REPORT

ON

POSTWAR FINDINGS ABOUT IRAQ’S WMD PROGRAMS AND LINKS TO TERRORISM AND HOW THEY COMPARE WITH PREWAR ASSESSMENTS

together with

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

September 8, 2006 - Ordered to be printed

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
United States Senate

109th Congress

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(U) The Intelligence Community has not provided the Committee with any additional postwar information about contacts between Iraq and al-Qa’ida.

C. Training and Support in Chemical-Biological Weapons and Terrorism

(U) Prior to the war, the Intelligence Community examined the possibility that the Hussein regime had supplied al-Qa’ida operatives with various types of training. Analysis in this area generally focused on chemical-biological weapons training and in special operations and terrorist training at the Salman Pak facility in Iraq.

1. Training in Chemical and Biological Weapons

(U) The ability of al-Qa’ida to procure training in chemical and biological weapons (CBW) particularly concerned the Intelligence Community prior to the war. Prewar reporting about training varied in reliability and was often contradictory. Regarding Iraqi provided CBW training to al-Qa’ida, Iraqi Support for Terrorism judged:

Details on training range from good reports from senior al-Qa’ida members to those of second-hand sources of varying reliability, often the result of long and opaque reporting chains or discussions of future intentions rather than evidence of completed training. The general pattern that emerges is of al-Qa’ida’s enduring interest in acquiring CBW expertise from Iraq.

(U) CIA also stated that:

Some of the most ominous suggestions of possible Iraqi–al-Qa’ida cooperation involve Bin Ladin’s CBW ambitions. Although Iraq
historically has guarded closely its strategic weapons information, experts, and resources, Baghdad could have offered training or other support to al-Qa'ida.\textsuperscript{197}

(U) The CIA relied heavily on the information obtained from the debriefing of detainee Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi, a senior al-Qa'ida operational planner, to assess Iraq's potential CBW training of al-Qa'ida. The January 2003 paper, \textit{Iraqi Support for Terrorism}, reported that al-Libi told a foreign intelligence service:

Iraq--acting on the request of al-Qa'ida militant Abu Abdullah, who was Muhammad Atif's emissary--agreed to provide unspecified chemical or biological weapons training for two al-Qa'ida associates beginning in December 2000. The two individuals departed for Iraq but did not return, so al-Libi was not in a position to know if any training had taken place.\textsuperscript{198}

(U) The September 2002 version of \textit{Iraqi Support for Terrorism} stated that al-Libi said Iraq had "provided" unspecified CBW training for two al-Qa'ida associates in 2000, but also stated that al Libi "did not know the results of the training."\textsuperscript{199} In the June 2002 paper, \textit{Iraq and al Qa'idas: Interpreting a Murky Relationship}, the CIA also stated that al-Libi claimed Iraq had "provided" unspecified CBW training for two al-Qa'ida associates in 2000. That report omitted the qualification that al-Libi did not know the results of the training.\textsuperscript{200}

(U) Although DIA coordinated on CIA's \textit{Iraqi Support for Terrorism} paper, DIA analysis preceding that assessment was more skeptical of the al-Libi reporting. On February 22, 2002, soon after CIA first disseminated the al-Libi


debbrief report, the DIA issued a Defense Intelligence Terrorism Summary which stated:

This is the first report from Ibn al-Shaykh [al-Libi] in which he claims Iraq assisted al-Qa’ida’s CBRN efforts. However, he lacks specific details on the Iraqi’s involvement, the CBRN materials associated with the assistance, and the location where the training occurred. It is possible he does not know any further details; it is more likely this individual is intentionally misleading the debriefers. Ibn al-Shaykh has been undergoing debriefs for several weeks and may be describing scenarios to the debriefers that he knows will retain their interest. Saddam’s regime is intensely secular and is wary of Islamic revolutionary movements. Moreover, Baghdad is unlikely to provide assistance to a group it cannot control.201

(U) A week later, on February 28, 2002, the DIA produced a special analysis that concluded:

Iraq has been repeatedly accused of aiding al-Qa’ida’s chemical and biological acquisition efforts. Despite recent information from a senior al-Qa’ida trainer currently in custody, all-source intelligence has not confirmed Iraq’s involvement. Iraq is unlikely to have provided bin Ladin any useful CB knowledge or assistance.202

(U) In a July 2002 assessment DIA noted:

It is plausible al-Qa’ida attempted to obtain CB assistance from Iraq and Ibn al-Shaykh is sufficiently senior to have access to such sensitive information. However, Ibn al-Shaykh’s information lacks details concerning the individual Iraqis involved, the specific CB

materials associated with the assistance and the location where the alleged training occurred. The information is also second hand, and not derived from Ibn al-Shaykh’s personal experience.  

(U) DCI Tenet testified, on September 17, 2002, before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that “Iraq provided training to al-Qa’ida members in Iraq—of most concern, in the area of chemical and biological agents.” Later in the same testimony, he discussed the varying reliability of sources, noting:

There is evidence that Iraq provided al-Qa’ida with various kinds of training—combat, bomb-making, and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear. Although Saddam did not endorse al-Qa’ida’s overall agenda and was suspicious of Islamist movements in general, he was apparently not averse, under certain circumstances, to enhancing Bin Ladin’s operational capabilities. As with much of the information on the overall relationship, details on training are second-hand or from sources of varying reliability.

(U) The DCI subsequently testified in an open hearing before the Committee on February 11, 2003 stating that:

[Iraq] has also provided training in poisons and gases to two al-Qa’ida associates. One of these associates characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as successful.

(U) A November 2002 National Intelligence Estimate (NIE), published in January 2003, Nontraditional Threats to the U.S. Homeland Through 2007, also commented on possible Iraq–al-Qa’ida CBW training. The NIE said, “we have

203 DIA, Special Analysis, July 31, 2002.

204 DCI, Testimony to SSCI, September 17, 2002.

205 The Committee has asked the CIA to provide sources supporting the DCI’s statements in the open hearing. The CIA has not yet responded to this request. The Committee is presently unable to determine the basis for the DCI’s testimony.
credible reporting that al-Qa’ida leaders sought help from Baghdad in acquiring WMD capabilities and that Iraq provided training in bomb-making and, according to one detainee, in the area of chemical and biological agents.\textsuperscript{206}

2. SSCI July 2004 Report Conclusions - CBW Training

(U) In July 2004, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence concluded that the CIA reasonably and objectively assessed that the most problematic area of contact between Iraq and al-Qa’ida were the reports of training in the use of non-conventional weapons, specifically chemical and biological weapons. The Committee noted that after the war, a key detainee (al-Libi) had recanted his claim that al-Qa’ida members traveled to Iraq for chemical and biological weapons training. The Committee noted that no other reporting found in Iraq after the war began had corroborated the CBW training reports.\textsuperscript{207}

3. Postwar Information - CBW Training

(\textsuperscript{\underline{207}}) In January 2004, Ibn al-Shaykh al-Libi, the source of reports on al-Qa’ida’s efforts to obtain CBW training in Iraq, recanted the information he provided. Al-Libi said he had a “strong desire to tell his entire story and identify why and how he fabricated information since his capture.”\textsuperscript{208} Al-Libi claimed that he fabricated “all information regarding al-Qa’ida’s sending representatives to Iraq to try to obtain WMD assistance.”\textsuperscript{209} Al-Libi claimed that to the best of his knowledge al-Qa’ida never sent any individuals into Iraq for any kind of support in

\textsuperscript{206} NIE, Non-Traditional Threats to the U.S. Homeland Through 2007, Nov 2002, p. 17. Note: The NIE did not include a cite for this information, but the only detainee known have discussed this issue was al-Libi.


\textsuperscript{208} CIA operational cable, February 4, 2004.

\textsuperscript{209} CIA operational cable, February 4, 2004.
chemical or biological weapons, as he had claimed previously.

Al-Libi told CIA debriefers in January 2004 that when he was detained by the United States in early 2002 one of his American debriefers told him that he had to tell “where bin Laden was and about future operations or the U.S. would give al-Libi to [another foreign service.]” Al-Libi claimed that the debriefers told al-Libi that he would have to sleep on the floor of his cell if he did not talk. Later, according to al-Libi, debriefers repeated the threat to send al-Libi to a foreign country, instructed him to remove his heavy socks and gloves, and placed him on the floor of his cell. Although al-Libi only remained on the cold floor for fifteen minutes, he claimed he “decided he would fabricate any information the interrogators wanted in order to gain better treatment and avoid being handed over to [a foreign government.]”

According to al-Libi, after his decision to fabricate information for debriefers, he “lied about being a member of al-Qa’ida. Although he considered himself close to, but not a member of, al-Qa’ida, he knew enough about the senior members, organization and operations to claim to be a member.” “Once al-Libi started fabricating information,” he claimed, “his treatment improved and he experienced no further physical pressures from the Americans.”

After his transfer to a foreign government, al-Libi claimed that during his initial debriefings “he lied to the [foreign government service] about future operations to avoid torture.” Al-Libi told the CIA that

the foreign government service explained to him that a “long list of methods could be used against him which were extreme” and that “he would confess because three thousand individuals had been in the chair before him and that each had confessed.”

( ) According to al-Libi, the foreign government service “stated that the next topic was al-Qa’ida’s connections with Iraq. . . . This was a subject about which he said he knew nothing and had difficulty even coming up with a story.” Al-Libi indicated that his interrogators did not like his responses and then “placed him in a small box approximately 50cm x 50cm.” He claimed he was held in the box for approximately 17 hours. When he was let out of the box, al-Libi claims that he was given a last opportunity to “tell the truth.” When al-Libi did not satisfy the interrogator, al-Libi claimed that “he was knocked over with an arm thrust across his chest and he fell on his back.” Al-Libi told CIA debriefers that he then “was punched for 15 minutes.”

(U) Al-Libi told debriefers that “after the beating,” he was again asked about the connection with Iraq and this time he came up with a story that three al-Qa’ida members went to Iraq to learn about nuclear weapons. Al-Libi said that he used the names of real individuals associated with al-Qa’ida so that he could remember the details of his fabricated story and make it more believable to the foreign intelligence service. Al-Libi noted that “this pleased his [foreign] interrogators, who directed that al-Libi be taken back to a big room, vice the 50 square centimeter box and given food.”

( ) According to al-Libi, several days after the Iraq nuclear discussion, the foreign intelligence service debriefers brought up the topic of anthrax and biological weapons. Al-Libi stated that he “knew nothing about a biological program and did not even understand the term biological.”

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Libi stated that "he could not come up with a story and was then beaten in a way that left no marks." According to al-Libi, he continued "to be unable to come up with a lie about biological weapons" because he did not understand the term "biological weapons."\(^{218}\)

(U) In February 2004, the CIA reissued the intelligence reporting from al-Libi to reflect the recantations.

(U) The other reports of possible al-Qa’ida CBW training from Iraq were never considered credible by the Intelligence Community. No other information has been uncovered in Iraq or from detainees that confirms this reporting.

4. Terrorist Training at Salman Pak

(U) The Salman Pak Unconventional Warfare Training Facility was established in the late 1970’s. Iraqi officials told UNSCOM inspectors that a counterterrorist unit was established at Salman Pak in 1985. Iraqi officials reiterated the claims and indicated that the IIS established the facility to train counterterror units.

(U) The January 2003 *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* noted that uncorroborated reporting since 1999 indicated that Iraq sponsored terrorism training for al-Qa’ida at the Salman Pak facility. *Iraqi Support for Terrorism* also said that:

Reporting about al-Qa’ida activity at Salman Pak—ultimately sourced to three Iraqi defectors—surged after 11 September. The defectors claimed that al-Qa’ida and other non-Iraqis engaged in special operations training at Salman Pak. It was subsequently determined, however, that at least one of these defectors, whose story appeared in [redacted] magazine, had embellished and exaggerated his access.

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\(^{218}\) CIA operational cable, February 5, 2004.