stocks were available. But we do not know if production took place – and just as clearly – we have not yet found biological weapons.

Before I leave the biological weapons story, an important fact that you must remember. For years the UN searched unsuccessfully for Saddam's biological weapons program. His son-in-law, Husayn Kamil, who controlled the hidden program, defected, and only then was the world able to confirm that Iraq indeed had an active and dangerous biological weapons program. Indeed, history matters when dealing with these complicated problems. While many of us want instant answers, this search for biological weapons in Iraq will take time and patience.

Let me now turn to chemical weapons. We said in the Estimate with high confidence that Iraq had them. We also believed, though with less certainty, that Saddam had stocked at least 100 metric tons of agent. That may sound like a lot, but it would fit in a few dorm rooms on this campus.

Initially, the community was skeptical about whether Iraq had started chemical weapons agent production. Sources had reported that Iraq had begun renewed production, and imagery and intercepts gave us additional concerns.

But only when analysts saw what they believed to be satellite photos of shipments of materials from ammunition sites did they believe that Iraq was again producing chemical weapon agents.

What do we know now?

- The work done so far shows a story similar to that of his biological weapons program. Saddam had rebuilt a dual-use industry. David Kay reported that Saddam and his son Uday wanted to know how long it would take for Iraq to produce chemical weapons. However, while sources indicate Iraq may have conducted some experiments related to developing chemical weapons, no physical evidence has yet been uncovered. We need more time.
- My provisional bottom line today: Saddam had the intent and capability to quickly convert civilian industry to chemical weapons production. However, we have not yet found the weapons we expected.

I have now given you my provisional bottom lines. But it is important to remember that Estimates are not written in a vacuum. Let me tell you some of what was going on in the fall of 2002. Several sensitive reports crossed my desk from two sources characterized by our foreign partners as 'established and reliable'.

The first, from a source who had direct access to Saddam and his inner circle said:

- Iraq was not in possession of a nuclear weapon. However, Iraq was aggressively and covertly developing such a weapon. Saddam had recently called together his Nuclear Weapons Committee, irate that Iraq did not yet have a weapon because money was no object and they possessed the scientific know-how.
- The Committee members assured Saddam that once the fissile material was in hand, a bomb could be ready in just 18-24 months. The return of UN inspectors would cause minimal disruption because, according to the source, Iraq was expert at denial and deception.
- The same source said that Iraq was stockpiling chemical weapons and that equipment to produce insecticides under the oil-for-food program had been diverted to covert chemical weapons production.
- The source said that:
 - Iraq's weapons of 'last resort' were 'mobile launchers armed with chemical weapons which would be fired at enemy forces in Israel';
 - Iraqi scientists were 'dabbling' with biological weapons, with limited success;
 - But the quantities were not sufficient to constitute a real weapons program.

A stream of reporting from a different sensitive source with access to senior Iraqi officials said he believed:

- production of chemical and biological weapons was taking place;
- biological agents were easy to produce and hide; and
- prohibited chemicals were also being produced at dual-use facilities.

This source stated that a senior Iraqi official in Saddam's inner circle believed, as a result of the UN inspections, that Iraq knew the inspectors' weak points and how to take advantage of them. The source said that there was an elaborate plan to deceive inspectors and ensure prohibited items would never be found.

Now, did this information make any difference in my thinking? You bet it did. As this and other information came across my desk, it solidified and reinforced the judgments we had reached, and in my own view, of the danger posed by Saddam Hussein and I conveyed this view to our nation's leaders.

Could I have ignored or dismissed such reports at the time? Absolutely not.

Continuing the Search

Now, I am sure you are asking: 'Why haven't we found the weapons?' I have told you the search must continue and it will be difficult.

As David Kay reminded us, the Iraqis systematically destroyed and looted forensic evidence before, during and after the war. We have been faced with the organized destruction of documentary and computer evidence in a wide range of offices, laboratories, and companies suspected of WMD work. The pattern of these efforts is one of deliberate, rather than random, acts. Iraqis who have volunteered information to us are still being intimidated and attacked.

Remember, finding things in Iraq is very tough. After the first Gulf War, the US Army blew up chemical weapons without knowing it. They were mixed in with conventional weapons in Iraqi ammo dumps.

My new Special Advisor, Charles Duelfer, will soon be in Iraq to join Major General Keith Dayton — commander of the Iraq Survey Group — to continue our effort to learn the truth. And when the truth emerges, we will report it to the American people — no matter what.

Reviewing Our Work

As Director of Central Intelligence, I have an important responsibility. I have a responsibility to evaluate our performance — both our operational work and our analytical tradecraft.

So what do I think about all this?

Based on an assessment of the data we collected over the past 10 years, it would have been difficult for analysts to come to any different conclusions than the ones reached in October 2002.

However, in our business that is not good enough.

We must constantly review the quality of our work. For example, the National Intelligence Council is reviewing the Estimate line by line.

Six months ago, we also commissioned an internal review to examine the tradecraft of our work on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. And through this effort we are finding ways to improve our processes. For example, we recently discovered that relevant analysts in the community missed the notice that identified a source that we had cited as providing information that in some cases was unreliable, and in other cases fabricated. We have acknowledged this mistake.

In addition to these internal reviews, I asked Dick Kerr, a former Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, and a team of retired senior analysts to evaluate the Estimate.

Among the questions that we as a Community must ultimately reflect on are:

- Did the history of our work, Saddam's deception and denial, his lack of compliance with the international community, and all that we know about this regime cause us to minimize, or ignore, alternative scenarios?
- Did the fact that we missed how close Saddam came to acquiring a nuclear weapon in the early 1990s cause us to over-estimate his nuclear or other programs in 2002?
- Did we carefully consider the absence of information flowing from a repressive and intimidating regime, and would it have made any difference in our bottom-line judgments?
- Did we clearly tell policy makers what we knew, what we didn't know, what was not clear, and identify the gaps in our knowledge?

We are in the process of evaluating just such questions – and while others will express views on the questions sooner, we ourselves must come to our own bottom lines.

I will say that our judgments were not single-threaded. UN inspections served as a baseline and we had multiple strands of reporting from signals, imagery and human intelligence.

After the UN inspectors left Iraq in 1998, we made an aggressive effort to penetrate Iraq. Our record was mixed.

While we had voluminous reporting, the major judgments reached were based on a narrower band of data. This is not unusual.

There was, by necessity, a strong reliance on technical data which, to be sure, was very valuable, particularly in the imagery of military and key dual-use facilities, on missile and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle developments – and in particular on the efforts of Iraqi front companies to falsify and deny us the ultimate destination and use of dual-use equipment.

We did not have enough of our own human intelligence.

We did not ourselves penetrate the inner sanctum – our agents were on the periphery of WMD activities, providing some useful information. We had access to emigres and defectors with more direct access to WMD programs, and we had a steady stream of reporting with access to the Iraqi leadership come to us from a trusted foreign partner. Other partners provided important information.

What we did not collect ourselves, we evaluated as carefully as we could. Still, the lack of direct access to some of these sources created some risk – such is the nature of our business.

To be sure, we had difficulty penetrating the Iraqi regime with human sources, but a blanket indictment of our human intelligence around the world is simply wrong.

We have spent the last seven years rebuilding our clandestine service. As Director of Central Intelligence, this has been my highest priority.

When I came to the CIA in the mid-'90s, our graduating class of case officers was unbelievably low. Now, after years of rebuilding our training programs and putting our best efforts to recruit the most talented men and women, we are graduating more clandestine officers than at any time in the CIA's history.

It will take an additional five years to finish the job of rebuilding our clandestine service, but the results so far have been obvious:

- A CIA spy led us to Khalid Sheik Muhammad, the mastermind of Al Qa'ida's September 11th attacks.
- Al Qa'ida's operational chief in the Persian Gulf, Nashiri, the man who planned and executed the bombing of the USS COLE, was located and arrested based on our human reporting.
- Human sources were critical to the capture of Hambali, the chief terrorist in southeast Asia. His organization killed hundreds of people when it bombed a nightclub in Bali.

So when you hear pundits say that we have no human intelligence capability ... they don't know what they are talking about.

Beyond Iraq: The Larger Role of US Intelligence

It's important that I address these mis-statements because the American people must know just how reliable American intelligence is on the threats that confront our nation.

Let's talk about Libya, where a sitting regime has volunteered to dismantle its WMD programs.

This was an intelligence success.

Why? Because American and British intelligence officers understood the Libyan programs.

- Only through intelligence did we know each of the major programs Libya had going.
- Only through intelligence did we know when Libya started its first nuclear weapons program and then put it on the back burner for years.
- Only through intelligence did we know when the nuclear program took off again. We knew because we had penetrated Libya's foreign supplier network.
- And through intelligence last fall, when Libya was to receive a supply of centrifuge parts, we worked with the foreign partners to locate and stop the shipment.
- Intelligence also knew that Libya was working with North Korea to get longer-range ballistic missiles.
- And we learned all of this through the powerful combination of technical intelligence, careful and painstaking analytic work, operational daring and, yes, the classic kind of human intelligence that people have led you to believe we no longer have.
- This was critical when the Libyans approached British and US intelligence about dismantling their chemical, biological and nuclear weapons programs. They came to the British and American intelligence because they knew we could keep the negotiations secret.

- And in repeated talks, when CIA officers were the only official Americans in Libya, we and our British colleagues made clear just how much insight we had into their WMD and missile programs.
- When the Libyans said they would show us their SCUD-Bs, we said, 'Fine, but we want to examine your longer range SCUD-Cs'.
- It was only when we convinced them that we knew Libya's nuclear program was a weapons program that they showed us their weapons design.
- As should be clear to you, intelligence was the key that opened the door to Libya's clandestine programs.

Let me briefly mention Iran. I cannot go into detail. I want to assure you that recent Iranian admissions about their nuclear programs validate our intelligence assessments. It is flat wrong to say that we were 'surprised' by reports from the Iranian opposition last year.

And on North Korea, it was patient analysis of difficult-to-obtain information that allowed our diplomats to confront the North Korean regime about their pursuit of a different route to a nuclear weapon that violated international agreements.

One final spy story: Last year in my annual World Wide Threat testimony before Congress in open session, I talked about the emerging threat from private proliferators, especially nuclear brokers. I was cryptic about this in public, but I can tell you now that I was talking about A.Q. Khan. His network was shaving years off the nuclear weapons development timelines of several states, including Libya.

Now, as you know from the news coming out of Pakistan, Khan and his network have been dealt a crushing blow, with several of his senior officers in custody. Malaysian authorities have shut down one of the network's largest plants. His network is now answering to the world for years of nuclear profiteering.

What did intelligence have to do with this?

- First, we *discovered the extent of Khan's hidden network*. We tagged the proliferators, we detected the network stretching from Pakistan to Europe to the Middle East to Asia offering its wares to countries like North Korea and Iran.
- Working with our British colleagues, we *pieced together the picture* of the network, revealing its subsidiaries, scientists, front companies, agents, finances, and manufacturing plants on three continents.
- Our spies *penetrated the network* through a series of daring operations over several years. Through this unrelenting effort, we confirmed the network was delivering such things as illicit uranium enrichment centrifuges.
- And as you heard me say on the Libya case, we *stopped deliveries* of prohibited material.

I welcome the President's Commission looking into proliferation. We have a record and a story to tell and we want to tell it to those willing to listen.

Conclusion

I came here today to discuss our prewar estimate on Iraq and how we have followed Iraq's development of weapons of mass destruction programs for well over 10 years. It is absolutely essential to do so openly and honestly.

I have argued for patience as we continue to learn the truth. We are nowhere near the end of our work. We need more time in Iraq. I have told you where we are and where our performance can be improved.

Our analysts, at the end of the day, have a duty to inform and warn. They did so honestly and with integrity when making judgments about the dangers posed by Saddam Hussein.

Simply assessing stacks of reports does not speak to the wisdom experienced analysts brought to bear on a difficult and deceptive subject.

But, as all these reviews are underway, we must take care. We cannot afford an environment to develop where analysts are afraid to make a call, where judgments are held back because analysts fear they will be wrong. Their work and these judgments make vital contributions to our nation's security.

I came here today also to tell the American people that they must know that they are served by dedicated, courageous professionals.

It is evident on the battlefields of Afghanistan and Iraq.

It is evident by their work against proliferators.

And it is evident by the fact that well over two-thirds of Al Qa'ida's leaders can no longer hurt the American people.

We are a community that some thought would not be needed at the end of the Cold War.

We have systematically been rebuilding all of our disciplines with a focused strategy and care.

Our strategy for the future is based on achieving capabilities that will provide the kind of intelligence the country deserves. The President has ensured that this will be the case.

We constantly learn and improve.

And at no time will we allow our integrity or our willingness to make tough calls to ever be compromised.

Source:

http://www.cia.gov/cia/public_affairs/speeches/2004/tenet_georgetownspeech_02052004.html; accessed 1 June 2004

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