





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Presenter: Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz Briefing on His Recent Trip to Iraq

Mr. Wolfowitz: Good morning. I'm sorry we're a few minutes late. We were just over at the White House, where, as I think you know, the president delivered a powerful statement about the situation in Iraq and the purpose of our mission there and the extraordinary performance of our troops there.

I'm here just to brief on my trip, which was a four-and-a-half-day whirlwind tour of northern, central and southern Iraq. We just got back in the wee hours of Tuesday morning. I guess that was actually yesterday.

With the support of U.S. military, just incredible support that they give us, I covered quite a lot of territory. In fact, I think we saw in four and a half days what would normally take at least a week or maybe two. It was a jam-packed schedule and temperatures that hovered around and sometimes above 120 degrees. One of the veteran journalists with us called it the most grueling trip he'd ever been on. And it deepens my gratitude to the incredible military men and women, not only for the support that they gave us, which was instrumental in making this trip happen, but for recognizing that this is what they do day after day in that grueling heat and, frankly, with much less good conditions than the ones they provided us, without letting up.



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This morning I'd like to briefly outline for you some of what we've learned.

The first thing I'd like to do is amplify what I just alluded to about our troops. They are just incredible, and they're doing an absolutely stunning job. They are brave when they have to fight -- and they still have to fight -- and they are caring and ingenious and extraordinarily imaginative when they deal with humanitarian and political and civil military challenges, which they are fortunately in a position to be doing in most of the country. What they do in a day's work is extraordinary, and it's a great tribute to the kind of quality of people that serve this country.

Their morale is high. They're committed to the mission. And their obvious commitment to getting the job done right is having a positive effect on the people of Iraq. They understand that helping the Iraqis build a free and democratic society will help make our children and grandchildren safer. The Iraqi people understand that they are there to help. I came away with two overwhelming impressions about the feelings of the Iraqi people. First, there is enormous gratitude on their part for American and British forces, and for President Bush and Prime Minister Blair personally, for what they have done to bring about the liberation of the Iraqi people from an incredibly evil and brutal regime. That gratitude was obvious across all the communities we encountered, definitely including Sunni Arabs. That may surprise some, but in fact, Saddam and his two evil sons practiced what I've called equal opportunity oppression.

The second big impression I came away with is that the pervasive fear of the old regime is still alive in Iraq. That's not surprising, particularly when you have a chance to view first-hand the kinds of horrors that Saddam and his regime perpetrated, the effects of which are visible everywhere you turn in that country. Among the most horrific remnants of the brutality of that regime that I witnessed were the Marsh Arabs of the village of Al Taraba (ph), the mass graves of Al Hillah, and the industrial-style execution process that was practiced in Abu Gharib prison.

In the case of the Marsh Arabs, liberation came just in time to save a fragment of a civilization that goes back thousands of years. In the case of the many tens of thousands who were killed at Al Hillah and Abu Gharib, it did not come in time.

For the Marsh Arabs, where there was once a lush landscape of productive, fresh-water marshes, there is now a wasteland the size of the state of New Jersey. One reporter with us compared it to the surface of the Moon -- a parched, lifeless void.

In Al Hillah, villagers told us stories about how buses and trucks of people were

led to a field where they were gunned down and buried dead or alive. Today, the graveyard in Hillah is one of dozens that have been discovered throughout Iraq. In fact, while we were in the north, a field commander there told us they had just temporarily stopped the excavation of a newly discovered gravesite after unearthing the remains of 80 victims, including women and little children, some still with their toys.

The torture chamber at the police academy, that was reported in gruesome detail in Monday's Washington Post, and which we chanced to see because we were going to the academy for a very different purpose, which was to get a better understanding of the training that's being done to bring in a new Iraqi police force -- but they took us to see the torture chamber. And it strikes you that this was just one family, that story, and there are tens of thousands of other individual families in Iraq that can tell similar stories.

I raise these issues because one conclusion that I draw from this visit is that the history of atrocities and the punishment of those responsible is directly linked to our efforts to establish better security and to achieve intelligence information from the Iraqi people. The Iraqi people want to build a free, secure and democratic future. But to do so, we need to remove the blanket of fear that still covers them. Yesterday's events help enormously in that regard.

It strikes me that in many ways, Iraqis are like prisoners who have emerged from years of solitary confinement with no light, no news, no knowledge of the outside world, and they have just emerged into the blinding sun and the fresh air of freedom.

The progress that our troops are making is helping to lessen the grip of fear. Make no mistake; we are making a great deal of progress.

General Sanchez, the outstanding new commander of the task force -- Joint Task Force 7, is a veteran of Kosovo. He went into Kosovo at the beginning and stayed there for a year. And he happened, in our briefing, to comment that things are happening in Iraq after three months that didn't happen after 12 months in Kosovo. And I said, "Well, that's interesting. Would you mind jotting down for me some of those examples?" And I'm not going to take the time here to read through them, but just off the top of his head, he gave me a handwritten note with 10 things that have already been accomplished in Iraq that had not been accomplished in Kosovo when he left after a year.

The entire south and north are impressively stable, and the center is getting better day-by-day. The public food distribution is up and running. There is no food

crisis. I might point out we planned for a food crisis; fortunately, there isn't one. Hospitals nationwide are open. Doctors and nurses are at work. Medical supply convoys are escorted to and from the warehouses. We planned for a health crisis; there isn't one. Oil production has passed the 1 million barrels per day mark. We planned for the possibility of massive destruction of this resource of the Iraqi people; we didn't have to do it.

The school year has been salvaged. Schools nationwide have reopened and final exams are complete. There are local town councils in most major cities and major districts of Baghdad, and they are functioning free from Ba'athist influence.

There's been a lot of talk that there was no plan. There was a plan, but as any military officer can tell you, no plan survives first contact with reality. Inevitably, some of our assumptions turned out to be wrong. Fortunately, many things turned out to be much better than our assumptions, in no small measure, I think, because of a brilliant military plan that achieved extraordinary surprise.

There is no humanitarian crisis. There is no refugee crisis. There is no health crisis. There has been minimal damage to -- to infrastructure; minimal war damage, lots of regime damage over decades, but minimal war damage to infrastructure except for telecommunications, which we had to target. There has been no environmental catastrophe, either from oil well fires or from dam breaks. And there has been no need for massive oil field repair.

So, fortunately, much of what we planned for, much of what's captured in the title of the initial office, Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, what we planned for and budgeted for, has not proved necessary. But some important assumptions turned out to underestimate the problem. Some conditions were worse than we anticipated, particularly in the security area, and there are three.

No Army units, at least none of any significant size, came over to our side so that we could use them as Iraqi forces with us today. Second, the police turned out to require a massive overhaul. Third, and worst of all, it was difficult to imagine before the war that the criminal gang of sadists and gangsters who have run Iraq for 35 years would continue fighting. Fighting what has been sometimes called a guerrilla war. It's only a guerrilla war in certain similarity of tactics. But even at the tactical level, I believe this will go down as the first guerrilla tactic in history in which contract killings, killings for hire, going out and soliciting young men for \$500 to take a shot at an American, was the principal tactic employed.

In spite of a security situation that was difficult to anticipate, we are making significant progress, as yesterday's events demonstrate. The north and south are

extraordinarily stable, and the 101st Air Assault Division and the 1st Marine Division are doing extraordinary civil military work.

In the center, in Baghdad, the 3rd Armored Division in Baghdad and the 4th Infantry Division in what's sometimes called the Sunni heartland are demonstrating great progress, particularly in the critical area of getting intelligence that allows us to hunt down the mid-level Ba'athists that are hiring those killers. And even in Fallujah, which is unquestionably the toughest area we've encountered, the 3rd Infantry Division is making notable progress.

Overall, we encountered a remarkably positive reception in the Shi'a heartland, the holy cities of Karbala and Najaf. So far -- and I underscore "so far" -- the Shi'a extremists and the Iranians don't seem to be getting much traction in the Shi'a heartland.

There's a similar situation in the northern regions, and what was perhaps most remarkable, although I think it's still fragile, is the extraordinary stability that's been achieved in the city of Kirkuk, where we have feared from the beginning the possibility of ethnic conflict, perhaps the one place in Iraq where it is most likely. We have a city with large populations, not only of Sunni Arabs but of Sunni Kurds, of Turks and Christians.

In fact, we had a very moving meeting with the members of the town council and a few other independents that had been invited. When it came the turn of one old Arab to speak, in his black robes with the classic gold embroidery and a white kaffiyeh with a black band around his head, he began to talk about how "it wasn't just the Kurds who were oppressed by Saddam; we were all oppressed by Saddam." He thanked the president and the coalition forces for their liberation, and I thought, "Okay, and now comes 'we Arabs deserve consideration as well.'" And the most extraordinary thing was, this old Arab said the Kurds were driven out of their homes, and they're entitled to their homes back. I don't know if that's representative, but it was powerful.

It's still a fragile achievement. Kirkuk now is run by its own police force, but we have to work every day to try to make sure that the appetite for correcting things -- that need for Kurds to get back to their homes, for example -- is managed in a peaceful way.

Our biggest remaining challenges, beyond the security issue -- and in fact, you can't separate these from the security issue, because electricity shortages contribute to security problems, and sabotage contributes to electricity shortages; you have to address these things together -- but if I can say, along with the direct

attack on the mid-level Ba'athists, our biggest remaining challenges are, number one, electricity; number two, jobs and unemployment; and number three, the domination of the local media by hostile sources, including, from the outside world, from Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabia and some other unhelpful foreign broadcasts.

We are committed to working with Iraqis and the international community to achieving the better government that the Iraqi people deserve. Ambassador Bremer has an excellent three-pronged strategy for addressing the way ahead. Our coalition troops continue every day to make remarkable progress in that direction.

And maybe let me just conclude once more: It's not possible often enough to say "thank you" to the troops. That was part of my mission. I remember when I was here 10 years ago, then-Secretary Cheney commented that when he made visits to troops to lift their morale, he always came home with his morale lifted. And I guess I can say the same today.

I'm happy to take your questions.

Q Mr. Secretary, as a designating authority, have you made a decision or are you close to a decision on who might go before military commissions? And will the United States acquiesce to British demands that if any British subjects are tried, that they not be allowed the death penalty?

Mr. Wolfowitz: Thank you for -- (chuckling) -- giving the opportunity for me to lay down a very firm ground rule. There is so much news today, and I want to stay focused on my trip. So, I'm going to only stick to trip questions. But I'll let you have a follow-up if you want, since I took your question off the table. (Laughs.)

Q Well, I just --

Mr. Wolfowitz: Not on that subject, but if you want a minute to come back, then I'll come back to you. You deserve a question --

Q You pointed out yourself that the Iraqis still lived in fear of the regime, many Iraqis. Has there been any decision yet on whether or not to release pictures of Uday or Qusay in order to prove to Iraqis that they, indeed, are dead?

Mr. Wolfowitz: It's an excellent question. We're -- the premise of the question -- you may be unused to hearing this from the podium -- the premise of the question

is absolutely correct. (Chuckles.) The answer is one we've got to think through. But the level of suspicion and paranoia is unbelievable.

I give you as an illustration that a town councilman in the city of Najaf, somebody who obviously is among the more sophisticated elite of that crucial city, asked me, "Are you people just holding Saddam Hussein as a trump card over us?" Now, I underscore that was a paranoid question. I was categorical in telling him: "Absolutely not. There is nobody that wants to get him and his two sons more than we do."

But in addition to the fear of the regime, there's a certain fear of us of a different kind, that we will repeat the performance of 1991 and we will leave and Saddam will come back. And we heard quite a few times that the rumor that is being spread by the Ba'athists, believe it or not, is that: "We have a deal with the CIA." And in the Middle East, people will believe almost anything.

So, another great thing about yesterday's events is it really helps to put a spike in the heart of that conspiracy theory. There is no doubt, I think, in Iraqis' minds now that we're out to get those people.

Q Are -- then are you inclined to release the pictures, even though they might be shocking or --

Mr. Wolfowitz: We're still weighing the decision. And you've just given us the parameters; I mean those are exactly the things people are trying to weigh.

But I would just say this, that if we have to do some things that people say, you know, you're just scraping over the past, you're giving us all this shocking stuff, why should our children have to see it on television, let me tell you that the main consideration on the other side, in our minds, is saving the lives of American men and women who are on the line. It is directly connected to security.

And when one reporter asked me, well, are you just going to places like Abu Gharib and Hillah because you want to find a justification for the war, I said absolutely not. I'm going there, first of all, so that I can speak of them from first-hand experience. But secondly, to try to understand why it is that we have so consistently underestimated the ability of that regime to terrorize its people.

Q Mr. Secretary, Monday you walked the streets of Mosul meeting people. And it turned out that that was just a few miles from this house where Uday and Qusay were hiding. And after you left, this informant came forward with this information. You talk about the fear of the old regime. Do you think that

informants now would be emboldened to come forward with information, especially after yesterday?

Mr. Wolfowitz: Well, actually, I think it was while we were meeting with the town council in Mosul that the first informant came forward, I believe. I don't -- don't -- I may be wrong. (Laughing) I'd love to be able to say it was because we were there, and of course it had nothing to do with our being there. I think it had something to do with the kinds of things that we were shown while we were there.

I'll give you an illustration. We did a little walking tour of the center of town with the Army company that is responsible for that area. And of course they had all their combat gear on and they were on high alert, probably more so because I was there. I'd actually like to be a fly on the wall and watch how they do it when they can interact more easily.

And as we were passing the line of butcher shops, the young Army captain, commander of that company, started telling me this quite remarkable story about how there had been a problem because the butchers were dumping -- doing slaughtering on the street and dumping carcasses out in front of the butcher shops. And in order to get the problem under control, they had done a number of things, and one of them had been to organize an association of the butchers, so that they would have an authoritative institution to interact with. Of course, in the old regime, you didn't let anybody organize an association, you simply took some -- anyone who was putting carcasses on the street out and shot them! We don't use those tactics. An I kiddingly said to him, "Well, did they teach you that at West Point?" And of course they didn't. He figured this out all by himself, and the fact that they're doing this on a daily basis.

In fact, one of the big successes -- that was a square where we had some trouble about six weeks ago. They did a good job with the local people. They found out that there were -- I don't remember the exact number now of Ba'athists and foreign terrorists in a particular building. They cleaned those people out and that center of town has been stable since.

So there has been an extraordinary strategic effort to both encourage people to feel good about coming forward and also to remove that blanket of fear that scares them. And I'm sure if we get a chance -- and I don't know if, we will; I mean, maybe these people would want to go into a deep witness protection program -- but if you can talk to the people who helped us yesterday, you will find that they could have helped us a week ago or two weeks ago or three weeks ago. It would be interesting to see the dynamic that brought them to the point of coming forward then.

Q I guess my point -- I'm sorry, sir. If you don't come forward with photos and there is this growing suspicion, does yesterday possibly produce more attacks and not less?

Mr. Wolfowitz: Well, two different things. First of all, we are going to make sure the Iraqi people believe this at the end of the day. And there are a lot of ways to do that. I think when they -- well, there are a lot of ways to do that. But I've heard speculation of the kind that says, "Well, in revenge for these attacks, there are going to be more attacks." Well, there's not an unlimited number of these criminals, and they're not getting more people coming over to their side, I can guarantee you. I suspect they're actually going to get more afraid. But if there are more attacks, then we'll have -- get more intelligence and we'll clean them up. The one thing that I'm sure of is we're going to get more intelligence, that Iraqis are going to be more comfortable. And you know -- well, yes?

Q Since are now, obviously, talking about events yesterday, I was wondering if you or Larry DiRita could help clarify one point. General Sanchez said this morning in his press conference that the decision to proceed with the attack on the house on Mosul was made at a tactical level by the commander on the ground. What I was hoping for some clarity on is, did anyone, yourself or Secretary Rumsfeld, have any -- were you given any information that this attack that was going to happen? Did you have a chance, you or Secretary Rumsfeld, to say yea or nay about proceeding with it and making the trade-off of attack versus waiting them out and getting them alive for intelligence, or did you have no knowledge of it?

Mr. Wolfowitz: Well, I didn't see Sanchez's briefing, and I have been back here too short a time to have a full grasp of the facts, so let me just make two general comments.

The key to success in an operation like that is speed and secrecy. And recognizing that in advance, we've spent a lot of time over the last months, even a year, in making sure, not only in Iraq but throughout the global war on terrorism, that commanders have rules of engagement that allow them to act quickly and with minimal transmission of information where there is an opportunity like yesterday. And that's the most important thing. I'd just hate to be up here asking the question, "How come it took you three hours and they got away?"

Yes, sir?

Q Secretary Wolfowitz, could I just also ask you, what did you really mean when you said people in the Middle East will believe almost anything?

Mr. Wolfowitz: It's a -- here's what I mean. And thank you for giving me a chance to clarify. It's a comment on how we are seen as a country that can do anything, that can restore power overnight. Sometimes it's nice to have the reputation for being almost godlike, but frankly, I think it produces this phenomenon that if something isn't happening, it must be because the Americans don't want it to happen; and they begin to invent the most elaborate reasons to explain it. And the fact is -- you know it -- we often just make mistakes. We do stupid things. And then people spend years and years afterwards with elaborate explanations of not, "Gee the Americans are stupid," but, "There must be some very ingenious plot here."

Yes?

Q Mr. Secretary, given that the Army's looking at year-long deployments and also dipping more into the Guard and Reserve forces, can you talk a little bit about foreign forces in Iraq, what you expect this fall? We've been told 30,000. Do you still expect that number? When do you hope to reach that level, and what kind of time commitment do they offer?

Mr. Wolfowitz: I know the secretary worked very hard while I was gone. I'm pleased to see that -- (laughs) -- no, I'm not surprised at all, devoted most of his Saturday to getting into the rotation plan. It is a complicated issue. I was amused to -- General Ray Ordierno, the commander of the 4th Infantry Division, who is doing an outstanding job -- I joked the last time I met you was when you came to my office, just before you took command of the division, to brief me on the Army rotation plan. And I came away with two conclusions: One, is the most complicated plan I've ever seen; and number two, you're awfully smart to have all those details mastered. Now that brilliance is being applied to capturing mid-level Ba'athists, and other people are trying to work out a rotation plan that will work.

We will announce something shortly, and it's important to have clarity on it.

Q What about foreign forces?

Mr. Wolfowitz: And we're working -- we welcome any foreign forces that want to come and help.

Q Do you --

Mr. Wolfowitz: Let me -- I think it's very encouraging to report that the British,

who are going to be bringing in an Italian brigade in their sector, are just delighted at the early indications of the Italian capabilities, the fact that they're bringing 3,000 carabinieri. It's exactly what is needed. We don't need heavy tanks in the Italian sector now, we need people who know how to do police work. I met the new Polish commander who is going to take over in the sector that our Marines command now. Enormous enthusiasm. I said, "You helped us liberate our country some 200 years ago, and I think the Iraqis appreciate your helping them now." They come with the spirit of people who were not so long ago enslaved themselves, and the Marines say they're ready to do the job. So, we're getting a lot of help from foreign forces already starting --

Q (Inaudible) -- 30,000 figure --

Mr. Wolfowitz: I can't give you a number. And I hope any number I would give you would keep growing daily. And again, getting those two miserable creatures is helpful, because everything that helps the security situation is going to make it easier for other people to come in.

Yes, sir?

Q You said that troop morale is high. As you know, there's been enough of a discussion about the complaints from troops that General Abizaid a week ago here said that certain kinds of things were not allowed to be said by troops, including calls for resignations of high Defense officials. And some observers think that that stems from unmet expectations on the parts of the troops be it about that they'd be treated as liberators and not be engaged in a guerrilla war; that combat would be over -- combat essentially over -- as you said -- 84 days later people are still dying, or that they'd be rotated out. I'm wondering how you see that.

Mr. Wolfowitz: Look, first of all, I said the 3rd Infantry Division not only had perhaps the toughest fighting during the war, it had the toughest area to take care of after the war. But the -- everywhere I went, I found troops with heartwarming stories about the reception they had gotten from Iraqis and how wonderful it felt to get that kind of reception, and the sort of lingering doubt about "Don't folks back home get it?" -- and your colleagues might be able to help in that regard.

But the thing that came through over and over and over again is, "The worst thing for us is uncertainty. If you would tell us we're going to be here for a year, we've got a job to do, it is a great job to do, it's helping Iraqi people, it's helping our country. We'd just like to have a date and work to a date."

We were flown around in part of the country by a wonderful Air National Guard crew from Nashville, Tennessee, and I want to say to the people of Nashville what great work they're doing. Those folks have been there for a very long time. In fact, I promised them to try to find an explanation of whether the jobs are being distributed fairly. They have a joke among themselves that they have a departure date: it's six weeks from now, whenever "now" is. (Light laughter.) Well, that's not acceptable. I mean, you can understand how frustrating that is. And we are working on giving -- trying to give people certainty, give their families certainty. It's one of the most difficult things.

But look, you can always go and find somebody, especially if you wheedle it out of them -- it's tough duty. But the more amazing thing is how many of them are spirited -- overwhelming number of them are spirited, excited, have a real sense of service.

Yes, sir?

Q Mr. Secretary, going back to what you just said about the Italian Carabinieri, the Portuguese are also sending their unfortunately named Republican Guard, which is the equivalent of the Italian force.

Mr. Wolfowitz: Just keep saying it in Portuguese, and no one will notice the similarity...

Q (Laughs.) I'm wondering, as part of your reputation as an advanced, look-ahead type of thinker, as well as Secretary Rumsfeld's idea of transformation, is it time to start thinking about creating within the U.S. military an equivalent service to the Carabinieri for a future type of engagement in which the U.S. is likely to find itself or could find itself, as it is in Iraq?

The 3rd ID, as you pointed out, is a terrific force for doing what it had to do, not necessarily trained for peacekeeping or after-war effects, not to criticize them, but not what they are trained for.

Mr. Wolfowitz: I don't think -- I mean, the parallel question would be, is it -- isn't it time for the Portuguese Republican Guard -- (chuckling) -- unfortunately named -- to start developing air assault divisions and heavy tank divisions? The answer to that is obviously no. I mean, a little bit of specialization is a wonderful thing.

If anything, I think, what it's time to do is to take perhaps the number-one lesson learned from this war, which we knew going into this war, which is that jointness

counts and that we took joint operations to a level -- probably an order of magnitude at least above what it was 10 years ago, and we're going to try to push it another order of magnitude in the next 10 years.

Q Well --

Mr. Wolfowitz: But jointness among U.S. services -- we're just still in the Industrial Age. Let me use my --

Q But that would not mean --

Mr. Wolfowitz: -- with respect to jointness among international forces. And that's something we do need to work on. I mean, we should have, to begin with, a better sense of those capabilities -- who's got them, who can provide them, what things they need from us to help them get there. But I don't think we should try to go around duplicating everything that someone else has that's useful. Let's use it.

Q You would be comfortable, then, in having the U.S. military locked into sort of a role where the postwar situation would be the jointness aspects --

Mr. Wolfowitz: You've overstating what I said. I am comfortable having help from other people. I think the more we have a coalition at every stage of these problems, the better it is. But it's very clear that generally speaking, the U.S. is the only country that can do the high end. If that's going to be the case, then it's reasonable to ask other countries to do more at the low end. That doesn't mean necessarily in time -- I mean, throughout any operation, there's a high end, if you know what I mean by that -- I mean, that requires more investment, more training -- and a low end.

Yes, sir?

Q From your trip, what's the take-away impression you have of the existence of tactical weapons of mass destruction, not programs, but actual tactical weapons, which were the rationale, in part, for the war?

Mr. Wolfowitz: This is a very important issue. It is under the direction of George Tenet, with David Kay and General Keith Dayton in the field managing it. There was nothing I could do being there to help them in their search, except to get, as I did, from them an appreciation of whether there are resources back here that we could make available to them, and I come back with a bit of a homework assignment from David Kay. But he's going to have to be the one -- to use our phrase -- a time and place of his choosing to decide when he has something to tell.

Q Sir, can we just go back to the photographs for a moment. You said that there are several things you're looking at, at the end of the day, that you can show the Iraqi people --

Mr. Wolfowitz: I'm not going to say more about that.

Q Well, let me ask you this --

Mr. Wolfowitz: You can ask a different question.

Q -- when you say the end of the day, do you mean the end of this day, there'll be a decision today?

Mr. Wolfowitz: Oh, no, no. I meant just figuratively.

Q And is there any possibility you'd actually show the bodies, that you may not think photographs is enough?

Mr. Wolfowitz: (Laughing) Next question! I really can't -- there are decisions being made by other people while we sit here and talk, so I really can't tell you.

STAFF: I think we have time for maybe one more. I'm sorry, we have to go.

Q Mr. Secretary, you mentioned contract killings of U.S. troops. Can you elaborate? Can you give us any hard evidence of how many or which of the -- that some of these killings in recent days or weeks have in fact been contract killings, how much these folks are being paid to kill U.S. troops, whom they're being paid by?

Mr. Wolfowitz: I can't. I can tell you that it wasn't just once, but over and over again, and that we were briefed by commanders that this was the perception, this was the intelligence assessment. The 4th Infantry Division has a flow chart, diagram, basically, that sort of goes from the mid-level Ba'athists through the facilitators down to the individual perpetrators. And it's clear they're happy to send young men out to die, and the young men, apparently at the moment, will do a lot for a little bit of money. But I think the key to that is cleaning up the middle and upper levels.

I think the evidence for that comes from a lot of sources; it comes from Iraqis telling them that. I didn't only hear it from the military, by the way, I heard it from Iraqis that we talked to. I'm sure it comes from individuals that they capture.

I can't tell you exactly all the details, and maybe that's something we in fact should get a briefing on. But it was a uniform story with individual variations in different places.

This has to be it. Okay, thank you very much.

Q Thank you.

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