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## SPEECHES AND TESTIMONY

**Testimony to the US Congress  
by Mr. Charles Duelfer,  
Director of Central Intelligence Special Advisor for Strategy regarding Iraqi Weapons  
of Mass Destruction (WMD) Programs**

**30 March 2004**

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members, thank you for the opportunity to address you today on the Iraq Survey Group and the investigation of Iraq's WMD capabilities.

### **Initial Impressions**

First, a disclaimer. This report is very limited in scope. It is intended to provide a status report of my efforts at steering the ISG. It is not a preliminary assessment of findings. I inherited the expectation of appearing before Congress from the previous Special Advisor, and I am using this opportunity to describe my overall approach.

It has now been six weeks since I arrived in Baghdad as the DCI's Special Advisor for WMD in Iraq. In that time I have begun my examination of the efforts of the Group, its accomplishments, and capabilities. Certainly, General Dayton and the ISG operation he has run for the past year have achieved many major accomplishments in difficult circumstances. Much data related to Iraq's WMD programs has been gathered. It is clear that Iraq was in violation of UN Resolutions, including UNSCR 1441.

I am now making some adjustments to strategy and focus, which I will discuss. Largely they are intended to derive the meaning of the assortment of facts we have accumulated and continue to accumulate.

While I am new to the ISG and the process, which has been underway for the past year, this is not my first time in Baghdad. I have been directly involved in the disarmament of Iraq since

1993. I served as the Deputy Director of UNSCOM from 1993 until 2000. I have spent long hours over the years with many of the key figures—many now in jail—and know them well. It is with this experience in mind that I speak to you today about Iraq and the search for WMD.

## Reviewing the Work

I have begun to review all the work of the Iraq Survey Group. It is my task to investigate Iraq's WMD programs and to determine the truth about their existence, their extent, their capabilities, and where the regime was headed. Let me state at the outset that I do not believe we have sufficient information and insight to make final judgments with confidence at this time. Interim assessments could turn out to be misleading or wrong. I believe there is more work to be done to gather critical information about the regime, its intentions, and its capabilities, and to assess that information for its meaning.

The ISG continues to look for Weapons of Mass Destruction. Many sites have been visited where intelligence reports before the war indicated there could be weapons. The ISG has investigated hundreds of sites to date. Moreover, we regularly receive reports, some quite intriguing and credible, about concealed caches. We continue to investigate these reports about WMD materials and weapons being buried or hidden across Iraq.

We do not just look for stockpiles of weapons that could be hidden in the country. It is the mission of the ISG to determine all that was potentially being done related to WMD and the delivery systems for WMD. In addition to site exploitations for weapons, ISG has conducted debriefings of former Iraqi regime officials, examined research and production facilities, and evaluated documents recovered from the regime. Special focus has been given to the senior leadership figures captured after the war.

The investigative work being done by ISG is time consuming and difficult. I commend the women and men of the ISG for their dedication and professionalism. They have sacrificed their time, and their families have sacrificed as well, so that this mission can move forward. Traveling around Iraq is dangerous, and several of our teams have been attacked—to date, there have been no fatalities. They are all a credit to their nations, the United States, Great Britain, and Australia.

## Challenges

One of the circumstances that struck me the most is the extreme reluctance of Iraqi managers, scientists, and engineers to speak freely. Before arriving in Iraq, I thought they would be more cooperative. Many perceive a grave risk in speaking with us. On one hand, there is a fear of prosecution or arrest. On the other, there is a fear former regime supporters will exact retribution. This is, in part, why we do not yet fully understand the central issue of regime intentions. We do not know whether Saddam was concealing WMD in the final years or planning to resume production once sanctions were lifted. We do not know what he ordered his senior ministers to undertake. We do not know how the disparate activities we have identified link

together.

In short, obtaining clear, truthful information from the senior Iraqi leadership has been problematic even at this point in time.

While ISG has met with hundreds of scientists, we have yet to identify the most critical people in any programmatic effort. Many people have yet to be found or questioned, and many of those we have found are not giving us complete answers.

Documents are another important source of information, but one that is more difficult to use than might be expected. We have recovered millions of documents, but there are millions more that were destroyed. The collected documents are often mixed up in such a way as to make research in an organized manner extremely difficult. Our linguistic capabilities limit full translations to a tiny fraction of the whole.

Imagine yourself being asked to determine the secret, behind the scenes intentions of our own government with respect to its most secret weapons programs after talking to a few hundred folks who may or may not have been intimately involved, with only a small fraction of documents available, and with a leadership that is not broken and willing to discuss its inner secrets. How much would you really understand? The people we need to speak to have spent their entire professional lives being trained not to speak about WMD.

Most of those in the ISG are not experts on Iraq, and most do not have extensive experience in the kinds of investigative operations and analysis they are asked to undertake. In fact, I am not sure anyone has ever undertaken this kind of operational, analytical, investigative mission before.

## Phases of Work

Before I provide some specifics on what the ISG has learned, let me discuss the evolution of ISG's efforts. The ISG can be seen as having evolved through phases since OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM ended.

The 75<sup>th</sup> Exploitation Task Force immediately began looking for WMD deployed on the battlefield or in forward stockpiles during and immediately after the war. The military was prepared for the potential that Iraq might use CW or BW. Our troops moved through Iraq in chemical protective gear because of the threat of chemical attack. When such attacks did not materialize, the Iraq Survey Group was established in June of 2003 to investigate in a non-tactical environment.

ISG's initial strategy was to examine sites associated with the former WMD programs or sites suspected of involvement. Some regime figures were captured and interrogated. Some documents were recovered. During this phase, the first DCI Special Advisor was appointed. He arrived in Baghdad in June 2003.

As site exploitations revealed WMD was not stored or produced at the primary known or suspect sites, the ISG moved to a strategy of finding and debriefing higher-level and mid-level scientists and engineers and military officers. Senior regime officials were debriefed. Site exploitations continued, and an interim report was provided last fall.

The first Special Advisor departed ISG on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2003. After that, the ISG continued to follow its previous strategy, but the effort shifted towards fewer site visits, more debriefings, and greater use of document sorting and review. A system was created for managing the cataloguing of the huge volume of documents, which continued to be received.

I arrived on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2004. I have endeavored to refine the strategy for ISG in the weeks since. In its simplest terms, my strategy is to determine the regime's intentions for all the activities ISG has uncovered. That is not simple to do, but I will tell you more of that later. At this point, let me provide you with an overview of some of the developments in the last few months.

## Procurement

Let me begin by discussing procurement and financing, two critical areas that cut across all potential WMD efforts. The ISG has been investigating Iraq's procurement process, sources of finance, the involvement of foreign firms, and the specific types of goods that were sought. Iraq utilized a complex and well developed procurement system hidden by an effective denial and deception strategy. By the late 1990s, Iraq, in contravention of UN sanctions, pursued the procurement of military goods and technical expertise for military capabilities.

The primary source of illicit financing for this system was oil smuggling conducted through government-to-government protocols negotiated by Iraq with neighboring countries. Money also was obtained from kickback payments made on contracts set up through the UN's Oil for Food program.

Iraq derived several billion dollars between 1999 and 2003 from oil smuggling and kickbacks. One senior regime official estimated Iraq earned \$4 billion from illicit oil sales from 1999 to March 2003. By levying a surcharge on Oil for Food contracts, Iraq earned billions more during the same period.

This was revenue outside UN control and provided resources the regime could spend without restriction. It channeled much of the illicitly gathered funds to rebuild Iraq's military capabilities through the Military Industrialization Commission, the MIC. MIC worked with the Iraqi Intelligence Service to establish front companies in Iraq and other countries to facilitate procurement.

The budget of MIC increased nearly 100 fold from 1996 to 2003, with the budget totaling \$500 million in 2003. Most of this money came from illicit oil contracts. Iraq imported banned military weapons and technology and dual-use goods through Oil for Food contracts. Companies in several countries were involved in these efforts. Direct roles by government officials are also

clearly established.

## Denial and Deception

Even as procurement and finance cut across all of Iraq's technical development efforts, denial and deception were infused in these efforts as well.

Much is known about Iraq's various efforts to conceal WMD from UNSCOM after the Gulf War in 1991. The ISG, however, has uncovered more details about the extensive efforts undertaken by Iraq against UNSCOM and later UNMOVIC. Moreover, these efforts at deception did not end with the departure of inspectors in 1998, and indeed deception continued right up until war in 2003.

The Iraqi Intelligence Service was tasked with monitoring and infiltrating UNSCOM and UNMOVIC. Iraqi officials tell us hundreds of officers from multiple directorates were tasked to monitor the UN officials, employing a spectrum of capabilities from human to electronic surveillance. Elaborate plans were developed and rehearsed to enable sensitive sites to be able to hide sensitive documents and equipment on as little as 15 minutes notice. Iraqi intelligence engaged in a worldwide effort to collect intelligence on the UN, including efforts to recruit sources inside the UN, UNSCOM and UNMOVIC.

## Biological and Chemical Weapons

The ISG has developed new information regarding Iraq's dual-use facilities and ongoing research suitable for a capability to produce biological or chemical agents on short notice. Iraq did have facilities suitable for the production of biological and chemical agents needed for weapons. It had plans to improve and expand and even build new facilities.

For example, the Tuwaitha Agricultural and Biological Research Center has equipment suitable for the production of biological agents. While it conducts civilian research, ISG has also determined that it was conducting research that would be important for a biological weapons program. For example, we are continuing to examine research on *Bacillus thuringiensis* that was conducted until March 2003. This material is a commercial biopesticide, but it also can be used as a surrogate for the anthrax bacterium for production and weapons development purposes. Work continued on single cell proteins at Tuwaitha as well. Single cell protein research previously had been used as the cover activity for BW production at al-Hakam. We are now focusing on what such activities meant.

With respect to chemical production, Iraq was working up to March 2003 to construct new facilities for the production of chemicals. There were plans under the direction of a leading nuclear scientist/WMD program manager to construct plants capable of making a variety of chemicals and producing a year's supply of any chemical in a month. This was a crash program. Most of the chemicals specified in this program were conventional commercial chemicals, but a

few are considered “dual use.” One we are examining, commonly called DCC (N,N-Dicyclohexyl carbodiimide), was used by Iraq before 1991 as a stabilizing agent for the nerve agent VX. Iraq had plans before OIF for large-scale production of this chemical. Again, what do these activities mean?

## Nuclear Weapons

Likewise, in the nuclear arena, the ISG has developed information that suggests Iraqi interest in preserving and expanding the knowledge needed to design and develop nuclear weapons.

One significant effort illustrating this was a high-speed rail gun program under the direction of two senior scientists associated with Iraq’s pre-1991 nuclear weapons program. Documents from this project show that the scientists were developing a rail gun designed to achieve speeds of 2-10 kilometers per second. The ostensible purpose for this research was development of an air defense gun, but these speeds are what are necessary to conduct experiments of metals compressing together at high speed as they do in a nuclear detonation. Scientists refer to these experiments as “equation of state” measurements.

Not only were these scientists developing a rail gun, but their laboratory also contained documents describing diagnostic techniques that are important for nuclear weapons experiments, such as flash x-ray radiography, laser velocimetry, and high-speed photography. Other documents found outside the laboratory described a high-voltage switch that can be used to detonate a nuclear weapon, laser detonation, nuclear fusion, radiation measurement, and radiation safety. These fields are certainly not related to air defense.

It is this combination of topics that makes us suspect this lab was intentionally focused on research applicable for nuclear weapons development.

We continued our efforts to determine if Iraq was seeking to develop technologies for a uranium enrichment capability. Iraq’s efforts to procure high tolerance aluminum tubes were examined. Ostensibly these tubes were for small rockets, but the manufacturing tolerances specified were much higher than would normally be required for this purpose. Technical reasons for the high tolerances were explained by a number of Iraqis associated with their acquisition, but there are still a number of discrepancies to examine with regard to these tubes. Again, we need to determine what these activities mean.

## Delivery Systems

In addition to WMD technologies, the ISG has continued to uncover a very robust program for delivery systems that were not reported to the UN. New information has been discovered relating to long-range ballistic missile development and Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs). Missiles and UAVs were flight tested that easily exceeded the UN limit of 150 kilometers. More than that, the Iraqi regime was developing technology to extend one of their ballistic missile’s range beyond 150

kilometers with changes to airframes and fuels. Discussions were underway with North Korea regarding technology associated with a 1,300 km system—presumably the No Dong. Other foreign support was being used or solicited.

Iraq was developing a variety of UAVs using inertial navigation systems and navigation using GPS. New information on the L-29 based UAV has also been developed.

Foreign technology and technical assistance were critical to the progress made by Iraqi engineers and designers. Foreign missile experts worked in Iraq in violation of UN sanctions from 1998 until just before the start of OIF. They undertook a complete review of the al-Samoud surface-to-surface missile system, which exceeded UN range limits. Based on this technical assistance, Iraq determined the original al-Samoud concept was not optimal and changed the production process to incorporate the new design information. Contracts were concluded calling for foreign firms to produce several major al-Samoud subsystems.

A variety of foreign companies with high-level political connections acted as middlemen to import technology into Iraq for missile and UAV development. These actions clearly violated UN sanctions.

## Regime Intent

The new area of focus I have initiated for ISG is that of regime intent. It is critically important for us to understand the intentions of the regime as we seek to put the various research, development, and production activities into context. Information on regime intent can come from many sources, including public statements by regime leaders, documents signed by senior leaders, debriefings, and other records.

We must determine what Saddam ordered, what his ministers ordered, and how the plans fit together. Were weapons hidden that were not readily available? Was there a plan for a break out production capacity? Were WMD technologies being developed for the missile and UAV programs? When did the leadership want to see results? How would technologies be integrated?

Some of these decisions may not have been recorded in traditional ways, such as documents. They may never have been broadly disseminated. They may have been orally transmitted or conveyed to only a select group, a trusted inner circle. We know from high-level debriefings that Saddam conveyed his most sensitive messages to particular individuals orally. Moreover, there were explicit instructions not to repeat such conversations.

Over the past ten months, we have learned that his most senior and trusted officials can hold their tongues as well. Some are willing to talk, but they oftentimes are the ones we know were not in the inner circle.

## Future Investigations

Let me end my remarks with some comments about the future work of the ISG.

I come back to the overarching questions: Did the former regime in Iraq have WMD at the end of OIF? What were its WMD capabilities and intentions?

At this stage, ISG is focusing on developing an integrated picture of regime programs and intentions. We are putting data together in a comprehensive way that, hopefully, will allow us to describe the overall WMD program of the regime.

My goal is to be able to effectively address the major technical and policy questions in the months ahead. At this point in time, I cannot say how long this investigation should take. I will strive, as will the ISG, to develop the critical information and insight we require. The difficult environment we work in, and the complexity of the issue, make certainty in our advancement impossible to predict.

However, my goal is to have a comprehensive product, which will describe what we have found and, as fully as possible, the WMD efforts and plans of the leadership of this defunct regime.

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