

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

### XIII. INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY COLLECTION ACTIVITIES AGAINST IRAQ'S LINKS TO TERRORISM

(U) The Committee focused its work in reviewing U.S. intelligence on Iraq's links to terrorism on the quality of intelligence analysis, the objectivity and reasonableness of the Intelligence Community's (IC) judgments, and whether any influence was brought to bear to shape that analysis to support policy objectives. The Committee also examined, however, the role of intelligence collectors in providing the fundamental information upon which the intelligence analysts based their assessments. To understand the collection posture against Iraq's links to terrorism, Committee staff interviewed the Assistant Director of Central Intelligence for Collection (ADCI/C) and various members of the National Intelligence Collection Board (NICB), analysts from the Director of Central Intelligence's (DCI's) Counterterrorist Center (CTC), and analysts from the National Security Agency (NSA).

( [REDACTED] ) Notwithstanding four decades of intelligence reporting, IC officials and analysts expressed frustration over the lack of useful intelligence collected on Iraq's involvement in terrorism, particularly on links to al-Qaida. A January 2003 IC assessment of Iraqi support for terrorism explained, "Our knowledge of Iraq's ties to terrorism is evolving and [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]." Based on information provided to Committee staff, these gaps had three main causes:

1. a late start collecting against the target,
2. the lack of a U.S. presence in Iraq, and
3. reliance on foreign government services, opposition groups and defectors for current intelligence.

( [REDACTED] ) [REDACTED]. Human intelligence (HUMINT) reports were derived [REDACTED] from detainees, defectors, opposition groups, as well as foreign government services. Analysts explained that information derived from HUMINT provided insight into historical links, but provided little information on the current environment. Thus, the IC's collection, and subsequent analysis, provided an understanding of the historical context of the Iraqi regime's relationships and contacts, but left many intelligence gaps about the Iraqi regime's intentions. Analysts briefed staff on the IC's [REDACTED] collection efforts, the [REDACTED] intelligence [REDACTED] that yielded the bulk of the information on Iraq's ties to terrorism.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**A. Human Intelligence (HUMINT)**

( [REDACTED] ) IC analysts told Committee staff that there was no robust HUMINT collection capability targeting Iraq's links to terrorism until the Fall of 2002. Prior to 2002, HUMINT collection was heavily dependant on a few foreign government services and there were no [REDACTED] [REDACTED] sources inside Iraq reporting on strictly terrorism issues. Officers from the office of the ADCI/C told Committee staff during interviews that HUMINT capabilities against were limited because there was no official U.S. presence in Iraq. This point had been explained in a report from the Collection Concepts Development Center entitled *Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction – Recommendations for Improvement in Collection*. The report said:

The current clandestine HUMINT capability against the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction (WMD) target is marginal, for a number of reasons. First the U.S. has no official [REDACTED] presence in Iraq, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. This [REDACTED] makes recruitment of Iraqis exceptionally difficult. Second, the brutal and pervasively repressive nature of the Iraqi regime makes any contact [REDACTED] [REDACTED] extremely risky. These conditions also make any operations in Iraq [REDACTED] extremely dangerous.

( [REDACTED] ) Analysts told Committee staff that in late 2002, the IC developed what they described as a comprehensive, robust collection program [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. When asked to characterize the collection effort against terrorism and Iraq, an IC analyst said "I don't think that we were really focused on the CT [counterterrorism] side, because we weren't concerned about the IIS going out and pro-actively conducting terrorist attacks. It wasn't until we realized that there was a possibility of going to war that we had to get a handle on that." [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

( [REDACTED] ) A senior collections officer from the CTC described a "multi-faceted CIA program to pursue this initiative." [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. The CTC also "built a concerted recruitment program . . .," [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. The same senior collections officer told

[REDACTED]

Committee staff that Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) officers “went out and tried to pitch all, or as many as we could [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

( [REDACTED] ) [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

( [REDACTED] ) The CTC collections officer noted that there was one major gap in collection, he stated:

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

( [REDACTED] ) CTC analysts told Committee staff that the CIA also targeted Palestinian surrogates and that the CIA already had considerable collection efforts in place to work with Palestinian groups. CTC noted that they had insights into Baghdad's efforts to reach out to additional Palestinian groups [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] foreign government services were also key to the CIA's collection. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The CTC analysts told Committee staff, “Iraq was a hard target . . . we relied heavily on working with foreign government services and their accesses . . . [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

( [REDACTED] ) In terms of obtaining information on the al-Qaida-Zarqawi network, CTC told Committee staff that there had been an ongoing collection effort since 9/11 that had been “aggressively worked.” [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* described a network of more than a dozen al-Qaida or al-Qaida-associated operatives in Baghdad, and estimated that 100-200 al-Qaida fighters were present in northeastern Iraq in territory under the control of Ansar al-Islam. As a result, collection continued to focus on understanding the historical context of the relationship between Iraq and al-Qaida and trying to understand the nature of contacts between the two. CTC told staff that they relied heavily on foreign government services, and increasingly on detainee debriefs to look into an al-Qaida/Iraq relationship. CTC noted that questions regarding al-Qaida's ties to the Iraqi regime were among the first presented to senior al-Qaida operational planner Khalid Shaikh Muhammad following his capture. When asked if the IC had any unilateral sources that could provide information on the Iraq/al-Qaida relationship, the CTC analysts stated that they were entirely dependent on foreign government services for that information.

**B.** [REDACTED]

( [REDACTED] ) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*C. Terrorism Collection Conclusions*

(U) Conclusion 99. Despite four decades of intelligence reporting on Iraq, there was little useful intelligence collected that helped analysts determine the Iraqi regime's possible links to al-Qaida.

( [REDACTED] ) [REDACTED]

( [REDACTED] ) Conclusion 100. The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) did not have a focused human intelligence (HUMINT) collection strategy targeting Iraq's links to terrorism until 2002. The CIA had no [REDACTED] sources on the ground in Iraq reporting specifically on terrorism. The lack of an official [REDACTED] U.S. presence in the country [REDACTED] curtailed the Intelligence Community's HUMINT collection capabilities.

( [REDACTED] ) [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] **Conclusion 101.** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]