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HEARING 4

HEARING 4

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE EVENTS SURROUNDING THE 2012 TERRORIST ATTACK IN BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, OCTOBER 22, 2015

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HEARING 4

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2015

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:01 a.m., in Room 1100, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Trey Gowdy [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Gowdy, Brooks, Jordan, Pompeo, Roby, Roskam, Westmoreland, Cummings, Smith, Schiff, Sanchez, and Duckworth.

Staff Present: Philip G. Kiko, Staff Director and General Counsel; Chris Donesa, Deputy Staff Director; Dana Chipman, Chief Investigative Counsel; Sharon Jackson, Deputy Chief Counsel; Craig Missakian, Deputy Chief Counsel; Mark Grider, Deputy General Counsel; Mac Tolar, Senior Counsel; Carlton Davis, Investigator; Sara Barrineau, Investigator; Sheria Clarke, Counsel; Paige Oneto, Clerk; Kim Betz, Member Outreach Liaison; Paul Bell, Minority Press Secretary; Krista Boyd, Minority Senior Counsel; Linda Cohen, Minority Senior Professional Staff; Ronak Desai, Minority Counsel; Shannon Green, Minority Counsel; Susanne Sachsman Grooms, Minority Staff Director and General Counsel; Jennifer Werner, Minority Communications Director; Peter Kenny, Minority Senior Counsel; Erin O'Brien, Minority Detailee; Laura Rauch, Minority Senior Professional Staff; Dave Rapallo, Minority Senior Advisor to the Ranking Member; Daniel Rebnord, Minority Professional Staff; Mone Ross, Minority Staff Assistant; Heather Sawyer, Minority Chief Counsel; and Brent Woolfork, Minority Senior Professional Staff.

Chairman GOWDY. Good morning. The committee will come to order, and the chair notes the presence of a quorum.

Good morning. Welcome, Madam Secretary.

Welcome to each of you.

This is a public hearing of the Benghazi Select Committee.

Just a couple of quick administrative matters before we start, Madam Secretary.

There are predetermined breaks, but I want to make it absolutely clear, we can take a break for any reason or for no reason. If you or anyone would just simply alert me, then we will take a break, and it can be for any reason or for no reason.

To our guests, we are happy to have you here. The witness deserves to hear the questions, and the members deserve to hear the answers. So proper decorum must be observed at all times. No reaction to questions or answers, no disruptions. Some committees

take an incremental approach to decorum. I do not. This is your one and only notice.

Madam Secretary, the ranking member and I will give opening statements, and then you will be recognized for your opening statement. And then, after that, the members will alternate from one side to the other. And because you have already been sworn, we will go straight to your opening.

So I will now recognize myself and then recognize Mr. Cummings and then you, Madam Secretary.

Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods served this country with courage and with honor, and they were killed under circumstances most of us could never imagine. Terrorists pour through the front gate of an American facility, attacking people and property with machine guns, mortars, and fire. It is important that we remember how these four men died. It is equally important that we remember how these four men lived and why.

They were more than four images on a television screen. They were husbands and fathers and sons and brothers and family and friends. They were Americans who believed in service and sacrifice. Many people speak wistfully of a better world but do little about it. These four went out and actually tried to make it better. And it cost them their lives.

So we know what they gave us. What do we owe them? Justice for those that killed them. We owe their families our everlasting gratitude, respect. We owe them and each other the truth—the truth about why we were in Libya; the truth about what we were doing in Libya; the truth about the escalating violence in Libya before we were attacked and these four men were killed; the truth about requests for additional security; the truth about requests for additional personnel; the truth about requests for additional equipment; the truth about where and why our military was positioned as it was on the anniversary of 9/11; the truth about what was happening and being discussed in Washington while our people were under attack; the truth about what led to the attacks; and the truth about what our government told the American people after the attacks.

Why were there so many requests for more security personnel and equipment, and why were those requests denied in Washington? Why did the State Department compound and facility not even come close to meeting proper security specifications? What policies were we pursuing in Libya that required a physical presence in spite of the escalating violence? Who in Washington was aware of the escalating violence? What precautions, if any, were taken on the anniversary of 9/11?

What happened in Washington after the first attack, and what was our response to that attack? What did the military do or not do? What did our leaders in Washington do or not do, and when? Why was the American public given such divergent accounts of what caused these attacks? And why is it so hard to get information from the very government these four men represented, served, and sacrificed for?

Even after an Accountability Review Board and a half-dozen congressional investigations, these and other questions still lingered. And these questions lingered because previous investigations were

not thorough. These questions lingered because those previous investigations were narrow in scope and either incapable or unwilling to access the facts and evidence necessary to answer all relevant questions.

So the House of Representatives—including some Democrats, I hasten to add—asked this committee to write the final, definitive accounting of what happened in Benghazi.

This committee is the first committee to review more than 50,000 pages of documents because we insisted that they be produced. This committee is the first committee to demand access to more eyewitnesses because serious investigations talk to as many eyewitnesses as possible. This committee is the first committee to thoroughly and individually interview scores of other witnesses, many of them for the first time.

This committee is the first committee to review thousands of pages of documents from top State Department personnel. This committee is the first committee to demand access to relevant documents from the CIA, the FBI, the Department of Defense, even the White House.

This committee is the first committee to demand access to the emails to and from Ambassador Chris Stevens. How could an investigation possibly be considered serious without reviewing the emails of the person most knowledgeable about Libya?

This committee is the first committee, the only committee, to uncover the fact that Secretary Clinton exclusively used personal email on her own personal server for official business and kept the public record, including emails about Benghazi and Libya, in her own custody and control for almost two years after she left office.

You will hear a lot today about the Accountability Review Board. Secretary Clinton has mentioned it more than 70 times in her previous testimony before Congress. But when you hear about the ARB, you should also know the State Department leadership handpicked the members of the ARB. The ARB never interviewed Secretary Clinton. The ARB never reviewed her emails. And Secretary Clinton's top advisor was allowed to review and suggest changes to the ARB before the public ever saw it.

There is no transcript of ARB interviews, so it's impossible to know whether all relevant questions were asked and answered. And because there's no transcript, it is also impossible to cite the ARB interviews with any particularity at all. That is not independent. That is not accountability. That is not a serious investigation.

You will hear there were previous congressional investigations into Benghazi, and that is true. And it should make you wonder why those investigations failed to interview so many witnesses and access so many documents. If those previous congressional investigations were really serious and thorough, how did they miss Ambassador Stevens' emails? If those previous investigations were serious and thorough, how did they miss Secretary Clinton's emails? If those congressional investigations really were serious and thorough, why did they fail to interview dozens of key State Department witnesses, including agents on the ground who experienced the attacks firsthand?

Just last month, three years after Benghazi, top aides finally returned documents to the State Department. A month ago, this committee received 1,500 new pages of Secretary Clinton's emails related to Libya and Benghazi, three years after the attacks. And a little over two weeks ago, this committee received nearly 1,400 pages of Ambassador Stevens' emails, three years after the attacks.

It is impossible to conduct a serious, fact-centric investigation without access to the documents from the former Secretary of State, the Ambassador who knew more about Libya than anyone else, and testimony from witnesses who survived the attacks.

Madam Secretary, I understand there are people, frankly, in both parties who have suggested that this investigation is about you. Let me assure you it is not, and let me assure you why it is not.

This investigation is about four people who were killed representing our country on foreign soil. It is about what happened before, during, and after the attacks that killed them. It is about what this country owes to those who risk their lives to serve it. And it is about the fundamental obligation of government to tell the truth, always, to the people that it purports to represent.

Madam Secretary, not a single member of this committee signed up to investigate you or your email. We signed up to investigate and, therefore, honor the lives of four people that we sent into a dangerous country to represent us and to do everything we can to prevent it from happening to others.

Our committee has interviewed half a hundred witnesses. Not a single one of them has been named "Clinton" until today. You were the Secretary of State for this country at all relevant times, so of course the committee is going to want to talk to you. You are an important witness. You are one important witness among half a hundred important witnesses.

And I do understand you wanted to come sooner than today, so let me be clear why that did not happen.

You had an unusual email arrangement, which meant the State Department could not produce your emails to us. You made exclusive use of personal email and a personal server, and when you left the State Department, you kept the public record to yourself for almost two years. And it was you and your attorneys who decided what to return and what to delete. Those decisions were your decisions, not our decisions.

It was only in March of this year we learned of this email arrangement. And since we learned of this email arrangement, we have interviewed dozens of witnesses, only one of whom was solely related to your email arrangement. And that was the shortest interview of all because that witness invoked his Fifth Amendment privilege against incrimination.

Making sure the public record is complete is what serious investigations do, so it was important and remains important that this committee have access to all of Ambassador Stevens' emails, the emails of other senior leaders and witnesses, and it is important to gain access to all of your emails, Madam Secretary. Your emails are no less or no more important than the emails of anyone else. It just took us a little bit longer to get them, and it garnered a little more attention in the process.

I want you to take note during this hearing how many times congressional Democrats call on this administration to make long-awaited documents available to us. They won't. Take note of how many witnesses congressional Democrats ask us to schedule for interview. They won't. We would be much closer to finding out what happened in writing the final, definitive report if Democrats on this committee had helped us, just a little bit, pursue the facts.

But if the Democrats on this committee had their way, dozens of witnesses never would have been interviewed, your public record would still be private, thousands of documents never would have been accessed, and we wouldn't have the emails of our own ambassador. That may be smart politics, but it is a lousy way to run a serious investigation.

There are certain characteristics that make our country unique in the annals of history. We are the greatest experiment in self-governance the world has ever known, and part of that self-governance comes self-scrutiny, even of the highest officials. Our country is strong enough to handle the truth, and our fellow citizens expect us to pursue the truth wherever the facts take us.

So this committee is going to do what we pledged to do and what should have been done, frankly, a long time ago, which is interview all relevant witnesses, examine all relevant evidence, and access all relevant documents. And we are going to pursue the truth in a manner worthy of the memory of the four people who lost their lives and worthy of the respect of our fellow citizens. And we are going to write that final, definitive accounting of what happened in Benghazi.

And we would like to do it with your help and the help of our Democrat colleagues, but make no mistake, we are going to do it nonetheless. Because understanding what happened in Benghazi goes to the heart of who we are as a country and the promises we make to those that we send into harm's way.

They deserve the truth, they deserve the whole truth, they deserve nothing but the truth. The people we work for deserve the truth. The friends and family of the four who lost their lives deserve the truth. We are going to find the truth, because there is no statute of limitations on the truth.

With that, I would recognize my friend from Maryland.

[Prepared statement of Chairman Gowdy follows:]

Mr. CUMMINGS. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Madam Secretary, I want to thank you very much for being here today to testify before Congress on this very important issue. This is your third time.

This week, our chairman, Mr. Gowdy, was interviewed in a lengthy media profile. During his interview, he complained that he has "an impossible job." That's what the chairman said, "impossible job." He said it is impossible to conduct a serious, fact-centric investigation in such a "political environment."

I have great respect for the chairman, but on this score, he is absolutely wrong. In fact, it has been done by his own Republican colleagues in the House on this very issue, Benghazi. The Republican chairman of the House Intelligence Committee conducted an extensive, bipartisan, 2-year investigation and issued a detailed report.

The Senate Intelligence Committee and the Senate Homeland Security Committee also conducted bipartisan investigations.

Those bipartisan efforts respected and honored the memories of the four brave Americans who gave their lives in Benghazi: Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty.

The problem is that the Republican caucus did not like the answers they got from those investigations. So they set up this select committee with no rules, no deadline, and an unlimited budget, and they set them loose, Madam Secretary, because you're running for President.

Clearly, it is possible to conduct a serious, bipartisan investigation. What is impossible is for any reasonable person to continue denying that Republicans are squandering millions of taxpayer dollars on this abusive effort to derail Secretary Clinton's Presidential campaign.

In the chairman's interview, he tried to defend against this criticism by attempting to cast himself as the victim, and he complained about attacks on the credibility of the select committee. His argument would be more compelling if Republicans weren't leading the charge.

As we all know, Representative Kevin McCarthy, Speaker Boehner's second-in-command and the chairman's close friend, admitted that they established the select committee to drive down Secretary Clinton's poll numbers. Democrats didn't say that; the second-in-command in the House said that, a Republican.

Republican Congressman Richard Hanna said the select committee was, "designed"—"designed" to go after Secretary Clinton.

And one of the chairman's own handpicked investigators, a self-proclaimed conservative Republican, charged that he was fired in part for not going along with these plans to "hyper-focus on Hillary Clinton."

These stark admissions reflect exactly what we have seen inside the select committee for the past year. Let's just take a look at the facts.

Since January, Republicans have canceled every single hearing on our schedule for the entire year except for this one, Secretary Clinton. They also canceled numerous interviews that they had planned with the Defense Department and the CIA officials. Instead of doing that, what they were going to do, Republicans zeroed in on Secretary Clinton, her speechwriters, her IT staffers, and her campaign officials. This is what the Republicans did, not the Democrats.

When Speaker Boehner established this select committee, he justified it by arguing that it would "cross jurisdictional lines." I assumed he meant we would focus on more than just Secretary of State.

But, Madam Secretary, you're sitting there by yourself. The Secretary of Defense is not on your left. The Director of the CIA is not on your right. That is because Republicans abandoned their own plans to question those top officials. So, instead of being cross-jurisdictional, Republicans just crossed them off the list.

Last weekend, the chairman told the Republican colleagues to shut up and stop talking about the select committee. What I want

to know is this, and this is a key question: Why tell the Republicans to shut up when they are telling the truth, but not when they are attacking Secretary Clinton with reckless accusations that are demonstrably false? Why not tell them to shut up then?

Carly Fiorina has said that Secretary Clinton has blood on her hands. Mike Huckabee accused her of ignoring the warning calls from dying Americans in Benghazi. Senator Rand Paul said Benghazi was a 3 a.m. phone call that she never picked up. And Senator Lindsey Graham tweeted, "Where the hell were you on the night of the Benghazi attack?"

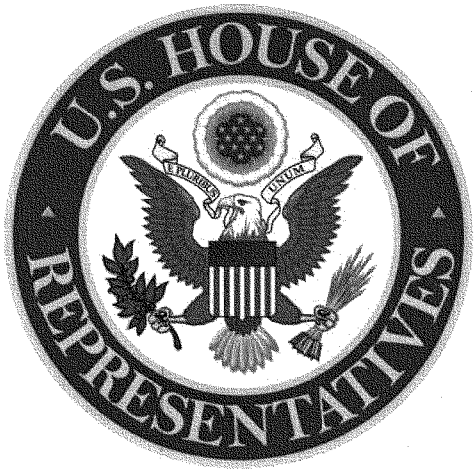
Everyone on this panel knows these accusations are baseless from our own investigation and all those before it. Yet Republican members of this select committee remain silent.

On Monday, the Democrats issued a report showing that none of the 54 witnesses the committee interviewed substantiated these wild Republican claims. Secretary Clinton did not order the military to stand down, and she neither approved nor denied requests for additional security.

I ask that our report be included in the official record for today's hearing, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. Without objection.

[The information follows:]



Results of Interviews Conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi:

No Evidence to Support Top Republican Allegations About Secretary Hillary Clinton

Democratic Staff Report

Select Committee on the Events Surrounding the 2012 Terrorist Attack in Benghazi
Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings

October 2015

democrats.benghazi.house.gov

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been prepared on behalf of the Democratic Members of the House Select Committee on Benghazi to summarize the results of 54 transcribed interviews and depositions conducted by the Select Committee.

The report concludes that none of the witnesses substantiated repeated claims that Republican Members of Congress and presidential candidates have been making about former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for the past three years relating to the attacks in Benghazi.

The report also releases key excerpts from unclassified interviews conducted by the Select Committee and calls on Chairman Trey Gowdy to release the full transcripts of all interviews and depositions conducted to date, consistent with classification guidelines.

Finally, the report provides additional information about Secretary Clinton's actions during and after the attacks.

Politicization of Benghazi Select Committee

When Republican Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy admitted on national television that Republicans have been using millions of taxpayer dollars to damage Secretary Clinton's campaign for president, he crystallized in one moment the ground truth of this investigation.

One week later, a self-described "conservative Republican" investigator publicly revealed that he had been fired from the Select Committee's staff in part because he wanted to conduct an objective investigation and refused to go along with Republican leadership plans to use the Select Committee to "hyper focus on Hillary Clinton."

Then, last week Republican House Member Richard Hanna admitted during a radio interview: "This may not be politically correct, but I think that there was a big part of this investigation that was designed to go after people and an individual, Hillary Clinton."

Chairman Gowdy has denied these criticisms, stating: "I cannot say it any plainer than stating the facts, the Benghazi Committee is not focused on Secretary Clinton." He has also argued that, "instead of listening to someone else's words, why don't you look at our actions?"

In fact, these remarkable and repeated Republican admissions are consistent with the actions of the Select Committee to aggressively target Secretary Clinton, while abandoning plans to conduct a more thorough, fact-based investigation of the attacks. For example:

- Chairman Gowdy identified Secretary Clinton as the first witness he wanted to testify one day after Stop Hillary PAC, a group that describes itself as "created for one reason only—to ensure Hillary Clinton never becomes President of the United States," delivered about 264,000 signatures demanding that he subpoena her. This is the same group that aired a highly offensive attack ad last week exploiting images of the four Americans killed in Benghazi and Ambassador Steven's grave—without the knowledge or consent of his family.

- After the *New York Times* issued its story on Secretary Clinton's emails in March, the Select Committee abandoned all of its scheduled monthly hearings for 2015—except its hearing with Secretary Clinton. The Select Committee has not held a single public hearing since January.

- The Select Committee abandoned its plans for a public hearing with the Secretary of Defense, as well as its plans for a private interview with him. The Select Committee has never asked a single question to the Secretary of Defense—in public or private.

- The Select Committee has never held a single hearing with anyone from the Department of Defense in 17 months, and the Select Committee has conducted nearly ten times as many interviews of State Department employees than Defense Department employees (39 compared to 4).

- Of the 70,000 pages of documents obtained by the Select Committee, the only documents Chairman Gowdy has chosen to release publicly are Secretary Clinton's emails with Sidney Blumenthal. His actions contradict his own claim that "serious investigations" do not "make selective releases of information without full and proper context."

- At the same time, Chairman Gowdy has blocked the public release of Mr. Blumenthal's deposition transcript, which would reveal the questions Republicans asked about issues related to Secretary Clinton that have nothing to do with Benghazi, as well as Mr. Blumenthal's answers to questions about the emails that Chairman Gowdy released.

- The Select Committee has been engaged in an aggressive press campaign focused almost entirely on Secretary Clinton, issuing 27 press releases related to Secretary Clinton since March, but only 5 on all other topics combined. Chairman Gowdy has referenced Secretary Clinton more than 50 times in nationally televised interviews since March.

Select Committee Interviews and Depositions

Chairman Gowdy has attempted to defend the Select Committee's record by explaining that it has broken new ground in witness interviews. On October 7, 2015, he wrote: "The Committee has interviewed over 50 witnesses to date who have never before been interviewed." However, this claim is inaccurate, and the *Washington Post* Fact Checker referred to it as an effort to "hype the numbers."

The Select Committee has conducted a total of 54 transcribed interviews and depositions to date. Previous congressional committees and the independent Accountability Review Board (ARB) had already spoken to 23 of these individuals. In other words, the actual number of "new" interviews is 31—significantly lower than the 50 interviews cited by the Chairman.

Moreover, the majority of the Select Committee's 31 new interviews have been with State Department employees, and they have included current and former campaign officials, IT employees, press officials, and others who had little or nothing to do with the attacks in Benghazi.

More important than the number of interviews is what these individuals told the Select Committee. In an effort to be thorough, consistent, and accurate, Democratic investigators developed a set of standard questions based on some of the most prominent Republican accusations against Secretary Clinton over the past three years. They posed these questions to every witness, regardless of agency affiliation, title, or position.

Many of these Republican accusations share common features: they claim Secretary Clinton took personal and knowing action to endanger the lives of the four Americans killed in Benghazi, they are based on no evidence or evidence that is unsubstantiated or distorted, they use extreme rhetoric that has no basis in fact, and they often make a direct link to Secretary Clinton's bid for president.

For example, Carly Fiorina stated that Secretary Clinton "has blood on her hands," Mike Huckabee accused her of "ignoring the warning calls from dying Americans in Benghazi," Senator Rand Paul stated that "Benghazi was a 3:00 a.m. phone call that she never picked up," and Senator Lindsay Graham tweeted, "Where the hell were you on the night of the Benghazi attack?"

In stark contrast to these baseless political attacks, the 54 individuals who have now been interviewed by the Select Committee have identified:

- no evidence that Secretary Clinton ordered the military to stand down on the night of the attacks;
- no evidence that Secretary Clinton personally approved or ordered a reduction of security in Benghazi prior to the attacks;
- no evidence that Secretary Clinton pressed the United States into supporting the United Nations campaign in Libya under false pretenses;
- no evidence that Secretary Clinton or her aides oversaw an operation at the State Department to destroy or scrub embarrassing documents; and
- no evidence that Secretary Clinton or any other U.S. official directed or authorized the U.S. Mission in Benghazi to transfer weapons from Libya to another country.

The evidence obtained by the Select Committee also corroborates previous testimony to Congress indicating that Secretary Clinton was deeply engaged during and after the attacks and took action to ensure the safety and security of U.S. personnel, even as intelligence assessments of the attacks changed more than once during this period.

Attached to this report are key excerpts from the transcripts of unclassified interviews conducted by the Select Committee. This report does not include excerpts from interviews that were conducted in classified settings, have not completed the inter-agency classification review process, or have not completed the transcription process. This report also does not include excerpts from transcripts of depositions since, under House procedures, they cannot be released without the consent of the Chairman, which he has declined to provide.

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I. NO EVIDENCE OF REPUBLICAN ALLEGATIONS

A. No evidence that Secretary Clinton ordered the military to stand down on the night of the attacks.

The Republican investigation of the attacks in Benghazi was initiated more than three years ago by Rep. Darrell Issa, then the Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. Chairman Issa held the first hearing on Benghazi on October 10, 2012, and at the time was leading Republican efforts to investigate the attacks in the House of Representatives.

Chairman Issa made clear that his efforts were aimed at Secretary Clinton when he spoke at a Republican fundraiser in New Hampshire and stated—with no evidence—that he suspected that Secretary Clinton had ordered Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta to "stand down" on the night of the attacks.

Traveling to address the Republican Party of New Hampshire on February 14, 2014, Chairman Issa explained his goal: "I came here to hopefully shape the debate for 2016."[1] During his speech, he made the following statement:

> We need to have an answer of when the secretary of defense had assets that he could have begun spinning up. Why there was not one order given to turn on one Department of Defense asset? I have my suspicions, which is Secretary Clinton told Leon to stand down, and we all heard about the stand down order for two military personnel. That order is undeniable. They were told not to get on—get off the airplane and kind of stand by—and they're going to characterize it wasn't stand down. But when we're done with Benghazi, the real question is, was there a stand-down order to Leon Panetta or did he just not do his job? Was there a stand-down order from the president who said he told them to use their resources and they didn't use them? Those questions have to be answered.[2]

His accusation prompted an immediate reaction from Rep. Elijah Cummings, the Ranking Member of the Oversight Committee. In a letter to Chairman Issa on February 21, 2014, he wrote:

> The definition of treason is the betrayal of allegiance owed to one's country, and your statements seem to accuse former Secretary Clinton of this offense. You suggest that Secretary Clinton directed the Secretary of Defense of the United States to intentionally withhold military assistance that may have saved the lives of one of her own ambassadors

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[1] *Darrell Issa Wants to 'Shape The Debate' For 2016,* Associated Press (Feb. 18, 2014) (online at www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/18/darrell-issa-2016_n_4807790.html).

[2] Republican Party of New Hampshire, *Concord GOP Committee and Merrimack County GOP Committee* (Feb. 17, 2014) (online at www.patch.com/new-hampshire/concord-nh/issa-i-will-get-to-the-top-of-benghazi).

and three other brave Americans serving their country. Your accusations are beyond the pale, and you should immediately retract them and issue a public apology.[3]

Chairman Issa made these accusations despite the fact that only four days earlier, his Republican counterparts on the House Committee on Armed Services had come to the opposite conclusion. Chairman Howard "Buck" McKeon had been working in partnership with Chairman Issa, conducting interviews of military officials jointly with the Oversight Committee. On February 10, 2014, Chairman McKeon, Vice Chairman Mac Thornberry, Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Chair Martha Roby, and five Republican Members of that subcommittee issued their own report identifying no evidence that Secretary Clinton ordered Secretary Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks.

The report first described the steps taken by the military to mobilize after the attacks:

When the Department of State learned the SMC was being assaulted on September 11, officials notified DOD's National Military Command Center at the Pentagon. Thus began a chain of events that involved DOD allocating various forces to the crisis. The response decisions were based upon what forces were available and could readily be brought to bear on the situation as it was understood by senior leaders.

The first step DOD took upon learning of the attack involved a U.S. drone that was overflying Darnah, a city in northeastern Libya. AFRICOM's operations officer immediately redirected the unarmed Predator to Benghazi, which was about an hour's flight time away. Separately, following the meeting in the White House, Secretary Panetta (in consultation with General Ham, General Dempsey, and others) verbally authorized three specific actions. First, two Marine FAST platoons in Rota, Spain were ordered to prepare to deploy; one bound for Benghazi and one destined for Tripoli. Second, a special operations unit assigned to the European Command, known as a Commander's In-Extremis Force (CIF), which was training in Croatia was ordered to move to a U.S. Naval Air Station in Sigonella, Italy and await further instructions. Third, a special operations unit in the United States was also dispatched to the region. These orders were issued approximately two to four hours after the initial attack on the SMC.[4]

The report also concluded:

Secretary Panetta said the President was "well informed" about events and worried about American lives. He and General Dempsey also testified they had no further contact with the President, nor did Secretary of State Hillary Clinton ever communicate with them that

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[3] Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings to Chairman Darrell E. Issa, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (Feb. 21, 2014) (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/sites/democrats.oversight.house.gov/files/migrated/uploads/2014-02-21%20EEC%20to%20DEI.pdf).

[4] House Committee on Armed Services, *Majority Interim Report: Benghazi Investigation Update* (Feb. 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C4E16543-8F99-430C-BEBA-0045A6433426#page=17).

> evening. ... General Dempsey answered "no" when asked by the House Armed Services Committee if he had "any restrictions placed on whatever it is that you thought needed to get done to respond to ... Benghazi."[5]

Subsequent interviews confirmed these facts. On March 18, 2014, AFRICOM Director of Operations Rear Admiral Richard Landolt was asked during a transcribed interview whether he or anyone in his command received any order from the Secretary of State to stand down. He responded: "Not at all. We did not."[6]

On March 20, 2014, AFRICOM Deputy Commander for Military Operations Vice Admiral Charles J. Leidig was asked during a transcribed interview whether he or anyone in his command received any order from the Secretary of State to stand down. He answered: "I never received any orders from the Secretary of State or heard of any orders from the Secretary of State."[7]

On April 9, 2014, AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham was asked whether he or anyone in his command received any order from the Secretary of State to stand down. He responded: "No, and we would not receive direct communications from the Secretary of State."[8]

Soon thereafter, Chairman Issa began to publicly disagree with the course of Chairman McKeon's investigation, as well as its conclusions. He decided to hold his own hearing on May 1, 2014, with a Defense Department witness who had not been vetted previously by either committee. Chairman McKeon issued a press release on that day condemning these actions and stating that Chairman Issa's witness "did not further the investigation or reveal anything new" and "did not serve in a capacity that gave him reliable insight into operational options available to commanders."[9]

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[5] *Id.*

[6] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and House Committee on Armed Services, Joint Interview of Rear Admiral Richard Landolt (Mar. 18, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/7r%20-%20March%2018%2C%202014%20-%20Rear%20Admiral%20Richard%20Landolt.pdf).

[7] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and House Committee on Armed Services, Joint Interview of Vice Admiral Charles J. Leidig (Mar. 20, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/8r%20-%20March%2020%2C%202014%20-%20Vice%20Admiral%20Charles%20Leidig%20Jr..pdf).

[8] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and House Committee on Armed Services, Joint Interview of General Carter Ham (Apr. 9, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9r%20-%20April%209%2C%202014%20-%20General%20Carter%20Ham.pdf).

[9] House Committee on Armed Services, *Statement by House Committee on Armed Services Chairman Howard "Buck" McKeon* (May 1, 2014).

The *Washington Post's* Fact Checker awarded Chairman Issa "Four Pinocchios" for his accusation against Secretary Clinton, its highest rating for inaccurate statements. As the Fact Checker explained:

> [H]is repeated use of the phrase "stand down" and his personalizing of the alleged actions ("Secretary Clinton;" "Leon") leave a distinct impression that either Clinton or Obama delivered some sort of instruction to Panetta to not act as forcefully as possible. He even incorrectly asserts that not a single order was given to use any DOD asset. One could argue the response was slow, bungled or poorly handled. But Issa is crossing a line when he suggests there was no response—or a deliberate effort to hinder it.[10]

Even after obtaining all of the evidence described above, some Republicans continue to allege that "somebody" ordered U.S. military personnel to stand down. For example, on September 10, 2014, Rep. Jason Chaffetz, Chairman Issa's successor on the Oversight Committee, stated:

> The president of the United States said they did everything they could possibly do to save the people in Benghazi. I still highly doubt that statement. ... You cannot name a single military asset that was ordered to go into Benghazi during those hours. ... Somebody in that food chain said "stand down."[11]

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

B. <u>No evidence that Secretary Clinton personally approved or ordered a reduction of security in Benghazi prior to the attacks.</u>

Over the past three years, Republican Members of Congress and presidential candidates have alleged that Secretary Clinton personally approved or ordered a reduction in security that contributed to the Special Mission Compound's inadequate security posture in Benghazi.

To date, the definitive accounting of the inadequate security posture in Benghazi has come from the independent Accountability Review Board (ARB), which conducted more than 100 interviews in approximately three months—far more than the Select Committee in much less time. The Board's report was highly critical of the State Department, concluding:

> Systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department (the "Department") resulted in a Special Mission

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[10] *Issa's 'Suspicions' That Hillary Clinton Told Panetta to 'Stand Down' on Benghazi*, Washington Post (Feb. 22, 2014) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2014/02/21/issas-suspicions-that-hillary-clinton-told-panetta-to-stand-down-on-benghazi/).

[11] *GOP's Benghazi Committee Prepares for Media Spotlight*, The Hill (Sept. 10, 2014) (online at http://thehill.com/homenews/news/217206-gops-benghazi-committee-prepares-for-media-spotlight).

> security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place.[12]

The Board also determined that requests for more security personnel were rejected by Washington-based Diplomatic Security personnel:

> The Board determined that DS staffing levels in Benghazi after Embassy Tripoli re-opened were inadequate, decreasing significantly after then-Special Envoy Stevens' departure in November 2011. Although a full complement of five DS agents for Benghazi was initially projected, and later requested multiple times, Special Mission Benghazi achieved a level of five DS agents (not counting DoD-provided TDY Site Security Team personnel sent by Embassy Tripoli) for only 23 days between January 1-September 9, 2012.[13]

On April 23, 2013, however, the Republican Chairmen of five House committees—Foreign Affairs, Oversight and Government Reform, Armed Services, Judiciary, and Intelligence—issued a joint report going a step further and accusing Secretary Clinton directly of personally signing a cable that was issued on April 19, 2012, declining additional security requests. Although this report was never debated or voted on by any of the five committees, it alleged:

> Reductions of security levels prior to the attacks in Benghazi were approved at the highest levels of the State Department, up to and including Secretary Clinton. This fact contradicts her testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on January 23, 2013.[14]

The Republican report stated that, "in a cable signed by Secretary Clinton in April 2012, the State Department settled on a plan to scale back security assets for the U.S. Mission in Libya, including Benghazi."[15]

The next day, Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa appeared on national television and repeated this claim, stating:

> The Secretary of State was just wrong. She said she did not participate in this, and yet only a few months before the attack, she outright denied security in her signature in a cable, April 2012.[16]

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[12] Benghazi Accountability Review Board Report (Dec. 18, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf).

[13] *Id.*

[14] Interim Progress Report for the Members of the House Republican Conference on the Events Surrounding the September 11, 2012 Terrorist Attacks in Benghazi, Libya (Apr. 23, 2013) (online at https://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Libya-Progress-Report-Final-1.pdf).

[15] *Id.*

[16] *Fox & Friends,* Fox News (Apr. 24, 2013) (online at https://youtu.be/MsJpsW59jCs).

Similarly, on May 19, 2013, Senator Rand Paul repeated this claim during a nationally televised interview, stating:

> She was asked repeatedly to provide security in Benghazi on several occasions including direct cables, and she says she never read the cables on security. I find that inexcusable and a dereliction of duty.[17]

Although Republicans had reviewed a copy of the cable at issue, they failed to explain to the public that the "signature" line on the cable was merely a pro forma stamp with the Secretary of State's name, similar to millions of other State Department cables issued every year. Since this Republican report was not vetted through standard committee procedures, this critical omission was not identified until after the report was issued.

After reviewing Chairman Issa's claim, the *Washington Post*'s Fact Checker called it "absurd" and a "whopper," awarding it "Four Pinocchios," its highest rating for inaccurate statements. As the Fact Checker explained: "every cable from an embassy bears the 'signature' of the ambassador—and every cable from Washington bears the 'signature' of the secretary of state."[18]

The Fact Checker cited Republican and Democratic officials who served previously at the State Department to debunk this claim. According to R. Nicholas Burns, a career diplomat who served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs for Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, "A very small fraction would be seen by the secretary of state." This was confirmed by Larry Wilkerson, former chief of staff to Secretary Colin Powell, who stated, "I can say that from being there with one secretary and reviewing the work of many other secretaries in my academic research, there are many, many cables the secretary never sees."[19]

The *Tampa Bay Times'* PolitiFact reviewed Senator Paul's statement and concluded:

> [W]e see no evidence that Clinton herself was made aware of these requests. For example, there's no "direct cable" that automatically appears on the secretary of state's desk. Instead, all cables would have carried her name, and only those passed up the chain by staff would have reached her.[20]

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[17] *State of the Union*, CNN (May 19, 2013) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=enwwbnPmVvs).

[18] *Issa's Absurd Claim that Clinton's 'Signature' Means She Personally Approved It*, Washington Post (Apr. 26, 2013) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/post/issas-absurd-claim-that-clintons-signature-means-she-personally-approved-it/2013/04/25/58c2f5b4-adf8-11e2-a986-eec837b1888b_blog.html).

[19] *Id.*

[20] *Rand Paul Says Hillary Clinton Was 'Asked Repeatedly to Provide Security in Benghazi ... Including Direct Cables,'* PolitiFact (May 22, 2013) (online at www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2013/may/22/rand-paul/rand-paul-says-hillary-clinton-was-asked-repeatedl/).

Yet, four days after entering the presidential race, Senator Paul continued to make this unsubstantiated allegation against Secretary Clinton. On April 11, 2015, Senator Paul appeared on CNN and stated: "She didn't—she didn't provide the security, not just that day, for nine months. Dozens and dozens of requests for more security, all completely ignored by Hillary Clinton."[21]

Again, PolitiFact reviewed Senator Paul's allegation and concluded that, while the "numerous requests from officials on the ground in Libya for better security for the Benghazi compound are undeniable and well-documented," no one "has shown Clinton willfully ignored the cries for help from Libya."[22]

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

C. No evidence that Secretary Clinton pressed the United States into supporting the United Nations campaign in Libya under false pretenses.

Republican Members of Congress and presidential candidates have repeatedly alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence about the Qaddafi regime's atrocities in order to press the United States into supporting the United Nations-led coalition in Libya.

During an interview with *Breitbart News* in January 2015, Senator Rand Paul summarized his claims:

> What I've been saying for over a year now is that Hillary took us to war in Libya under false pretenses. ... She claimed there was some sort of imminent threat and that there was going to be some sort of genocide and she sold this war to the Obama administration.

Senator Paul continued, linking his criticism to Secretary Clinton's electability as president:

> This is involved on so many levels. One, you want a Commander-in-Chief who has wisdom and would look to all different various parts of government for information. You would want a Commander-in-Chief who would listen to the military, who would listen to the State Department, who would also listen to the intelligence community. But in this case, you have Hillary Clinton basically not listening to anyone while promulgating

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[21] *State of the Union*, CNN (Apr. 11, 2015) (online at www.cnn.com/2015/04/12/politics/rand-paul-hillary-clinton-foreign-policy/).

[22] *Rand Paul Attacks Hillary Clinton's Response to Benghazi Attack*, PolitiFact (Apr. 12, 2015) (online at www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2015/apr/12/rand-paul/rand-paul-attacks-hillary-clintons-response-bengha/).

> something that really appears to be contradicted by other branches of government—in that there was some sort of imminent genocide awaiting in Libya.[23]

Rep. Ted Poe repeated these accusations against Secretary Clinton to *The Washington Times* in February 2015:

> You have a false report from the Secretary of State, and then the military holding a completely different view of what's taking place. ... They wanted [the president] to have facts—facts as opposed to what Secretary Clinton was hoping the facts would be; that Moammar Gadhafi was killing innocent women and children. That was was [sic] a false narrative. So, it would make sense that they would want to get that information straight to the president and not go through the Secretary of State.[24]

In 2011, however, many prominent Republicans were calling for military action to protect civilians in Libya. For example, on March 30, 2011, Senator Marco Rubio sent a letter to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell warning about the consequences of inaction in Libya. He wrote:

> As long as Qaddafi remains in power, he will be in a position to terrorize his own people and potentially the rest of the world. In fact he has vowed to turn rebel strongholds into "rivers of blood." If he succeeds, it will provide a blueprint to repressive regimes across the Middle East in the use of force against unarmed civilians.[25]

Similarly, during a visit to Benghazi in April 2011, Senator John McCain issued the following statement:

> We need to urgently step up the NATO air campaign to protect Libyan civilians, especially in Misurata. We desperately need more close air-support and precision strike assets—such as A-10s and AC-130s. And I applaud Secretary Gates's decision to use Predator aircraft to help in this effort. We can better identify and destroy Qaddafi's forces as they seek to conceal themselves in civilian areas. Finally, responsible nations need to provide the military forces of the Transitional National Council with every appropriate means of assistance to enable them to create conditions on the ground that increase the pressure on Qaddafi to leave power. That includes command and control

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[23] *Exclusive—Rand Paul: Obama Defended 'Hillary's War' in Libya in Secret Capitol Hill Meeting with GOP*, Breitbart News (Jan. 29, 2015) (online at www.breitbart.com/big-government/2015/01/29/exclusive-rand-paul-obama-defended-hillarys-war-in-libya-in-secret-capitol-hill-meeting-with-gop/).

[24] *House Benghazi Committee to Review Secret Hillary Tapes on Libya*, Washington Times (Feb. 2, 2015) (online at www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/feb/2/hillary-clinton-libya-tapes-set-house-benghazi-com/?page=all).

[25] Letter from Senator Marco Rubio to Majority Leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (Mar. 30, 2011) (online at http://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=6e2704bf-b318-4ea4-a74d-3added704679).

support, battlefield intelligence, training, and weapons. I have met with these brave fighters, and they are not Al-Qaeda. To the contrary: They are Libyan patriots who want to liberate their nation. We should help them do it.[26]

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

D. No evidence that Secretary Clinton or her aides oversaw an operation at the State Department to destroy or scrub embarrassing documents.

On September 15, 2014, an article in *The Daily Signal* reported that Raymond Maxwell, the former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Maghreb Affairs, had come forward with "a startling allegation." Specifically, the report claimed that "Hillary Clinton confidants were part of an operation to 'separate' damaging documents before they were turned over to the Accountability Review Board." The article identified the confidants as Chief of Staff Cheryl Mills and Deputy Chief of Staff Jake Sullivan.[27]

According to this account, employees were instructed to review documents and "pull out anything" that might put senior officials "in a bad light." The article also stated that Mr. Maxwell said that he "couldn't help but wonder if the ARB—perhaps unknowingly—had received from his bureau a scrubbed set of documents with the most damaging material missing."[28]

The report also described an incident in which Ms. Mills and Mr. Sullivan allegedly checked in on the operation and came into contact with Mr. Maxwell:

> "When Cheryl saw me, she snapped, 'Who are you?'" Maxwell says. "Jake explained, 'That's Ray Maxwell, an NEA deputy assistant secretary.' She conceded, 'Well, OK.'"[29]

Several conservative press outlets immediately seized on *The Daily Signal*'s report to claim that former aides to Secretary Clinton ordered the destruction of documents to prevent Congress and the ARB from ever seeing them.[30]

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[26] Senator John McCain, *Statement by Senator McCain in Benghazi, Libya* (Apr. 22, 2011) (online at www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/press-releases?ID=7e95d18f-a9eb-80ef-e599-95754897384e).

[27] *Benghazi Bombshell: Clinton State Department Official Reveals Details of Alleged Document Review*, Daily Signal (Sept. 15, 2014) (online at http://dailysignal.com/2014/09/15/benghazi-bombshell-clinton-state-department-official-reveals-alleged-details-document-review/).

[28] *Id.*

[29] *Id.*

On October 17, 2014, Chairman Gowdy was interviewed on *Fox News* by Greta Van Susteren, who asked if he believed Mr. Maxwell's allegation that "documents were tossed out." In response, the Chairman stated:

> What you would do is what I'm going to do Greta, and that is, give Mr. Maxwell an opportunity to say what he perceived to happen and he's going to have to give us the names of the other people who were involved and then we're going to give them an opportunity to say whether or not they have a different perspective. It's going to be an investigation. And if there is a dispute as to what happened then we'll let your audience decide who has more credibility.[31]

By the time Chairman Gowdy made this statement, however, his staff had already interviewed Mr. Maxwell without including, inviting, or even notifying Democratic Members or staff. Mr. Maxwell apparently identified for Republican staff a second witness that he claimed was present during this document review at the State Department. Mr. Maxwell identified this person as someone who could corroborate his allegations and someone he believes is credible.

Then, on October 16—one day before Chairman Gowdy appeared on *Fox News*—his staff interviewed this second witness, again without including Democrats. However, this second witness did not substantiate Mr. Maxwell's claims. To the contrary, he did not recall ever having been in the document review session Mr. Maxwell described, he said he was never instructed to flag information in documents that might be unfavorable to the Department, and he reported that he never engaged in or was aware of any destruction of documents.

Democrats did not discover any of this information from Chairman Gowdy or his staff, but from the witnesses themselves. When Democratic staff inquired with Republican staff about what they learned from the witness identified by Mr. Maxwell, they stated that he did work at the State Department during this period. Beyond that, however, they reported: "We learned nothing else of note in our discussion, so we don't plan to conduct any additional follow up."[32]

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[30] *See, e.g., Former State Department Official: Clinton Camp Destroyed Benghazi Documents*, TruthInMedia.com (Sept. 16, 2014) (online at http://truthinmedia.com/former-state-department-official-clinton-camp-destroyed-benghazi-documents/); *Hillary Clinton Staffers Destroyed Benghazi Documents, State Dept. Official Claims*, Christian Post (Sept. 16, 2014) (online at www.christianpost.com/news/hillary-clinton-staffers-destroyed-benghazi-documents-state-dept-official-claims-126510/); *Report: State Department Official Claims They Destroyed Benghazi Documents to Protect Hillary Clinton*, Conservative Tree House (Sept. 15, 2014) (online at http://theconservativetreehouse.com/2014/09/15/report-state-department-official-claims-they-destroyed-benghazi-documents-to-protect-hillary-clinton/).

[31] *On the Record with Greta Van Susteren*, Fox News (Oct. 17, 2014) (online at http://gretawire.foxnewsinsider.com/video/video-benghazi-select-committee-chairman-trey-gowdy-our-goal-was-to-play-it-straight/).

[32] Email from Republican Staff to Democratic Staff, House Select Committee on Benghazi (Oct. 23, 2014).

On November 24, 2014, Ranking Member Elijah Cummings wrote to Chairman Gowdy objecting to the exclusion of Democrats from Committee interviews and requesting that the Select Committee vote on official rules to prevent this from happening again. He wrote:

> I am sure you understand—as a former prosecutor—that evaluating the credibility of witnesses and their allegations depends on whether the information they provide can be corroborated. Although your staff stated that they learned nothing "of note," in fact they learned that this claim was not substantiated by a key witness. If our goal is the truth, and not a preconceived political narrative, these interviews should have been conducted jointly, with both Democrats and Republicans present.[33]

Since that time, Chairman Gowdy has consistently refused Democratic requests to adopt rules for the Select Committee that would guarantee Democratic participation in all aspects of the investigation.

None of the 54 individuals that were interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

E. No evidence that Secretary Clinton or any other U.S. official directed or authorized the U.S. Mission in Benghazi to transfer weapons from Libya to another country.

For years, Republican Members of Congress and presidential candidates have alleged that Secretary Clinton was aware of, and a proponent of, an illicit government program to transfer weapons from Libya to Syria. The Select Committee continues to investigate this theory despite the fact that it was debunked by the Republican-led House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

On January 23, 2013, Senator Rand Paul asked Secretary Clinton about this weapons-transfer theory when she testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. They had the following exchange:

> Sen. Paul: It's been in news reports that ships have been leaving from Libya and that they may have weapons. And what I would like to know is the annex that was close by, were they involved with procuring, buying, selling, obtaining weapons, and were any of these weapons being transferred to other countries? Any countries, Turkey included?
>
> Sec. Clinton: Well, Senator, you will have to direct, direct that question to the agency that ran the annex. I will see what information is available and …
>
> Sen. Paul: You're saying you don't know.

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[33] Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings to Chairman Trey Gowdy, House Select Committee on Benghazi (Nov. 24, 2014) (online at http://democrats.benghazi.house.gov/sites/democrats.benghazi.house.gov/files/documents/2014_11_24_EEC_to_TG_Bipartisan_Committee.pdf).

Sec. Clinton: I do not know, I don't have any information on that.[34]

After the hearing, the State Department supplemented the hearing record with an official statement: "The United States is not involved with any transfer of weapons from Libya to Turkey."[35]

On April 21, 2013, Senator Paul explained his theory further during a radio interview:

> With regard to Benghazi, I think it's important because it may have something to do with why the compound was attacked if we were involved with shipping guns to Turkey. There was a report that a ship left from Libya towards Turkey and that there were arms on it in the week preceding this. There were reports that our Ambassador was meeting with the Turkish Attaché. So, I think with regards to figuring out what happened at Benghazi, it's very important to know whether or not the CIA annex had anything to do with facilitating guns being sent to Turkey and ultimately to Syria.[36]

In January 2014, the Republican Members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued an "Update on Benghazi" dispelling this allegation based on evidence and testimony they had received. The report stated:

> All CIA activities in Benghazi were legal and authorized. On-the-record testimony establishes that CIA was **not** sending weapons (including MANPADS) from Libya to Syria, or facilitating other organizations or states that were transferring weapons from Libya to Syria.[37]

Nonetheless, in a radio interview on July 14, 2014, Senator Paul not only repeated his claim, but escalated his allegations to question whether Secretary Clinton had lied about this issue when she testified before Congress:

> I'm concerned about the veracity of how she responded. For example, the New York Times about two weeks ago reported that the CIA has been involved with facilitating weapons to Syria for over a year. And it's also been reported I think in the New York Times as well that Hillary Clinton was the big cheerleader for arming Syria when there was two factions within the Obama Administration arguing this. Hillary Clinton was the

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[34] Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Benghazi: The Attacks and the Lessons Learned*, 113th Cong. (Jan. 23, 2013) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIXicd6ZFhQ).

[35] Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Benghazi: The Attacks and the Lessons Learned*, 113th Cong. (Jan. 23, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113shrg86780/pdf/CHRG-113shrg86780.pdf).

[36] *Aaron Klein Investigative Radio*, AM 970 (Apr. 21, 2013) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=FCI5csafSuM).

[37] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *HPSCI January 2014 Update on Benghazi* (Jan. 30, 2014) (online at http://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/HPSCIBenghaziUpdateJan2014.pdf) (emphasis in original).

> one, you know, cheering them on to get weapons. She was the hard-liner that wanted to get involved in the war in Syria. And yet, in the hearing she says oh, she's never heard of this? I find that hard to believe. And after Clapper's coming to Congress and lying because he said it was classified, my question to Hillary Clinton is, did you lie to Congress simply because it was a classified program, or were you telling the truth? And I really kind of doubt the Secretary of State has no knowledge that the CIA is facilitating weapons to Syria.[38]

On July 31, 2014, after nearly two years of "comprehensive and exhaustive" investigation, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, led by Republican Chairman Mike Rogers, adopted its final bipartisan report definitively putting this allegation to rest. The report, which was publicly released on November 21, 2014, concluded:

> **Finding #4: The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria.** Multiple media outlets have reported allegations about CIA collecting weapons in Benghazi and facilitating weapons from Libya to Syria. The eyewitness testimony and thousands of pages of CIA cables and emails that the Committee reviewed provide no support for this allegation. Committee Members and staff asked all witnesses what they observed at the Benghazi Annex and whether they had any information to support allegations about weapons being collected and transported to Syria. Each witness reported seeing only standard CIA security weapons at the base. No witness testified that non-CIA weapons were brought to the Annex. Security personnel and officers testified that they had complete access to the Annex and would have observed any weapons, such as MANPADs, stored at the facility. Security personnel and officers also testified that nobody told them to hide or withhold any information from the Committee. This record is consistent throughout the Committee interviews by Members and staff. According to testimony from CIA Deputy Director Morell and confirmed by other witnesses, the CIA's mission in Benghazi was to collect foreign intelligence. From the Annex in Benghazi, the CIA was collecting intelligence about foreign entities that were themselves collecting weapons in Libya and facilitating their passage to Syria. The Benghazi Annex was not itself collecting weapons. The Committee has not seen any credible information to dispute these facts.[39]

Despite these definitive findings, the Select Committee has continued to investigate this accusation. On November 18, 2014—in the Select Committee's first substantive document request to the Department of State—Chairman Gowdy requested the following documents relating to Secretary Clinton and others:

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[38] *Aaron Klein Investigative Radio*, AM 970 (July 14, 2014) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9UcDic6ENM).

[39] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Investigative Report on the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Nov. 21, 2014) (online at http://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/Benghazi%20Report.pdf) (emphasis in original).

> For the time period of January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2012: Any and all documents and communications referring or relating to policies, decisions, or activities regarding … weapons located or found in, imported or brought into, and/or exported or removed from Libya, authored by, sent to, or received by the following individuals.[40]

On January 23, 2015, Ranking Member Cummings expressed concerns about the Select Committee's ongoing investigation of this repeatedly debunked accusation after Republicans interviewed yet another individual who confirmed the Intelligence Committee's findings:

> I have recently learned that you have chosen to disregard the statements of someone who has firsthand information relevant to allegations that you continue to investigate and discuss publicly. Among other things, she has confirmed—based on her expertise and personal experience in Benghazi in the time period immediately before the attacks—that there was no illegal transfer of weapons from Libya to Syria. In fact, she said that the bipartisan report of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) should have been stronger in its language making this point. In its report, HPSCI concluded that "eyewitness testimony and thousands of pages of CIA cables and emails that the Committee reviewed provide no support for this allegation." Instead of crediting her testimony to help put this previously investigated and debunked allegation to rest, you followed up your private, Republican-only interview of this witness by requesting a broad set of documents from the State Department on this debunked allegation.[41]

Disregarding all of these previous findings and the concerns expressed by the Ranking Member, the Chairman decided to go a step further and, on March 4, 2015, issued a unilateral subpoena without any debate or vote by the Select Committee demanding the production of documents in this category.[42]

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

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[40] Letter from Chairman Trey Gowdy, Select Committee on Benghazi, to Secretary John F. Kerry, Department of State (Nov. 18, 2014).

[41] Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings to Chairman Trey Gowdy, House Select Committee on Benghazi (Jan. 23, 2015) (online at http://democrats.benghazi.house.gov/sites/democrats.benghazi.house.gov/files/documents/2015_01_23_EEC_to_TG.PDF).

[42] Subpoena from Chairman Trey Gowdy, House Select Committee on Benghazi, to the Honorable Hillary R. Clinton (Mar. 4, 2015).

II. SECRETARY CLINTON'S ACTIONS DURING AND AFTER THE ATTACKS

The evidence obtained by the Select Committee confirms that Secretary Clinton was "deeply engaged" in responding to the attacks in Benghazi and sought to mobilize resources to protect the lives of U.S. officials across the region, contrary to claims by Republican Members of Congress and presidential candidates.[43]

In addition, the evidence confirms previous findings that intelligence assessments changed not once, but twice, in the days after the attacks. Based on these changing assessments, the evidence also corroborates Secretary Clinton's previous statement that, "I myself went back and forth on what likely happened, who did it, and what mix of factors—like the video—played a part."[44]

Finally, the evidence confirms previous findings that the State Department was inundated that week with dozens of reports of protests and violence around the world and that the Intelligence Community was receiving conflicting reports about the motivation for the Benghazi attacks from both open source and classified sources.[45]

A. The Night of the Attacks

Secretary Clinton first learned about the attacks in Benghazi shortly after 4 p.m. EST on September 11, 2012.

In the following hours, she spoke with President Obama, National Security Advisor Tom Donilon, Central Intelligence Agency Director David Petraeus, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey, the State Department's Charge d'Affaires in Tripoli, Acting Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs Beth Jones, Under Secretary for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, Under Secretary for Management Patrick Kennedy, Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Thomas Nides, Executive Secretary Stephen Mull, State Department Spokesperson Victoria Nuland, Chief of Staff Cheryl Mills, Deputy Chief of Staff Jake Sullivan, and Libyan General National Congress President Magariaf. She also personally participated in a Secure Video Tele-Conference (SVTC) with senior officials from the Intelligence Community, the White House, and the Department of Defense.

Secretary Clinton testified twice before Congress in 2013 about the Benghazi attacks. During her testimony, she explained:

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[43] *See, e.g., Lindsay Graham Wins Second-Tier #GOPDebate on Twitter,* CBS News (Sept. 16, 2015) (online at www.cbsnews.com/news/top-5-lindsey-graham-moments-tweeted-during-gop-republican-debate-2015/) ("Where the hell were you on the night of the Benghazi attack?").

[44] Hillary Clinton, *Hard Choices* (2014).

[45] *See, e.g.,* Congressional Research Service, *Recent Protests in Muslim Countries: Background and Issues for Congress* (Sept. 20, 2012) (online at www.hsdl.org/?view&did=723794#page=16). *See also A Deadly Mix in Benghazi,* New York Times (Dec. 28, 2013) (online at www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/benghazi/#/?chapt=0).

> I was notified of the attack shortly after 4 p.m. Over the following hours, we were in continuous meetings and conversations, both within the Department, with our team in Tripoli, with the interagency, and internationally. I instructed our senior Department officials and our diplomatic security personnel to consider every option, to just break down the doors of the Libyan officials to get as much security support as we possibly could, to coordinate with them.[46]

Secretary Clinton also testified about many of the steps she took that afternoon and evening:

> I spoke several times with National Security Advisor Tom Donilon to seek all possible support from the White House, which they quickly provided. I also spoke with our Charge d'Affaires in Tripoli to receive updates on the situation and to former CIA Director Petraeus to confer and coordinate. I called Libyan General National Congress President Magariaf to press him for greater support not only in Benghazi but also in Tripoli. I participated in a secure video conference of senior officials from the intelligence community, the White House, and the Department of Defense, during which we reviewed the options and the actions we were taking. And I spoke with President Obama later in the evening to update him on the situation. I spoke early on the morning of September 12 with General Dempsey and again with Tom Donilon.[47]

Documents obtained by the Select Committee from the State Department's Operations Center confirm Secretary Clinton's testimony about her actions on the night of the attacks. For example, the documents show:

- At 6:41 p.m., the Operations Center reported that Secretary Clinton requested a telephone call with Libyan President Magariaf.[48]
- At 6:49 p.m., the Operations Center reported that the Secretary spoke with President Magariaf.[49]
- At 6:57 p.m., the Operations Center reported that the Secretary requested to speak with Deputy Chief of Mission Gregory Hicks at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli.[50]
- At 7:03 p.m., the Operations Center reported that the Secretary requested a conference call with Gregory Hicks, Patrick Kennedy, Cheryl Mills, Steve Mull, Wendy Sherman, Tom Nides, and Jake Sullivan.[51]

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[46] Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearing on Benghazi: The Attacks and the Lessons Learned* (Jan. 23, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113shrg86780/pdf/CHRG-113shrg86780.pdf).

[47] *Id.*

[48] Email from Operations Center (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB0084318).

[49] Email from Operations Center (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB0084317).

[50] Email from Operations Center (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB0084316).

- At 7:03 p.m., the Operations Center reported that the Secretary began the conference call with the various parties.[52]

- At 7:14 p.m., the Operations Center updated the conference call to add Acting Assistant Secretary Beth Jones.[53]

- At 7:45 p.m., an email from Secretary Clinton's office confirmed that the Secretary participated in a SVTC with the White House and agency officials regarding the situation at the consulate in Benghazi.[54]

- At 8:31 p.m., a subsequent email from the Secretary's office reported that the Secretary had just completed the 40-45 minute SVTC.[55]

The State Department Chief of Staff, Cheryl Mills, who was with Secretary Clinton on the night of the attacks, confirmed these facts during her interview with the Select Committee:

> The Secretary reached out to the government. So, too, were others reaching out, both on the ground, if I recall, in Tripoli, and it might have been the case that also the Assistant Secretary or her team was doing the same thing. But, candidly, everybody was trying to reach to whatever asset or individual or government partner who they thought would be able to help secure our people and ensure their safety.[56]

She also stated:

> She was pretty emphatic about wanting whatever to be done and whatever were assets that could be deployed, if that was both effective and possible to be done. Obviously, it was a challenging environment, given that our compound had been overrun. And so you want to ensure that, as you also are thinking about who else might go in, how they are able to do that effectively. But my observation and impression and, obviously, engagements were around what can be done, what can be sent, and how can that be done best. There was not any notion of not doing that to the fullest amount that was practical, effective, and possible.[57]

When asked if Secretary Clinton requested that military assets be deployed, Ms. Mills responded:

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[51] Email from Operations Center (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB0084315).

[52] Email from Operations Center (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB0084314).

[53] Email from Operations Center (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB0084313).

[54] Email from Office Manager, Office of the Secretary (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB00085747).

[55] *Id.*

[56] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Cheryl Mills (Sept. 3, 2015).

[57] *Id.*

> She actually on our SVTCS—which obviously had the presence of a number of different agencies, of which I believe DOD was one—said we need to be taking whatever steps we can, to do whatever we can to secure our people. And I can remember that someone from the White House said that the President was 100 percent behind whatever needed to be done and we needed to do whatever needed to be done. And that's, you know, that's what he would expect, but it's also what was said.[58]

Ms. Mills also had this exchange:

> A: She was very concerned. She was also very determined that whatever needed to be done was done. And she was worried. She was worried not only about our team on the ground in Benghazi but worried about our teams that were on the ground in Libya and our teams on the ground in a number of places, given what we had seen unfold in Egypt.
>
> Q: Did she seem uncertain as to how to respond?
>
> A: No. She was very—she was very certain. And, indeed, when we said it was going to be a staff SVTCS, which was our diplomatic way of saying that maybe she shouldn't be attending, she said, "I'm coming." And so we tried to make sure the rest of the interagency knew ahead of time that she was going to be on, but we were unsuccessful, so they were surprised when she sat down.
>
> Q: So were you surprised by that?
>
> A: I'm not surprised, because that's her approach. She's a person who steps in and leads. She's someone who, when there is accountability, takes it. So I wasn't surprised. But I know that it can sometimes be intimidating to other staff that there is a principal present. And what she really was communicating that night is, "I'm here because I want my team safe. I'm not here because I'm here for any other reason than trying to get their safety. And whatever we need to do to do that I want to do."[59]

Ms. Mills also explained Secretary Clinton's reaction to the deaths of Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty:

> I think she was devastated. Ambassador Stevens was someone she had a lot of confidence and respect for. And his guidance and his way was a compelling one. And the notion that he had been murdered, I think, was something that all of us thought was unbearable, but I think she particularly felt the pain of that. She also felt the pain of the loss of other Americans that were there that night, whom she didn't have a personal relationship with but who she knew were there because they were trying to further our own interests. And so she felt very strongly about claiming all of them, even at a time where there was ambiguity about how that should or shouldn't be done, but also in

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[58] *Id.*

[59] *Id.*

> honoring their service and what they had done. And, in the days afterwards, she spent time reaching out to our team in Tripoli, constantly trying to determine if they had what they needed, constantly trying to remind people that, while we all have jobs, people are fragile and you have to remember the fragility of people and their humanity and you have to give respect to that. And she made herself consistently present to people on her team because she wanted them to know that, as hard as this was, this was something that required us all to bear witness, to learn, and to try to be the very best we could in those moments.[60]

The State Department's Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Policy Planning, Jake Sullivan, was also with Secretary Clinton on the night of the attacks and corroborated Ms. Mills' account. During a previous interview with the Oversight Committee, he stated:

> She was deeply engaged. She not only was receiving regular reports and updates, but she was proactively reaching out. She spoke with Director Petraeus. She spoke with the national security adviser on more than one occasion. She participated in the SVTS, and she made other phone calls that night, and from the time she first learned of it, this was the only thing that she was focused on.[61]

He also stated:

> Secretary Clinton was receiving reports of what was happening, and she made a series of phone calls as a result of that and gave direction to Pat Kennedy, to diplomatic security, to Beth Jones to do everything possible both with respect to our own resources and with respect to Libyan resources to try to respond to this.[62]

He also explained that her "very clear guidance" was that "no effort be spared":

> Q: Could you just elaborate on that? And could you maybe help us explain, did that statement, did your observation of her and her performance that night, did that carry through throughout the response of the attack?
>
> A: Yes, it did. She provided very clear guidance that whether it was the diplomatic security service, or it was our diplomats in Washington and out in Tripoli that no effort be spared to respond to this as effectively as possible. She communicated that same message to all of the interagency colleagues with whom she spoke that night.
>
> Q: Okay. And when we talk about her level of engagement that night, did you witness that others, other stakeholders were also engaged in this process.

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[60] *Id.*

[61] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Jacob Sullivan (Sept. 12, 2013). The Select Committee has re-interviewed Mr. Sullivan, but the transcript of that interview has not completed the classification review process.

[62] *Id.*

A: Yes. This was an all hands on deck situation.[63]

B. The Aftermath of the Attacks

The evidence obtained by the Select Committee confirms previous accounts that the information being gathered in the aftermath of the attacks—and intelligence assessments of that information—continued to change throughout the week. For example, although initial reports claimed that Ansar al-Sharia was responsible for the attacks, the group later disavowed responsibility.[64]

In her book, Secretary Clinton explained that she personally changed views several times that week about the possible motivations of the attackers, whether there was a protest, and whether the attacks were preplanned:

> What about the attack in Benghazi? In the heat of the crisis we had no way of knowing for sure what combination of factors motivated the assault or whether and how long it had been planned. I was clear about this in my remarks the next morning, and in the days that followed administration officials continued to tell the American people that we had incomplete information and were still looking for answers. There were many theories—but still little evidence. **I myself went back and forth on what likely happened, who did it, and what mix of factors—like the video—played a part.** But it was unquestionably inciting the region and triggering protests all over, so it would have been strange not to consider, as days of protests unfolded, that it might have had the same effect here, too. That's just common sense. Later investigation and reporting confirmed that the video was indeed a factor. All we knew at that time with complete certainty was that Americans had been killed and others were still in danger.[65]

Documents obtained by the Select Committee indicate that Ansar al-Sharia appeared to have claimed responsibility for the attacks on the night of September 11, 2012.

At 6:07 p.m. on the night of the attacks, the State Department Operations Center sent an alert titled: "Ansar al-Sharia Claims Responsibility for Benghazi Attack." This alert stated: "Embassy Tripoli reports the group claimed responsibility on Facebook and Twitter and has called for an attack on Embassy Tripoli."[66] This alert appears to have been based on reports from Deputy Chief of Mission Greg Hicks, who was located in Tripoli and whose team was reviewing internet traffic.[67]

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[63] *Id.*

[64] Written Statement of Michael Morell, Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=1).

[65] Hillary Clinton, *Hard Choices* (2014) (emphasis added).

[66] Email from Operations Center (Sept. 11, 2012) (C5272001).

[67] Email from Deputy Chief of Mission Gregory Hicks (Sept. 11, 2012) (C5391036).

At 6:49 p.m., an email was sent with notes from Secretary Clinton's call with Libyan General National Congress President Mohammed Magariaf. These notes show that Secretary Clinton pressed the Libyan government to take immediate action to protect American lives and that she relayed that Ansar al-Sharia was claiming responsibility for the attacks:

> We need your immediate help, as one of our diplomats was killed and our Ambassador, who you know, is missing. We have asked for the Libyan government to provide additional security to the compound immediately as there is a gun battle ongoing, which I understand Ansar as-Sharia is claiming responsibility for. We also need you to provide additional capacity for firefighting as there are reports that the principle officer's residence has been bombed or set on fire. We believe that it is important for your government, as well as ours, to condemn this attack in the strongest possible terms and promise that these criminals will be brought to justice. I also need you to help us secure our mission in Tripoli. We have seen serious threats on social media sites, like Facebook, and it is important that your government take all possible measures, in an urgent manner, to secure our facilities. We need you to have people who you are confident in, who will follow your direction, and that your government trusts to secure our compounds.[68]

The notes also indicate that the Secretary stated: "If there is anything that you need or that I can do please do not hesitate to call me at any time, day or night."[69]

Social media traffic, including Twitter posts that night and in the following days, cited the video as justification for the attacks and called for further violence throughout the region.[70]

Late that night, Secretary Clinton issued the following public statement:

> I condemn in the strongest terms the attack on our mission in Benghazi today. As we work to secure our personnel and facilities, we have confirmed that one of our State Department officers was killed. We are heartbroken by this terrible loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and those who have suffered in this attack.
>
> This evening, I called Libyan President Magariaf to coordinate additional support to protect Americans in Libya. President Magariaf expressed his condemnation and condolences and pledged his government's full cooperation.
>
> Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet. The United States deplores any intentional effort to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. Our commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very

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[68] Email from Lawrence Randolph Memorializing Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's Call with Libyan General Nat'l Congress President Mohammed Magariaf (Sept. 11, 2012) (SCB71244).

[69] *Id.*

[70] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Victoria Nuland (Sept. 28, 2013).

> beginning of our nation. But let me be clear: There is never any justification for violent acts of this kind.
>
> In light of the events of today, the United States government is working with partner countries around the world to protect our personnel, our missions, and American citizens worldwide.[71]

In the early morning hours of September 12, 2012, an intelligence product was issued stating that "the presence of armed assailants from the incidents outset suggest that this was an intentional assault and not an escalation of the peaceful protests," as previously explained to Congress by the Deputy Director of the CIA.[72]

Later that morning, Secretary Clinton spoke publicly about the attacks, stating:

> Yesterday, our U.S. diplomatic post in Benghazi, Libya was attacked. Heavily armed militants assaulted the compound and set fire to our buildings. American and Libyan security personnel battled the attackers together. Four Americans were killed. ... This is an attack that should shock the conscience of people of all faiths around the world. We condemn in the strongest terms this senseless act of violence, and we send our prayers to the families, friends, and colleagues of those we've lost. ... There will be more time later to reflect, but today, we have work to do. There is no higher priority than protecting our men and women wherever they serve. We are working to determine the precise motivations and methods of those who carried out this assault. Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior, along with the protest that took place at our Embassy in Cairo yesterday, as a response to inflammatory material posted on the internet. America's commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very beginning of our nation. But let me be clear—there is no justification for this, none. Violence like this is no way to honor religion or faith. And as long as there are those who would take innocent life in the name of God, the world will never know a true and lasting peace.[73]

Secretary Clinton testified previously to Congress that her statements were intended to acknowledge this terrorist attack, prevent future attacks, and condemn anyone seeking to use the video to justify violence, regardless of the various motives of the attackers:

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[71] Press Statement from Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Statement on the Attack in Benghazi* (Sept. 11, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2012/09/197628.htm).

[72] Michael Morell, Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at www.c-span.org/video/?318648-1/benghazi-obama-administration).

[73] Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Remarks on the Deaths of American Personnel in Benghazi, Libya* (Sept. 12, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2012/09/197654.htm).

> As I stated before the Committee, the tragedy in Benghazi was a terrorist attack. On September 12, I stated that "heavily armed militants assaulted the compound" the previous day, and the President spoke of an act of terror. We did not know who the attackers were, what their motives were, what the context of the attack was, and other information of that sort. At the same time, we were dealing with protests against our facilities in the region that were clearly connected to the video, and we were focused on keeping our people safe. We had our compounds breached in Cairo, Tunis, Khartoum, and Sana'a, in addition to Benghazi. We had serious disturbances in Pakistan and protests in more than 10 other countries that week. So we were working around the clock on high alert to deal with those threats and to protect our personnel and our facilities.
>
> Throughout, we saw public comments that such violence was justified by—whether or not it was motivated by—inflammatory material posted on the internet, including the video. The Administration made clear that all such violence was unacceptable and unjustified, regardless of the motives. The intelligence community has addressed the fact that it assessed in the immediate aftermath that the attack in Benghazi began spontaneously following protests earlier that day in Cairo. The senior Administration officials who spoke to this, including me, had the same information from the intelligence community—which reflected the best, most current assessment at the time—and made clear that we were continuing to gather information and our assessment might change. And when additional information was collected, we updated our public posture which is normal in fluid circumstances.[74]

On the afternoon of September 12, Secretary Clinton received notes to prepare for a 4:30 p.m. meeting on the attacks in Benghazi and Cairo. The notes stated that "sources indicate a group named Ansar al-Sharia, affiliated with Islamic extremists, organized the attack." The notes also stated that Embassy Tripoli was reporting that the attack in Benghazi was pre-planned, similar to the intelligence report issued earlier that morning: "Embassy Tripoli reports that the attack was sophisticated, well-organized, involved over 50 armed gunmen, and appears to have been planned in advance."[75]

Later that afternoon, Secretary Clinton had a call with the Egyptian Prime Minister Hesham Kandil regarding the events in Cairo and Libya. The notes from that call indicate that the Secretary relayed information consistent with reporting at the time: "We know that the attack in Libya had nothing to do with the film. It was a planned attack—not a protest." The notes also indicate that she acknowledged that Ansar al-Sharia reportedly claimed responsibility for the attacks: "Your [sic] not kidding. Based on the information we saw today we believe the group that claimed responsibility for this was affiliated with al Qaeda."[76]

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[74] Response to Question for the Record submitted to Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton by Representative Rohrabacher, House Committee on Foreign Affairs (Jan. 23, 2013).

[75] Secretary's Participation in the Small Group Meeting on Libya and Egypt (Sept. 12, 2012) (C05447784; SCB0085910-12).

[76] Call Notes from Secretary's Call with Egyptian PM Kandil (Sept. 12, 2012) (C05561911).

On that same day, however, Ansar al-Sharia reportedly disavowed responsibility for the attacks, claiming that they were spontaneous protests against the video and its maker. The group reportedly posted a video on YouTube that praised the attacks in Benghazi, referencing the "American pastor who is known for his animosity to Islam and Muslims." It also reportedly stated:

> The Ansar al-Shari'ah Battalion did not participate in this popular uprising as an independent entity. ... Rather it was a spontaneous and popular uprising in response to what the West did.[77]

As these events unfolded, the Intelligence Community was making significant changes to the initial early morning assessment that "the presence of armed assailants from the incidents outset suggest that this was an intentional assault and not as escalation of the peaceful protests."[78] In fact, according to the Deputy CIA Director, this sentence "was not written by the analysts," but rather was "added after the analysts had finished their work and gone home for the night."[79] He explained:

> It was written by a senior CIA editor with expertise in military matters but no expertise in Libya or what had just happened in Benghazi. This editor added the sentence because she thought the early-morning update on the twelfth needed a bottom line. She never showed the sentence to the analysts; had she done so, they would have removed it. When the analysts came in the next morning, they complained vehemently about the edit.[80]

It was not until September 13 that the Intelligence Community issued its "first thorough, fully coordinated, assessment of what happened in Benghazi." The title of this assessment was: "Extremists Capitalized on Benghazi Protests." Although the full assessment remains classified, it contained the following now-unclassified analysis from the Intelligence Community:

- "We assess the attacks on Tuesday against the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi began spontaneously."
- "[T]he attacks began spontaneously following the protests at the U.S. embassy in Cairo."

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[77] Open Source Center, *Video: Ansar Al-Shari'ah Statement on US Consulate Attack in Benghazi* (Sept. 12, 2012) (online at www.opensource.gov/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_0_).

[78] Michael Morell, Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at www.c-span.org/video/?318648-1/benghazi-obama-administration).

[79] Michael Morell, *The Great War of Our Time: The CIA's Fight Against Terrorism—From al Qa'ida to ISIS* (2015).

[80] *Id.*

- "Extremists with ties to al-Qa'ida were involved in the attacks."[81]

This assessment was the basis for the talking points provided by the Intelligence Community to Congress and also passed along by others to Ambassador Susan Rice before her appearance on the Sunday talk shows later that week. Those talking points stated:

> The currently available information suggests that the demonstrations in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the US Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against the US diplomatic post in Benghazi and subsequently its annex. There are indications that extremists participated in the violent demonstrations.[82]

On September 14, Secretary Clinton spoke at a ceremony to honor those lost in the attacks in Benghazi, stating:

> This has been a difficult week for the State Department and for our country. We've seen the heavy assault on our post in Benghazi that took the lives of those brave men. We've seen rage and violence directed at American embassies over an awful internet video that we had nothing to do with. It is hard for the American people to make sense of that because it is senseless, and it is totally unacceptable.
>
> The people of Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Tunisia did not trade the tyranny of a dictator for the tyranny of a mob. Reasonable people and responsible leaders in these countries need to do everything they can to restore security and hold accountable those behind these violent acts. And we will, under the President's leadership, keep taking steps to protect our personnel around the world.[83]

On September 18, the Libyan officials provided their assessment of the video footage from security cameras just before the attack, but they did not provide the video itself. According to the Deputy CIA Director:

> It was not until 18 September, when CIA received the Libyan Government's assessment of video footage from the State Department facility's security cameras that showed the front of the facility just before the attack—with no sign of protesters—that it became clear that we needed to revisit our analysis. It is important to note that on 18 September,

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[81] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Written Statement of Michael Morell, Deputy Director of the CIA, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=1).

[82] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities In Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.congress.gov/113/crpt/srpt134/CRPT-113srpt134.pdf).

[83] Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, *Remarks at the Transfer of Remains Ceremony to Honor Those Lost in Attacks in Benghazi, Libya* (Sept. 14, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2012/09/197780.htm).

> the Libyans did not provide the video; they only provided their assessment of the video. Analysts refined their analysis, and on 22 September, CIA—in coordination with the Intelligence Community—published a joint piece with NCTC that assessed that the attacks were a deliberate assault by extremists influenced by events in Cairo, not that they grew spontaneously out of local protests.[84]

Once the video footage and FBI reporting from interviews of personnel on the ground in Benghazi during the attacks became available, the CIA changed its assessment. As explained in the bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

> "Once the video footage became available on September 18, 2012, two days after Ambassador Rice spoke, and FBI reporting from interviews with U.S. officials on the ground began to be published on September 22, 2012, CIA changed its judgment and made it clear in a WIRe that ran on September 24th that CIA now assessed that no protest had occurred outside the TMF."[85]

On September 28, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence issued a statement reflecting this revised assessment. It stated:

> In the immediate aftermath, there was information that led us to assess that the attack began spontaneously following protests earlier that day at our embassy in Cairo. We provided that initial assessment to Executive Branch officials and members of Congress, who used that information to discuss the attack publicly and provide updates as they became available. Throughout our investigation we continued to emphasize that information gathered was preliminary and evolving.
>
> As we learned more about the attack, we revised our initial assessment to reflect new information indicating that it was a deliberate and organized terrorist attack carried out by extremists. It remains unclear if any group or person exercised overall command and control of the attack, and if extremist group leaders directed their members to participate. However, we do assess that some of those involved were linked to groups affiliated with, or sympathetic to al-Qa'ida. We continue to make progress, but there remain many unanswered questions. As more information becomes available our analysis will

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[84] Written Statement of Michael Morell, Deputy Director, Central Intelligence Agency, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=1).

[85] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Investigative Report on the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 27, 2012* (Nov. 21, 2014) (online at http://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/Benghazi%20Report.pdf) (emphasis in original).

> continue to evolve and we will obtain a more complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding the terrorist attack.[86]

In June 2014, Ahmed Abu Khatallah was captured in Libya and brought to the United States to face prosecution. According to press reports, witnesses saw him "directing the swarming attackers who ultimately killed Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and three other Americans."[87] Press accounts also reported:

> On the day of the attack, Islamists in Cairo had staged a demonstration outside the United States Embassy there to protest an American-made online video mocking Islam, and the protest culminated in a breach of the embassy's walls—images that flashed through news coverage around the Arab world. As the attack in Benghazi was unfolding a few hours later, Mr. Abu Khattala told fellow Islamist fighters and others that the assault was retaliation for the same insulting video, according to people who heard him.[88]

According to the bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence more than a year ago: "Much of the early intelligence was conflicting and two years later, intelligence gaps remain." The report concluded: "To this day, significant intelligence gaps regarding the identities, affiliations and motivations of the attackers remain."[89]

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[86] Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Statement by the Director of Public Affairs for ODNI, Shawn Turner, on the Intelligence Related to the Terrorist Attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya* (Sept. 28, 2012) (online at www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/press-releases/96-press-releases-2012/731-statement-by-the-odni-s-director-of-public-affairs-on-intelligence-related-to-the-terrorist-attack-on-the-u-s-consulate-in-benghazi).

[87] *U.S. Captured Benghazi Suspect in Secret Raid*, Washington Post (June 17, 2014) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-captured-benghazi-suspect-in-secret-raid/2014/06/17/7ef8746e-f5cf-11e3-a3a5-42be35962a52_story.html).

[88] *Brazen Figure May Hold Key to Mysteries*, New York Times (June 17, 2014) (online at www.nytimes.com/2014/06/18/world/middleeast/apprehension-of-ahmed-abu-khattala-may-begin-to-answer-questions-on-assault.html?_r=0).

[89] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Investigative Report on the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Nov. 21, 2014) (online at http://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/Benghazi%20Report.pdf).

III. EXCERPTS FROM WITNESS INTERVIEWS

A. No evidence that Secretary Clinton ordered the military to stand down on the night of the attacks.

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

1. State Department Chief of Staff

The State Department Chief of Staff from 2009 until February 1, 2013, who was with the Secretary on the night of the attacks, had the following exchange:

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli?
A: I don't.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. Former Republican Congressman Howard Buck McKeon, the former chair of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?
A: I could not.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could've saved lives if the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[90]

2. Diplomatic Security Command Center Senior Watch Officer

A Senior Watch Officer in the Diplomatic Security Command Center from 2011 to 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down" and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that quote "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: No.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No.
Q: Do you have evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?
A: No.[91]

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[90] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

3. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No, ma'am, I would not have any access to information.
Q: It has been alleged —
A: — like that.
Q: It has —
A: — like that. I'm sorry.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second flighting [sic] plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that these those four individuals were, instead, ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. Former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quick it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to

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[91] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of DS Command Center Senior Watch Officer (Aug. 19, 2015).

them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No, ma'am.[92]

4. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," close quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down," close quote, on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has also been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on a second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place," close quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance at that location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote?

A: No.

Q: It has also been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

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[92] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (May 8, 2015).

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[93]

5. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," close quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down," close quote, on the nights of the attacks?

A: None.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: None.

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Q: It has further been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi but were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," close quote, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place," close quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. The Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: None.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's

[93] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 15, 2015).

conclusion?

A: None.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: None.[94]

6. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No, sir.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No, sir.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that there was no standdown order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion the House Armed Services Committee report that there was no standdown order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: None, sir.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that could have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard Buck McKeon, the former chairman the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, given where the troops were, how quickly things all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No, sir.

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[94] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 26, 2015).

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have been -- that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy them?
A: Not that I'm aware of, sir.[95]

7. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down. And this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: Nope.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No, ma'am.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead, ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that there was no standdown order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no standdown order issued to the U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we could." Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to

[95] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 19, 2015).

them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No, ma'am.[96]

8. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated, quote, "that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi on the night of the attacks. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: I don't.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli, to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the

[96] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 24, 2015).

Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?
A: No.[97]

9. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: So it has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that quote "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down" end quote and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that quote "There was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." End quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: No.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated quote "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." End quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?
A: No.[98]

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[97] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 13, 2015).

10. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down. And this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, concluded a review of the attacks after which he stated, Given where the troops were, how quickly that things all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No, sir.[99]

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[98] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Aug. 21, 2015).

[99] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 13, 2015).

11. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter and spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. Do you any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No. [100]

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[100] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 9, 2015).

12. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton attempted to block military action on the night of the attacks. One congressman speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi." Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down" on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at MC [Embassy] Tripoli on the night of the attacks, who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi, were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place" to Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. The Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand-down order" issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It's been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard Buck McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: And do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that Pentagon leadership essentially decided not to deploy?

A: No.[101]

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[101] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 12, 2015).

13. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011-2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote. And this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: I have no information on that.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: I have no information on that.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to, quote, stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote?
A: I don't have any information on that.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?
A: I don't have any information on that.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not the [to] deploy?
A: I don't have any information on that.[102]

[102] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 3, 2015).

14. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It's been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down" on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place," end quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance at their current location. The Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "There was no stand down-order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No. [103]

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[103] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 24, 2015).

15. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It's been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel of Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that these four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It's been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[104]

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[104] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 21, 2015).

16. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," close quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order – any kind of order – to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has further been alleged that a team of four military personnel in Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," close quote, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were ordered to, quote, "remain in place," close quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to the U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It has been further alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[105]

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[105] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 26, 2015).

17. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It's been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon [Panetta] to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not seconding more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down" on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: I can't speak to any orders Secretary Clinton has mentioned or given in any regard, relation to anything.

Q: So no evidence or information then?

A: No evidence or information to that or any other anything.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane of Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered, quote, "to remain in place," end quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi"?

A: No.

Q: The last one. It's been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard Buck McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: I mean, no.

Q: Okay. Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: I have no information related to Pentagon capabilities or what their leadership as

discussing.[106]

18. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: So the first is, it's been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon" – Leon Panetta – "to stand down," close quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Agent [REDACTED], do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," close quote. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place," close quote, in Tripoli in order to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the flight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard Buck McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to

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[106] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 19, 2015).

them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[107]

19. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: So the first allegation relates to whether Secretary Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Mr. [REDACTED], do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: I have no idea –

Q: Okay. That's fine.

A: – because I wasn't at the Department anymore.

Q: Okay.

Q: Understood. But do you have any evidence that that occurred?

A: No. No.

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Q: We'll turn to the next allegation, which relates to a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join in the fight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence that the House Armed Services Committee's conclusion that there was no stand-down order is accurate?

A: I have no knowledge of that.

Q: The first rescue team was sent from Tripoli to Benghazi within 45 minutes of receiving notice of the initial attack at the State Department facility in Benghazi. Some have questioned, however, whether a second team of four military personnel should have also been sent. Some have alleged that those four military personnel were ordered to stand down. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were ordered to, quote, "remain in place," close quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance there. Do you have any evidence that military officials who told Congress that the individuals were ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance were incorrect or misrepresenting the facts?

A: I have no knowledge of that DOD activity.

Q: Okay. Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon in fact ordered the four

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[107] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 12, 2015).

military personnel in Tripoli to stand down rather than remain in place to provide security and medical assistance in Tripoli on the night of the attacks?

A: I have no knowledge on the DOD activity. [108]

20. Libya Post Management Officer

The Post Management Officer for Libya from 2011 through June 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One congressman has speculated that "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down." This resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to "stand down" on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of that attacks were considering flying on a second plane to Benghazi were ordered by the superiors to stand down, meaning see-saw operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff reported issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," closed quote.

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," closed quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

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[108] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 10, 2015).

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[109]

21. Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer

A Communications Officer for the State Department Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from the fall of 2008 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down," end quote, on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personal in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, and I quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly this thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

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[109] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Libya Post Management Officer (July 23, 2015).

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[110]

22. U.S. Ambassador to Libya

The U.S. Ambassador to Libya from December 2008 until May 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

***

Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considered flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no standdown ordered issued to U.S. Military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no standdown order issued to U.S. Military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the might [fight] in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chair of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

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[110] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer (July 29, 2015).

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decide [decided] not to deploy?
A: No.[111]

23. U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN

The U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2010 until July 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: I have no evidence.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: I do not have any evidence.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: I do not.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" P. McKeon, the former Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?
A: I do not.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to

[111] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Ambassador (July 31, 2015).

them on the night of the attack that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: I do not.[112]

24. U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya

The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya from 2009 until June 15, 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, "Secretary Clinton told Leon to quote "stand down." Close quote. And this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to "stand down" on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that, Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks were considering flying on a second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to quote "stand down." Close quote. Meaning cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to quote "remain in place" close quote in Tripoli to provide security, medical assistance in their current location. Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that quote "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." Close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no -- let me start over. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that quote "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi"? Close quote.

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However former Republican Congressman Howard 'Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote "given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it all dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." Close quote. Do you have any evidence do contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

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[112] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 11, 2015).

A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?
A: No.[113]

25. Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

The Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2011 until September 2014 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the Republican House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: No.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No.

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[113] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya (Aug. 12, 2015).

Q: Do you have any evidence of that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?
A: No.[114]

26. Contracting Officer, Office of Acquisitions

A Contracting Officer in the State Department Office of Acquisitions starting in May of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: No.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to

[114] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 25, 2015).

them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[115]

27. Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management

The Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management who served from spring of 2008 until November of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attack. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attack?

A: I do not.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attack?

A: I do not.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," unquote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the things all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," unquote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to

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[115] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Office of Acquisitions Contracting Officer (Aug. 27, 2015).

them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[116]

28. Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division

The Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division from fall of 2014 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attack. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attack who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi? Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A: No.

Q: And finally, it has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard Buck McKeon, former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attack after which he stated, "given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did." Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attack that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon

[116] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management (June 30, 2015).

leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?
A: No.[117]

29. Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

The spokesperson in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from 2011 through 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?
A: No.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

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[117] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division (June 30, 2015).

A: No.[118]

30. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: First, it has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, and this resulted in the defense department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: I do not.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: I do not.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks were considering flying on second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were ordered to, quote, "remain in place," close quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of House Armed Services Committee that there was, quote, "no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote?
A: I do not.
Q: Almost there.
A: Okay.
Q: It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote, "given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did" close quote. Do you any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?
A: I don't.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that Pentagon

[118] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (Oct. 9, 2015).

leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?
A: I don't.[119]

31. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: First, it's been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to 'stand down,'" closed quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?
A: I do not.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?
A: No. I don't.

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Q: It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks were considering flying on a second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," close quote, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place," closed quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to the U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," closed quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," closed quote?
A: No.
Q: Last one. It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," closed quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?
A: No. I do not.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but the Pentagon

[119] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter A (Oct. 9, 2015).

leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A: No.[120]

[120] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter B (Oct. 9, 2015).

B. No evidence that Secretary Clinton personally approved or ordered a reduction of security in Benghazi prior to the attacks.

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

1. State Department Chief of Staff

The State Department Chief of Staff from 2009 until February 1, 2013 had the following exchange:

> Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
> A: No.
> Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
> A: No.[121]

2. U.S. Ambassador to Libya

The U.S. Ambassador to Libya from December 2008 until May 2012 had the following exchange:

> Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
> A: No.
> Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
> A: No.[122]

3. U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya

The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya from 2009 until June 15, 2012 had the following exchange:

> Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable

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[121] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

[122] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Ambassador (July 31, 2015).

denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[123]

4. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact-checker evaluated this claim and gave it Four Pinocchio's, its highest award for false claims. Nonetheless, this allegation has persisted. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No, ma'am.[124]

5. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It's also been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources in Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[125]

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[123] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya (Aug. 12, 2015).

[124] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (May 8, 2015).

[125] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 15, 2015).

6. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: None.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: None.[126]

7. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and give it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: Sorry, sir. I got thrown over the Pinocchios.
[Agency Counsel] Do you want him to repeat the allegation?
[Witness] I'm sorry. I just -- I got lost in that.
[Staff Counsel]
Q: The Pinocchios are confusing, yeah. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No, sir.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No, sir.[127]

8. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable

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[126] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 26, 2015).

[127] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 19, 2015).

denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios. That is the highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No, ma'am.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instructions on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No, ma'am.[128]

9. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[129]

10. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it "Four Pinocchio's," its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: I don't know.

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qaddafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in Spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qaddafi to his own people in order to garner support

[128] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 24, 2015).

[129] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 13, 2015).

for military operations in Libya in Spring 2011?

A: I don't know, I don't know, I guess to all of them. I don't have any evidence, no. And I don't know of anything.

Q: I am just going to go back. And I understand that, but we just have to go through the entire script. So I am going to ask you the question that I asked just a couple minutes ago, just to make sure we have it clear for the record, on whether or not you have evidence with respect to this particular allegation.

A: Okay.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[130]

11. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence in Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[131]

12. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter and spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April of 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[132]

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[130] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Aug. 21, 2015).

[131] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 13, 2015).

13. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it, quote, "four Pinocchios," end quote, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[133]

14. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011-2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it, quote, "Four Pinocchios," end quote, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: I don't have any information on that.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on the day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: Could you repeat that, please?
Q: Sure. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: I don't have any information on that.[134]

15. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it, quote, "four Pinocchios," end quote, its highest award for

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[132] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 9, 2015).

[133] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 12, 2015).

[134] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 3, 2015).

false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[135]

16. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It's been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it, quote, "Four Pinocchios," it's highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: Not that I know of, no.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[136]

17. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[137]

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[135] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 24, 2015).

[136] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 21, 2015).

[137] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 26, 2015).

18. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it, quote, "four Pinocchios," its highest award for false claims. Again, do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: I have no recollection of anything Secretary Clinton -- nothing. No.
Q: No, okay. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[138]

19. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who also served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: Okay. Were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information for the ARB?
A: No.

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Q: It's also been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[139]

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[138] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 19, 2015).

[139] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 12, 2015).

20. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: We'll move now to the next allegation, and this relates to the Secretary's personal involvement in security decisions related to Libya. Some have alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to the post in Benghazi. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for these claims. And, Mr. [REDACTED], do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: I have no knowledge of that.
Q: So you have no evidence. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: I have no evidence of that.[140]

21. Libya Post Management Officer

The Post Management Officer for Libya from 2011 through June 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable to denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally assigned in April of 2012 a cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: I have no evidence that she personally signed a cable in April of 2012.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[141]

22. Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer

A Communications Officer for the State Department Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from the fall of 2008 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It is has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012

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[140] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 10, 2015).

[141] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Libya Post Management Officer (July 23, 2015).

cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[142]

23. U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN

The U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2010 until July 2014 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it Four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: I do not.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: I do not.[143]

24. Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

The Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2011 until September 2014 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it, quote, "Four Pinocchios," its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: No.[144]

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[142] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer (July 29, 2015).

[143] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 11, 2015).

[144] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 25, 2015).

25. Diplomatic Security Command Center Senior Watch Officer

A Senior Watch Officer in the Diplomatic Security Command Center from 2011 to 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[145]

26. Contracting Officer, Office of Acquisitions

A Contracting Officer in the State Department Office of Acquisitions starting in May of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[146]

27. Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management

The Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management who served from spring of 2008 until November of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.

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[145] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of DS Command Center Senior Watch Officer (Aug. 19, 2015).

[146] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Office of Acquisitions Contracting Officer (Aug. 27, 2015).

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[147]

28. Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division

The Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division from fall of 2014 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it "4 Pinocchios," its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[148]

29. Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

The spokesperson in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from 2011 through 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security in Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?
A: No.[149]

30. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: Next. It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012

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[147] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management (June 30, 2015).

[148] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division (June 30, 2015).

[149] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (Oct. 9, 2015).

cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it Four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: I do not.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A: I do not.[150]

31. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated the claim and gave it Four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources at Benghazi?

A: No, I don't.[151]

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[150] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter A (Oct. 9, 2015).

[151] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter B (Oct. 9, 2015).

C. No evidence that Secretary Clinton pressed the United States into supporting the United Nations campaign in Libya under false pretenses.

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

1. U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN

The U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2010 until July 2014 had the following exchange:

> Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?
> A: I do not.[152]

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> Q: What was your sense, based on the information you had at the time, of the risk Colonel Qadhafi posed to the Libyan civilian population? If you can just unpack that a little bit as to what information did you have?
> A: My perception was that he was going after them very, very -- you know, with a very, very heavy hand. We were getting reports of some of the murders, the killings. He was calling them cockroaches and rats and so forth. And we were getting -- we had some reports from the region about what was happening internally, reports from Libyans themselves about what was happening, and it seemed very, very dire, my perception.
> Q: We've heard the situation in Libya at the time you described as a potential human catastrophe.
> A: Uh-huh, potential genocide.
> Q: Potential genocide?
> A: Uh-huh.
> Q: Did you share that concern? I mean, was this a fairly common-held perception at the time within the U.N. for yourself personally?
> A: It was certainly my perception that we were on the brink of thousands of thousands being murdered. Thousands.[153]

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[152] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 11, 2015).

[153] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 11, 2015).

2. U.S. Ambassador to Libya

The U.S. Ambassador to Libya from December 2008 until May 2012 had the following exchange:

> Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?
>
> A: No.[154]

3. U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya

The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya from 2009 until June 15, 2012 had the following exchange:

> Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support from military operations in Libya in spring of 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support from military operation in Libya in spring of 2011?
>
> A: No.[155]

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> Q: The term "genocide" has been used to describe what possibly could have happened had Qadhafi moved on Benghazi I believe in the February-March 2011 timeframe. Is that something that you were tracking at all, back in Washington, back at Main State?
>
> A: In anticipation of what he was going to do?
>
> Q: Yes.
>
> A: Certainly, I was watching the military situation on the ground, yes.
>
> Q: Okay. And was that a concern that you had, what might happen if Qadhafi moved on Benghazi?
>
> A: I was concerned that a lot of people would die, yes. He was a rather ruthless character.[156]

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[154] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Ambassador (July 31, 2015).

[155] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya (Aug. 12, 2015).

[156] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya (Aug. 12, 2015).

4. State Department Chief of Staff

The State Department Chief of Staff from 2009 until February 1, 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support from military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011?
A: No.[157]

5. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has further been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring of 2011?
A: No.[158]

6. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It's been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for the military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to some people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?
A: No.[159]

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[157] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

[158] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 26, 2015).

[159] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 19, 2015).

7. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who also served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has also been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring of 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in 2011?

A: No.[160]

8. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: We'll turn to the next allegation, and this relates to Secretary Clinton's role in the March 2011 run-up to U.S. military operations in Libya, then called Operation Odyssey Dawn, which was pursuant to a United Nations Security Council resolution, as well as the follow-on mission led by NATO called Operation Unified Protector. Recently, the Washington Times has raised an allegation that, quote, "U.S. intelligence did not support the story that Mrs. Clinton used to sell the war in Libya, namely that there was an imminent danger of genocide to be carried out by the Qadhafi regime," close quote. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011?

A: I have no idea.

Q: So you have no evidence?

A: I have no knowledge of it.

Q: Okay. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton intentionally exaggerated the risk that Muammar Qadhafi, the longtime Libyan dictator, presented to his own people so that she could justify military intervention in Libya?

A: I have no knowledge of that.[161]

9. Libya Post Management Officer

The Post Management Officer for Libya from 2011 through June 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton has misrepresented or fabricated

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[160] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 12, 2015).

[161] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 10, 2015).

intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner the course of military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support from military operations in Libya in spring of 2011?

A: No.[162]

10. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No, ma'am. I was a student in Cairo, Egypt.[163]

11. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[164]

12. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner

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[162] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Libya Post Management Officer (July 23, 2015).

[163] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (May 8, 2015).

[164] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 15, 2015).

support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: None.[165]

13. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No, sir.[166]

14. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No, ma'am.[167]

15. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any

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[165] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 26, 2015).

[166] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 19, 2015).

[167] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 24, 2015).

evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[168]

16. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qaddafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in Spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qaddafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in Spring 2011?

A: I don't know, I don't know, I guess to all of them. I don't have any evidence, no. And I don't know of anything.[169]

17. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[170]

18. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter and spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any

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[168] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 13, 2015).

[169] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Aug. 21, 2015).

[170] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 13, 2015).

evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[171]

19. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011?

A: No.[172]

20. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011-2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: I don't have any information on that.[173]

21. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the

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[171] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 9, 2015).

[172] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 12, 2015).

[173] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 3, 2015).

risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[174]

22. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[175]

23. Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer

A Communications Officer for the State Department Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from the fall of 2008 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people, nor to garnish support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[176]

24. Diplomatic Security Command Center Senior Watch Officer

A Senior Watch Officer in the Diplomatic Security Command Center from 2011 to 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the

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[174] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 24, 2015).

[175] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 21, 2015).

[176] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer (July 29, 2015).

risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring of 2011?

A: No.[177]

25. Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

The Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2011 until September 2014 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[178]

26. Contracting Officer, Office of Acquisitions

A Contracting Officer in the State Department Office of Acquisitions starting in May of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[179]

27. Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management

The Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management who served from spring of 2008 until November of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the

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[177] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of DS Command Center Senior Watch Officer (Aug. 19, 2015).

[178] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 25, 2015).

[179] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Office of Acquisitions Contracting Officer (Aug. 27, 2015).

risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[180]

28. Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division

The Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division from fall of 2014 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A: No.[181]

29. Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

The spokesperson in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from 2011 through 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring of 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011?

A: No.[182]

30. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military

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[180] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management (June 30, 2015).

[181] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division (June 30, 2015).

[182] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (Oct. 9, 2015).

operations in Libya in spring 2011?
A: I do not.[183]

31. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011.Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011?
A: No, I don't. And I hadn't heard that one.[184]

[183] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter A (Oct. 9, 2015).

[184] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter B (Oct. 9, 2015).

D. No evidence that Secretary Clinton or her aides oversaw an operation at the State Department to destroy or scrub embarrassing documents.

None of the 54 individuals that were interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

1. State Department Chief of Staff

The State Department Chief of Staff Cheryl Mills, who was specifically identified by Mr. Maxwell as having had some part in this alleged activity, fully denied all of Mr. Maxwell's charges. She explained that she had not had any interaction with Mr. Maxwell about documents, and further explained that it would have been impossible for someone in the document review process to have removed or scrubbed a document from the production to the ARB or Congress because the A Bureau kept a separate, complete copy of the documents. She had the following exchange:

> Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
> A: I don't.
> Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
> A: I don't.
> Q: Let me ask you this question for documents provided to Congress: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
> A: I do not.[185]

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> Q: There have been reports out there that an individual by the name of Ray Maxwell, at some point between September and December 2012, was in a room in the State Department where Benghazi documents were being assembled or reviewed or stored or something like that and that you had an encounter with him. Did that occur?
> A: No.
> Q: None of that is true?
> A: Correct.
> Q: You never had an encounter with Ray Maxwell?
> A: Not of the kind he described –
> Q: Okay.

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[185] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

A: -- or any kind around Benghazi.
Q: Was it regarding -- did you encounter him regarding documents for some other subject?
A: No.[186]

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Q: In a broad-brush kind of way, in your role, whether it be, you know, helping to collect or helping to review, did you in any way, yourself, remove any document that was relevant to or related to the attacks in Benghazi and destroy that or prevent it from getting to the Accountability Review Board or Congress or to the Secretary or whoever had asked you for the information?
A: I did not.[187]

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Q: And, you know, setting aside this particular instance and whether there was a basement review process going on, did you ever give anyone any instruction that they should pull out anything that might put anybody in the NEA front office or the seventh floor in a bad light?
A: I did not.
Q: Did you ever instruct anyone to pull out documents that might put Secretary Clinton -- paint her in a bad light?
A: I did not.
Q: Did you instruct anyone to in any way kind of remove or destroy or scrub documents that might not reveal the full and complete story about what happened in Benghazi?
A: I did not.
Q: Did anyone ever come to you -- you were kind of the point person for the Department on making a lot of these wheels go around. Did anyone come to you at the time or any time after and express concern to you internally that there had been efforts, that there had been orders to flag, remove, scrub, destroy documents that might look damaging to the State Department?
A: No, they did not. And the A Bureau keeps a copy of everything, so they are the repository that holds everything. So there are only then copies made for review. So, no, that didn't happen, and the complete repository always stayed with the A Bureau. It never left.
Q: So if anyone were going to propose or think about doing this, it's a pretty high-risk gambit, because ultimately the A Bureau is going to have the master copy –
A: That's exactly right.

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[186] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

[187] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

Q: -- and if documents are scrubbed, there's going to be an evidentiary trail. Is that accurate?
A: Correct.[188]

2. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: Okay. And at the time you were interviewed, were you able to be fully forthcoming with the ARB about your experience in Benghazi?
A: Yes, ma'am.
Q: Did you withhold any information about your experience at all?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Were you ever instructed by anyone at the State Department not to be fully forthcoming with the Accountability Review Board?
A: No, ma'am.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the Accountability Review Board?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else to -- at the State Department, to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Let me ask these questions for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No, ma'am.[189]

3. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: There have been some allegations with regard to the ARB and the ARB process that it either wasn't thorough enough, or it wasn't independent enough, or that

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[188] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

[189] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (May 8, 2015).

individuals were asked not to share all of the information they had. Did anyone ever indicate to you that you should withhold information from the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Did anyone ever give you any instructions about what you should say to the ARB?

A: No.[190]

4. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No.[191]

5. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: There have been various accusations about the ARB, the process employed. I'd just like to ask you, were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?

A: Never.

Q: Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?

A: Never. Quite to the contrary.

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[190] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 6, 2015).

[191] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 15, 2015).

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: None.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: None.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: None.[192]

6. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: Okay. And you felt as if you were fully forthcoming with the ARB?
A: Yes, I was.
Q: And you didn't withhold any information from the ARB?
A: None at all.
Q: And did you ever withhold any information from Congress in connection with this attack in Benghazi?
A: No.
Q: At any point, Agent [REDACTED], were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No, sir.
Q: And you were never asked or ordered not to provide information to Congress at any point. Is that right?
A: No, sir.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No evidence, sir.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the

[192] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 26, 2015).

materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: Not that I'm aware of, sir.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No, sir.[193]

7. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No, ma'am.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No, ma'am.[194]

8. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: Were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?
A: No.

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[193] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 19, 2015).

[194] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 24, 2015).

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[195]

9. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: With respect to the ARB, were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: And were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?
A: No.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the accountability review board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask you these questions also for the documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[196]

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[195] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 13, 2015).

10. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: And were you ever asked or ordered at any time not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No, sir.
Q: And were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or even destroy information from the ARB?
A: No, sir.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No. [197]

11. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter and spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: So there are a couple of just very brief allegations that have been put out there with respect to the ARB that I want to ask you about –
A: Okay.
Q: – and just dispense with. Were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No.

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[196] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Aug. 21, 2015).

[197] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 13, 2015).

Q: Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?
A: No.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that, in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No. [198]

12. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: Were you ever asked or ordered to not provide information to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?
A: No.

***

Q: Concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or, quote, "scrubbed" damaging documents from materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

[198] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 9, 2015).

A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or, quote, "scrubbed" damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[199]

13. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011-2012 had the following exchange:

Q: Were you ever asked or ordered to not provide information to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Were you asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from ARB?
A: No.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or, quote-unquote, "scrubbed," damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: I don't have any information on that.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: I don't have any information on that.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: I don't have information on that.[200]

14. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: Did anyone ask you or order you not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: And were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the

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[199] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 12, 2015).

[200] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 3, 2015).

ARB?
A: No.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or, quote, "scrubbed" damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or, quote, "scrubbed" damaging documents from the materials provided that were to Congress?
A: No.[201]

15. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: Now, I know after the September 11, 2012, attacks, as you were discussing earlier, there was an Accountability Review Board that was convened. I'm just going to ask you a couple of questions regarding that board. Were you ever asked or ordered to not provide information?
A: To not provide?
Q: To not provide information to the ARB.
A: No.
Q: Okay. Were you ever asked to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?
A: No.

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Q: Concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone

[201] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 24, 2015).

else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: And let me ask these questions as for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No.[202]

16. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board that damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone in the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone in the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No.[203]

17. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: Okay. A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from materials that were provided to ARB?

A: I was never asked and have not been – have no knowledge of anything along those lines.

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[202] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 21, 2015).

[203] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 26, 2015).

Q: Okay. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[204]

18. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who also served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that, in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed from that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[205]

19. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: Were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?
A: No. I had no – I had no interaction at all with the ARB, no.
Q: Okay. Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?
A: No.

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[204] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 19, 2015).

[205] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 12, 2015).

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Q: The next allegation relates to the State Department's cooperation with the Accountability Review Board. According to a September 15, 2014, article entitled "Benghazi Bombshell: Clinton State Department Official Reveals Details of Alleged Document Review" that appeared on the Web site The Daily Signal, quote, "Hillary Clinton confidants were part of an operation to separate damaging documents before they were turned over to the Accountability Review Board," close quote. The article further reports that former State Department Deputy Assistant Secretary Ray Maxwell, quote, "couldn't help but wonder if the ARB, perhaps unknowingly, had received from his bureau a scrubbed set of documents with the most damaging material missing," close quote. Do you have any evidence that Hillary Clinton confidants, such as Cheryl Mills or Jake Sullivan, which are both named in the article, were part of an operation to remove or scrub damaging documents before they were turned over to the ARB?

A: I have no knowledge. I wasn't there.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No knowledge. I wasn't there.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No knowledge. I wasn't there.

Q: Okay. And then we will again ask these questions for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No knowledge that any documents were altered.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No knowledge of that.[206]

20. Libya Post Management Officer

The Post Management Officer for Libya from 2011 through June 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: So I would like to ask, were you able to be fully forthcoming with the ARB?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you withhold any information about the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Were you ever under any pressure from anyone to withhold information from the ARB?

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[206] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 10, 2015).

A: No.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No.

Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No.[207]

21. Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer

A Communications Officer for the State Department Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from the fall of 2008 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No.[208]

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[207] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Libya Post Management Officer (July 23, 2015).

[208] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer (July 29, 2015).

22. U.S. Ambassador to Libya

The U.S. Ambassador to Libya from December 2008 until May 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: And did you feel that you could be fully forthcoming with the ARB about your experience in Libya?
A: Yes.
Q: Did you withhold any information from what you conveyed to the ARB about your time there?
A: Not to my recollection.
Q: And were you under pressure from anyone?
A: No.
Q: To --
[Agency Counsel]: Let her finish.
[Witness] I'm sorry.
[Staff Counsel]:
Q: Were you under pressure from anyone to withhold information or convey facts in any particular way when you spoke with the ARB?
A: No.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[209]

23. U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN

The U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2010 until July 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have

[209] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Ambassador (July 31, 2015).

been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: I do not.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: I do not. Sorry.

Q: Let me ask these questions for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A: I do not.[210]

24. U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya

The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya from 2009 until June 15, 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: And your participation in that. I'd just like to ask a couple of questions about your participation with the ARB. Just first did you withhold any information from the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Okay. Were you ever under any pressure from anyone to withhold information from the ARB?

A: No.

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Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing document to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone of the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A: No.

Q: Let me ask you these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone in the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A: No.[211]

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[210] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 11, 2015).

25. Diplomatic Security Command Center Senior Watch Officer

A Senior Watch Officer in the Diplomatic Security Command Center from 2011 to 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone in the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[212]

26. Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

The Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2011 until September 2014 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[213]

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[211] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Chief of Mission in Libya (Aug. 12, 2015).

[212] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of DS Command Center Senior Watch Officer (Aug. 19, 2015).

[213] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 25, 2015).

27. Contracting Officer, Office of Acquisitions

A Contracting Officer in the State Department Office of Acquisitions starting in May of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[214]

28. Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management

The Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management who served from spring of 2008 until November of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask you these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[215]

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[214] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Office of Acquisitions Contracting Officer (Aug. 27, 2015).

[215] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management (June 30, 2015).

29. Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division

The Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division from fall of 2014 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[216]

30. Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

The spokesperson in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from 2011 through 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: A concern has been raised by one individual that, in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the Accountability Review Board?
A: No, I do not.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No, I do not.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No, I do not.[217]

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[216] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division (June 30, 2015).

[217] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (Oct. 9, 2015).

31. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: Concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: I don't.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed to anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: I don't.
Q: Let me ask these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: I do not.[218]

32. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: Concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials or provided to the ARB?
A: No. I don't.
Q: Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed to anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging document from the materials that were provided to the ARB?
A: No.
Q: Let me ask you questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?
A: No.[219]

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[218] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter A (Oct. 9, 2015).

[219] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter B (Oct. 9, 2015).

E. No evidence that Secretary Clinton or any other U.S. official directed or authorized the U.S. Mission in Benghazi to transfer weapons from Libya to another country.

None of the 54 individuals interviewed by the Select Committee identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against Secretary Clinton.

1. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

> Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or they are countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?
> A: No, ma'am.
> Q: Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?
> A: No, ma'am.[220]

2. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

> Q: It has also been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?
> A: No.
> Q: Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?
> A: No.[221]

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[220] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (May 8, 2015).

[221] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 15, 2015).

3. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the summer and fall of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: None.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: None. [222]

4. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found no support for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: I don't know anything about that, sir.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: I don't have any information about that either, sir.[223]

5. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found no support

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[222] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 26, 2015).

[223] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 19, 2015).

for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No, ma'am.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No, ma'am.[224]

6. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the spring and summer of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation." Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapon transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[225]

7. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that quote "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria" end quote and that they found quote "no support for this allegation." End quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[226]

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[224] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 24, 2015).

[225] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 13, 2015).

[226] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Aug. 21, 2015).

8. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found no support for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[227]

9. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter and spring of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria, and they found no support for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[228]

10. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the winter of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the

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[227] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 13, 2015).

[228] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Apr. 9, 2015).

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[229]

11. Principal Officer

The Principal Officer who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011-2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels to or other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to the contrary to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: I don't have any information on that.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: I don't have any information on that.[230]

12. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall and winter of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

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[229] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Mar. 12, 2015).

[230] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Principal Officer (Mar. 3, 2015).

A: No.[231]

13. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the fall of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?
A: No.[232]

14. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has also been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and they found that, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report findings that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?
A: No.[233]

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[231] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 24, 2015).

[232] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (May 21, 2015).

[233] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 26, 2015).

15. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It's been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan support finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[234]

16. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who also served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[235]

17. Diplomatic Security Agent

A diplomatic security agent who served in Benghazi in the spring of 2011 had the following exchange:

Q: We'll turn to the next allegation, which relates to speculation about the illegal transfer of weapons from Libya to Syria. Some have questioned whether the U.S. mission in Benghazi was transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to any

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[234] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 19, 2015).

[235] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 12, 2015).

other countries, including Turkey. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and that, quote, "eyewitness testimony and thousands of pages of CIAs cables and emails that the committee reviewed provide no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: I have no knowledge of any of that.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or any other country?

A: No knowledge of that.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. personnel in Benghazi were involved in the unlawful transfer of weapons to Syria, to Turkey, or to any other country?

A: I have no knowledge of that.[236]

18. Libya Post Management Officer

The Post Management Officer for Libya from 2011 through June 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels for other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria" closed quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," closed quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapon transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[237]

19. Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer

A Communications Officer for the State Department Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from the fall of 2008 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and they

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[236] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Diplomatic Security Agent (Feb. 10, 2015).

[237] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Libya Post Management Officer (July 23, 2015).

found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[238]

20. U.S. Ambassador to Libya

The U.S. Ambassador to Libya from December 2008 until May 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. The bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found no support for this allegation." Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[239]

21. U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN

The U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2010 until July 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: I do not.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: I do not.[240]

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[238] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Near Eastern Affairs Communications Officer (July 29, 2015).

[239] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Ambassador (July 31, 2015).

[240] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 11, 2015).

22. U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya

The U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya from 2009 until June 15, 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. Bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria." Close quote and that they found quote "no support for this allegation." Close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[241]

23. Diplomatic Security Command Center Senior Watch Officer

A Senior Watch Officer in the Diplomatic Security Command Center from 2011 to 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select on Intelligence found that quote the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found quote no support for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[242]

24. Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations

The Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations from July 2011 until September 2014 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA

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[241] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission in Libya (Aug. 12, 2015).

[242] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of DS Command Center Senior Watch Officer (Aug. 19, 2015).

was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfer from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[243]

25. Contracting Officer, Office of Acquisitions

A Contracting Officer in the State Department Office of Acquisitions starting in May of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[244]

26. State Department Chief of Staff

The State Department Chief of Staff from 2009 until February 1, 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found no support for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: I do not have any such information.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: I do not.[245]

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[243] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Deputy to the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations (Aug. 25, 2015).

[244] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Office of Acquisitions Contracting Officer (Aug. 27, 2015).

[245] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of State Department Chief of Staff (Sept. 3, 2015).

27. Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management

The Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management who served from spring of 2008 until November of 2012 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found no support for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?
A: Could you just read that again? My mind wandered a little bit.
Q: Sure. I won't take it personally.
A: Okay.
Q: Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?
A: No.[246]

28. Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division

The Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division from fall of 2014 to the present had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria" and they found no support for this allegation. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?
A: No.
Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?
A: No.[247]

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[246] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Executive Secretariat Director of Information Resources Management (June 30, 2015).

[247] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Chief of the Records and Archives Management Division (June 30, 2015).

29. Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs

The spokesperson in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs from 2011 through 2013 had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No.

Q: Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No.[248]

30. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: I do not.

Q: Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or any other foreign country?

A: I do not.[249]

31. Speechwriter for Secretary Clinton

A speechwriter for Secretary Clinton had the following exchange:

Q: It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syrian," close quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote. Do you

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[248] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of the Spokesperson for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (Oct. 9, 2015).

[249] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter A (Oct. 9, 2015).

have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A: No. I don't.[250]

[250] House Select Committee on Benghazi, Interview of Secretary Clinton Speechwriter B (Oct. 9, 2015).

Mr. CUMMINGS. What is so telling is that we issued virtually the same report a year ago—the same report.

When we first joined the select committee, I asked my staff to put together a complete report and database setting forth the questions that have been asked about the attacks and all of the answers that were provided in the eight previous investigations.

I ask that this report also be included in the record, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

Benghazi on the Record: Asked and Answered

Compendium of Investigative Resources

Prepared at the request of
Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member
The Select Committee on Benghazi
U.S. House of Representatives

September 2014

democrats.benghazi.house.gov

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On September 11 and 12, 2012, the U.S. Special Mission Compound in Benghazi, Libya and a nearby annex were attacked, killing four Americans—Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods. Several others were seriously wounded, while others were successfully evacuated to safety.

On May 8, 2014, the House of Representatives adopted H. Res. 567, establishing the Select Committee on Benghazi. House Speaker John Boehner explained that a Select Committee was needed because "there are so many unanswered questions" about the attacks. Specifically, he said there were "three areas" the Select Committee would investigate:

- "The events leading up to 9/11, 2012, the requests—the number of requests for more security and why it was not provided."
- "The events of the night of September 11, 2012, what happened, why there was no response."
- "Thirdly, why did the White House describe this in a way, I believe, they knew was false."

Similarly, Rep. Trey Gowdy, who was appointed by Speaker Boehner as the Chairman of the new Select Committee, identified the top questions he believed the Select Committee should answer:

- "If you ask me personally what's number one to me, I would like to know why we, number one, were still in Benghazi when everyone else had pulled out."
- "Number two, why was our security footprint so light despite the repeated requests for more security."

These and many other questions have already been answered. An independent Accountability Review Board and seven different congressional committees interviewed dozens of witnesses, reviewed tens of thousands of pages of documents, conducted numerous interviews and briefings, and held multiple hearings. These investigative bodies have issued nine separate classified and unclassified reports.

* * *

Benghazi on the Record was prepared at the request of Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, the Ranking Member of the Select Committee on Benghazi, to collect—in one place—as much information as possible regarding questions that have already been asked and answered about the attacks in Benghazi.

It includes an interactive ***Asked and Answered Database*** of more than 150 questions and statements by Members of Congress that have been addressed in previous investigative reports,

interviews, and hearings. This database includes links to original sources, and it is searchable by keyword, date, and Member of Congress.

It also includes this detailed ***Compendium of Investigative Resources*** that addresses each question in greater detail based on the wide range of already public investigative resources, including reports, interview transcripts, and hearing testimony.

For example, on the specific questions posed by Speaker Boehner and Chairman Gowdy, this compendium includes the following investigative resources:

- ***Inadequate Security in Benghazi:*** On December 18, 2012, the independent Accountability Review Board chaired by Ambassador Thomas Pickering and Admiral Michael Mullen, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, concluded that inadequate security in Benghazi resulted from "[s]ystemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department." The report concluded: "Staffing was at times woefully insufficient considering post's security posture and high risk, high threat environment. ... As it became clear that DS [Diplomatic Security] would not provide a steady complement of five TDY [temporary duty assignment] DS agents to Benghazi, expectations on the ground were lowered by the daunting task of gaining approvals and the reality of an ever-shifting DS personnel platform." ***For more detailed information on this topic, see the sections starting on pages 18 and 21.***

- ***The Military Response:*** In February 2014, the Republican Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee issued a staff report concluding that, on the night of the attacks, the Department of Defense began "allocating various forces to the crisis" based on assets that "were available and could readily be brought to bear on the situation as it was understood by senior leaders." The report stated that Republican Committee Members "believe the regional and global force posture assumed by the military on September 11, 2012 limited the response. Majority members recognize, of course, that it is impossible for the Department of Defense to have adequate forces prepared to respond immediately to every conceivable global contingency. Ensuring that preparations exist for some likely possibilities is not to be confused with the ability to anticipate all prospective circumstances, especially in highly volatile regions." ***For more detailed information on this topic, see the sections starting on pages 53 and 59.***

- ***The Talking Points:*** On July 31, 2014, both Republicans and Democrats on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence adopted a classified report that addressed the intelligence available to the Administration relating to the attacks. According to the Committee's Ranking Member: "The House Intelligence Committee spent nearly two years looking at every aspect of the Intelligence Community's activities before, during and after the attacks of September 11, 2012, in Benghazi Libya. The result is a bipartisan, factual, definitive report on what the Intelligence Community did and did not do. ... The report also shows that the process used to develop the talking points was flawed, but that the talking points reflected the conflicting intelligence assessments in the days immediately following the crisis." ***For more detailed information on this topic, see the sections starting on pages 79, 86, and 95.***

- ***The "Last Flag Flying":*** On January 15, 2014, both Republicans and Democrats on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence issued a report finding that the United States was not, in fact, the "last flag flying" in Benghazi: "Some nations closed their diplomatic facilities in Benghazi as the security conditions deteriorated during the summer of 2012, but other nations stayed along with the United States, contrary to some public reports and statements that the U.S. was the last country represented in Benghazi." ***For more detailed information on this topic, see page 6.***

In addition to the questions above, the compendium includes a host of information on additional questions, such as where the President was on the night of the attacks and what actions he took (page 115), whether former Secretary Hillary Clinton personally signed a cable reducing security in Benghazi (page 18), and whether military or intelligence officials were ordered to "stand down" (pages 34, 38, and 43).

* * *

Benghazi on the Record does not answer every conceivable question, but it answers many of the primary questions that have been raised about the attacks. This resource is intended to be used as a tool for Members of Congress and the American people.

In addition, with its budget of $3.3 million for 2014, it is critical that the Select Committee make full use of the extensive investigations that have already been completed—which are compiled here—to define its scope, avoid duplication, and conserve taxpayer dollars to help improve the security of U.S. facilities and personnel around the world.

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QUESTION:

Why was the U.S. the "last flag flying" in Benghazi?

Rep. Trey Gowdy: "Why were we still in Benghazi? The British Ambassador was almost assassinated. Our facility was attacked twice. There were multiple episodes of violence. We were the last flag flying in Benghazi, and I would like to know why."

Source: *Fox News Sunday,* Fox News (May 11, 2014) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=fB38YKLSvyc).

ANSWER:

The bipartisan report adopted by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence found that the U.S. was not the "last flag flying" in Benghazi. The U.S. presence—alongside the United Nations and the European Union—reflected Ambassador Stevens' view that Benghazi was "critically important," and he received significant deference as "one of, if not the premier expert" on Libyan matters, according to his colleagues. PolitiFact rated this claim as "False."

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

> Some nations closed their diplomatic facilities in Benghazi as the security conditions deteriorated during the summer of 2012, but other nations stayed along with the United States, contrary to some public reports and statements that the U.S. was the last country represented in Benghazi.
>
> ...
>
> Although some countries and international organizations had reduced their presence in Benghazi, the United States maintained a diplomatic presence there similar to the UN, the European Union, and other Western countries such as Italy, France, Turkey, and Malta.[1]

PolitiFact:

On May 16, 2014, the PolitiFact "Truth-O-Meter" issued a report finding that this assertion was "False":

> When we checked with Gowdy's staff, they pointed us to testimony given by Lt. Col. Andrew Wood, who was stationed in Libya as a site security team commander in Libya

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[1] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=27).

from February 2012 to August 2012. He testified before the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee when it was investigating the Benghazi attack in October 2012.

Wood's testimony appears to be the source of the vivid phrase "last flag flying in Benghazi."

...

Wood said that when he used the phrase "last flag flying in Benghazi," he was specifically referring to the three western institutions mentioned in the threats on Facebook—the British and United States diplomatic complexes and the Red Cross facility.

In other words, Wood didn't literally mean there was no other western presence in Benghazi—rather, he was referring to the United States as the last of the three specifically cited targets to be attacked.

...

Our ruling

Gowdy said the United States had "the last flag flying in Benghazi." Some nations, such as the United Kingdom, had abandoned Benghazi or limited their footprint prior to the attack on the United States complex. But like a game of telephone, the meaning of the phrase Gowdy used shifted from its original meaning as politicians embraced it as an evocative talking point.

In his testimony, Wood used the phrase more rhetorically than literally, explaining that the United States was the last of three western institutions that had been mentioned in a terrorist threat to be attacked. In fact, there's clear evidence that several other western nations had a presence in Benghazi immediately before and well after the attack on the U.S. compound. We rate the claim False.[2]

House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Democratic Staff Report:

According to multiple witnesses, Ambassador Stevens was "one of, if not the premier expert" on Libya and strongly believed that having a U.S. post in Benghazi was "critically important" to "indicate that the United States was going to stay involved," "to have a window into the Islamist extremism that was developing primarily in the east," and "to have a window into the tribal dynamics, which are very important." As one

[2] *Trey Gowdy Said the United States Was 'The Last Flag Flying in Benghazi,'* PolitiFact, Tampa Bay Times (May 16, 2014) (online at www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2014/may/16/trey-gowdy/trey-gowdy-says-we-were-last-flag-flying-benghazi/).

official said, "nobody knew Libya better than Chris," and "Chris strongly recommended that we maintain a presence in Benghazi."[3]

...

Special Envoy Stevens served in Benghazi from April 2011 until November 17, 2011, when he departed Libya. As a leading expert on Libya, he returned to Tripoli in May 26, 2012, as the U.S. Ambassador. Meanwhile, the Special Mission in Benghazi continued to operate, but with limited, temporary-duty staff.

Numerous State Department officials interviewed by Committee staff acknowledged that Ambassador Stevens championed the U.S. presence in Benghazi and had successfully built a consensus that the U.S. should maintain its presence in eastern Libya. The former Office Director for Maghreb Affairs stated that "there was widespread ... consensus that the mission in Benghazi was very important." This State Department official emphasized that Ambassador Stevens was a primary advocate of maintaining a presence in the eastern region:

> He thought that Benghazi was a critically important—and the east in general, were critically important components to understanding Libya. ... And he felt it was important on a symbolic level to indicate that the United States was going to stay involved not only in Libya writ large but also in Benghazi and in the east. And then for the other reasons that I mentioned: to have a window into the Islamist extremism that was developing primarily in the east but in other parts of Libya, to have a window into the tribal dynamics, which are very important, more so in the east than in the west.[4]

On September 6, 2011, Ambassador Stevens wrote an e-mail to senior State Department officials articulating the reasons the State Department should continue to maintain a temporary presence in Benghazi while Embassy Tripoli re-opened. In describing the importance of the region, Ambassador Stevens noted that "the revolution began in eastern Libya and the views of these 2 million inhabitants will certainly influence events going forward." He also noted that eastern Libya would continue to play an important role in Libyan governance and politics because "some [Libyan] government agencies may have their headquarters in Benghazi. ... Other government agencies/corporations already have their HQ's here." He relayed comments that the U.S. presence in eastern Libya "has a salutary 'calming' effect on easterners who are fearful that the new focus on Tripoli could once again lead to their neglect and exclusion from reconstruction and wealth distribution." He provided an overview of the Benghazi Special Mission Compound and

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[3] Minority Staff, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *Status Update on Investigation of Attacks on U.S. Personnel and Facilities in Benghazi* (Sept. 19, 2013) (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=3).

[4] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=38).

discussed ongoing upgrades and staffing plans. Finally, he recommended a small, continuing presence in Benghazi.[5]

In the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary explained that the opinion of Ambassador Stevens, who she referred to as "one of, if not the premier expert" on Libyan matters, carried significant weight in Washington:

A: Chris Stevens' views weighed heavily into the bureau's decision to request an extension of the mission. Chris argued very eloquently that it was important for the United States to keep in contact with people in the eastern part of Libya, which had been the cradle of the revolution. And given that the leadership of the interim government was primarily from the east and was traveling back and forth between Tripoli and Benghazi and other parts of the east, he felt it was important to maintain those contacts.

Q: And who would have listened to him in the State Department? Would he have had—

A: Everybody.

Q: Everybody? And why is that?

A: And not just in the State Department, in the interagency. You know, the national security staff was very interested in hearing what Chris's views were because he was recognized as one of, if not the premier expert on the current situation in Libya, having served there previously as DCM charge and then having been sent back as envoy during the revolution. And then the intent, which is what happened, was that we were going to nominate him as Ambassador to replace Ambassador Cretz.

Q: And I think you said his opinions carried significant weight.

A: Yes, they did.

Q: And so he thought it was very important to be in eastern Libya, Benghazi specifically, correct?

A: Yes.

Q: And did that ever change? Did he ever say, you know, I think it's time that we no longer have a presence in—

A: No, not that I'm aware of.

---

[5] *Id.*

Q: So the reasons for being in eastern Libya, Benghazi, in 2011, it's your view that those would have just carried forward.

A: Yes.[6]

Defense Attaché at Embassy Tripoli:

On January 31, 2014, staff from House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the House Committee on Armed Services conducted a transcribed interview of the Defense Attaché at Embassy Tripoli:

Q: And then as a member or participant on the country team, obviously you worked closely with the Ambassador. Is that an accurate statement?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Can you maybe just tell us, in your opinion, was Ambassador Stevens, how knowledgeable he was about Libya?

A: He was very knowledgeable about Libya, to put it succinctly. I think this was his third or fourth tour, to include his time as a special envoy—that title may not be accurate—in Benghazi to the NTC. But even prior to that, he had served as the deputy chief of mission, possibly the pol officer at one point.

So, yeah, I don't know, but my presumption would be that he had to be one of the foremost experts on Libya in particular.

Q: Okay.

A: For instance, he would tell stories about having been at meetings with Qadhafi, give insight into that strange personality that was Qadhafi. And he would take time to mentor country team members. So, like, if I would come back from a meeting completely frustrated, for instance, he would say, wait, what did they say? He is like, that's old regime. He is like, I know what that is, don't worry about that, they will come around, and it's going to—something I appreciated from a leader and a mentor. And I felt that Ambassador Stevens did that with all the members of the country team.

Q: So you, yourself, considered him to be a mentor with respect to Libyan matters or—

A: Absolutely. He had just time on the ground experience and he could provide insight.

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[6] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=39).

Q: Did he have specific knowledge about Benghazi, to your knowledge?

A: He certainly had specific knowledge about Benghazi. Again, I think prior to, but specifically during his months in working with the NTC, I believe pre- and post-—pardon me—post-revolution, as that transpired.

Q: And for the record that NTC is?

A: Sorry, this is the Libyan body which before the elections, National Transition Council. I believe that's what the acronym stands for. I may be off.

Q: Okay.

A: But essentially the opposition government.

Q: Sure. Would you say that his—as a member of the country team again—were his decisions accorded deference, great deference?

A: Like any chief of mission, yes, certainly, his decisions were treated with deference. There was different types of deference, right? There was deference potentially out of intimidation, but no, he was given deference because we knew where he was coming from, he had good leadership traits in my estimation, and yes, and he knew more than anyone in the room about most topics.

Q: Okay. Was that latter, that last statement you made about his knowledge, in particular about Libya and Benghazi, to your knowledge, was that generally shared by your military colleagues in AFRICOM and elsewhere?

A: I don't think you can replicate the experience and knowledge that Ambassador Stevens had per se. So it would be difficult to a do a one-to-one correlation. But what I can say is, both in AFRICOM and DIA, there have been a number of capable people, officers, civilians, who have been working Libya writ large, obviously tied to the NATO piece and our involvement in it. But it's difficult to make up for time on the ground, spending time drinking tea with Libyans, which is unfortunately something a lot of your staff just don't have the opportunity to do.

Q: Excuse me, but I don't think that was the question. I think the question was did your military colleagues share your estimation of Ambassador Stevens?

A: Oh. Yeah. I apologize. Then I did misunderstand the question.

Q: That's okay.

A: No, by and large, I don't know of anyone who didn't, if that—there was no one in my—

Q: To include personnel back at AFRICOM and General Ham?

A: Right. No, he—I mean Ambassador Stevens had a very strong reputation everywhere I went as I was doing my office calls.

Q: Okay. Were you aware at all of Ambassador Stevens' views on the U.S. presence in eastern Libya?

A: I can't speak specifically to the U.S. presence, but if anyone understood the importance of eastern Libya to the totality of Libya it was Ambassador Stevens. So in my opinion, he felt it was important to have an American presence there just because of the significance not only of Benghazi, but of the east in general.

Q: What was the significance of the eastern part of the country? Why was that important? And what were his views on that?

A: Yeah. So let's just take Benghazi, for instance. Benghazi is seen in the eyes of the majority of the Libyans, particularly those in the east, as much more the cultural center, the social center, the business center of Libya. So it's also, if you look—I mean there is oil infrastructure everywhere, but predominantly in the eastern side you have significant oil there.

I think it better defines for Libyans the character of the country. And what you saw in Benghazi, which you didn't necessarily see in other cities in the country, was there was an aspect of assimilation and a cosmopolitan aspect to Benghazi where different tribal factions all came together and made Benghazi what Benghazi was.

Q: Would it be fair to say that then this views would be if you were going to be successful in Libya you really also wanted to have a presence or focus on the eastern part of the country?

A: I feel that's a fair characterization, yes.[7]

Accountability Review Board Report:

The Board found that Ambassador Stevens made the decision to travel to Benghazi independently of Washington, per standard practice. Timing for his trip was driven in part by commitments in Tripoli, as well as a staffing gap between principal officers in Benghazi. Plans for the Ambassador's trip provided for minimal close protection security support and were not shared thoroughly with the Embassy's country team, who were not fully aware of planned movements off compound. The Ambassador did not see

[7] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Defense Attaché at Embassy Tripoli (Jan. 31, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/1r%20-%20January%2031%2C%202014%20LTC%2C%20Defense%20Attache.pdf#page=55).

> a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale on the U.S. Mission in the overall negative trendline of security incidents from spring to summer 2012. His status as the leading U.S. government advocate on Libya policy, and his expertise on Benghazi in particular, caused Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments.[8]
>
> ...
>
> Ambassador Chris Stevens arrived in Benghazi, Libya on September 10, 2012, accompanied by two temporary duty (TDY) Assistant Regional Security Officers (ARSOs) from Tripoli. ... Ambassador Stevens was scheduled to remain in Benghazi until September 14, and his visit was timed in part to fill the staffing gaps between TDY principal officers as well as to open an American Corner at a local school and to reconnect with local contacts.[9]

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton:

On January 23, 2013, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton testified at a hearing before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs:

> Q: Regarding the security professionals, is there anybody now in existence in the Department who is responsible for reviewing the itineraries of Ambassadors in advance in order to determine whether there is an undue threat to their safety?
>
> A: The general answer to that is no. Ambassadors are given what is called "chief of mission authority." Ambassadors, especially those who we ask to go to dangerous posts, are pretty independent folks. Some them might say, well, what do you think about this or that? But most of them make their own decisions.
>
> Chris Stevens did not ask anyone for permission to go to Benghazi; I don't think it would have crossed his mind.
>
> ...
>
> Q: Well, with regard to Ambassador Stevens, certainly it was brave of him to go to Benghazi on the date that he did. I have to ask you honestly, though, was there anything in his itinerary on the 10th or the 11th that actually specifically required his personal presence?
>
> A: Well, he certainly thought so, Congressman. And he did, of course, discuss this with his own security people. Remember, we do have regional security officers in these posts. They are the ones that an Ambassador will turn to.

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[8] Accountability Review Board, *Report on the Attacks in Benghazi, Libya, September 2012* (Dec. 18, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=6).

[9] *Id.* (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=18).

> He believed that it was important for him to go to Benghazi. There were a number of meetings that he was holding and some public events that he had on his schedule. And, you know, he was someone who really believed strongly he had to get out there. And I think, as the ARB has pointed out, he was given great deference by the rest of the government.[10]

Accountability Review Board Chairman Ambassador Thomas Pickering:

On June 4, 2013, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a deposition of Ambassador Thomas Pickering, Chairman of the independent Accountability Review Board:

Q: I think we covered to some extent this previously, but it says here, and I'm quoting, "Timing for his trip was driven in part by commitments in Tripoli, as well as the staffing gap between principal officers in Benghazi."

A: Yes.

Q: Where did that information come from?

A: It came from the testimony we received from, I believe, one of the principal officers, perhaps by Mr. Hicks, but it's somewhere in that nexus.

Q: So from some of the people who were discussing it with Mr.—with Ambassador Stevens before he left?

A: Yes.

Q: And did anyone tell you at the time that he was leaving to go to Benghazi on that date, the September 2012, September 11th date—

A: He left on September 10th to go to Benghazi.

Q: Yes, sir.

Did anyone tell you that he left on December 10th [sic] [September 10, 2012] to take that particular trip at the Secretary's urging?

A: No.

Q: Did anybody raise to you that his trip was related to some need to make the special mission permanent?

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[10] House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearing on the Terrorist Attack in Benghazi: The Secretary of State's View* (Jan. 23, 213) (online at http://docs.house.gov/meetings/FA/FA00/20130123/100170/HHRG-113-FA00-20130123-SD003.pdf#page=39).

A: It was clear that one of the subjects that was under discussion and one that I believe there is evidence that played a role in his decision to go to Benghazi, not at any particular time, but to go, was to provide suggestions, ideas or recommendations to the State Department, and that before that Hicks and Stevens had prepared what I can only describe as a kind of strawman memo recommending a permanent facility at Benghazi perhaps to be still a U.S. mission or a branch office of the embassy, but that it was also thinking out of some of the record in conversations that Stevens had with others, which was the subject of written communication, that he had also begun to recruit a new principal officer for the autumn with the idea in mind that he might be the last principal officer in Benghazi. So it was clear that Stevens was having thoughts about the future of Benghazi that were not yet fully settled, and that's as far as I can take it.

Q: But nothing specifically related to him going on September 10th?

A: No. The—it appears as if the date had been scheduled earlier. There were other obligations in Tripoli, and that, as a result made, the date, that one, that the principal officer in Tripoli, who was in—in Benghazi, who was assigned in Tripoli, had to leave the morning of Ambassador Stevens' arrival, I believe, to go back to Tripoli for other reasons.[11]

...

Q: And—and just still on page 6 at the bottom of that paragraph, it discusses that the Ambassador, and I'm reading here, did not see a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale on the U.S. mission in the overall negative trendline of security incidents from spring to summer of 2012.

A: The bottom of page 6?

Q: No. I'm sorry. It's the bottom of that same paragraph we were on on page 6.

A: Okay. Uh-huh.

Q: So not quite the bottom.

A: Uh-huh.

Q: How did the ARB learn that information about the Ambassador, that he wasn't seeing this direct threat?

A: From what he was writing and saying.

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[11] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Deposition of Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering (June 4, 2014) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Pickering-transcript.pdf#page=159).

Q: And the ARB goes on to describe this, and what—what the report calls Washington giving an unusual deference to his judgments, to Ambassador Stevens' judgments. Can you explain what—what you meant by that?

A: Yes. He had been in Benghazi for a considerable period of time; knew many, if not most, of the leaders; was seen to be well thought of in Benghazi; and had—if not adulation, he had a status of high favorable profile in Benghazi. And it was the combination of his background and experience and his knowledge of Benghazi, which exceeded that of many others in the State Department at least, that had people turn to him for advice and counsel on Benghazi.

Q: And I guess who in D.C., who in Washington, D.C., was giving him this deference to his judgments on—on Benghazi?

A: Well, I think that his reporting that came in and things of that sort carried weight because they were from him.

Q: I see.

A: This is also in the context of the opening sentence of the paragraph, his decision to travel, which was his decision alone to make.[12]

...

Q: On page 16 the [ARB] report also says this, and I'll quote: "The longer a post is exposed to continuing high levels of violence, the more it comes to consider security incidents, which might otherwise provoke a reaction, as normal, thus raising the threshold for an incident to cause a reassessment of risk and mission continuation."

Is that what happened in Libya?

A: We found that there was a process of rationalization that went on, that each of the incidents—and you will see them catalogued in the main on page 15 and 16—was explained in terms that in effect made it one-off, unlikely to happen again, not part of a buildup of activity, and treated as basically, if it affected us, we could cure that, but it didn't really mean that us—the threat against us had increased or was serious.

And we found that a failing on the intelligence side, and we found it a failing on the perceptional side, that you get used to hard times, worse times make hard times look like picnics. So we were concerned about that, and we were concerned in the fact that people got caught up in this kind of an environment, and with

[12] *Id.* (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Pickering-transcript.pdf#page=162).

busy, heavily hectic days, they tended to lose sight of the responsibility they had both to alert and then get the decisions made and then to follow up.

Q: And so how would the Board's recommendations on tripwires prevent that?

A: We would tell the State Department, you have got to put a process with tripwires, that once a tripwire is passed, it has to be notified, that the central system people in Washington and the field people are required to say, what are they going to do about this?[13]

[13] *Id.* (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Pickering-transcript.pdf#page=67).

QUESTION:

Did Secretary Clinton personally authorize cables that reduced State Department security?

Rep. Darrell Issa: "The Secretary of State was just wrong. She said she did not participate in this, and yet only a few months before the attack she outright denied security in her signature in a cable, April 2012."

Source: *Fox and Friends*, Fox News (Apr. 24, 2013) (online at http://video.foxnews.com/v/2323454879001/benghazi-report-takes-aim-at-state-department).

ANSWER:

The suggestion that Secretary Clinton personally signed a State Department cable denying security requests prior to the attacks was awarded "Four Pinocchios" by the Washington Post Fact Checker—its highest rating for inaccurate statements—on two separate occasions. Instead, the cable at issue included a pro forma stamp with the Secretary of State's name, similar to millions of other Department cables.

Washington Post Fact Checker:

On April 26, 2013, the Washington Post Fact Checker awarded Rep. Darrell Issa "Four Pinocchios":

> [E]very cable from an embassy bears the "signature" of the ambassador—and every cable from Washington bears the "signature" of the secretary of state.
>
> ...
>
> Issa has no basis or evidence to show that Clinton had anything to do with this cable—any more than she personally approved a cable on proper e-mail etiquette. The odds are extremely long that Clinton ever saw or approved this memo, giving us confidence that his inflammatory and reckless language qualifies as a "whopper."[14]

During a subsequent interview on March 2, 2014, Rep. Issa disputed the Fact Checker's rating, claiming that he was merely "quoting something that was in somebody else's report." On March 3, 2014, the Fact Checker issued a second report reaffirming its award and noting that the report Rep. Issa referred to in his interview was issued under his name: "It is especially strange that he

[14] *Issa's Absurd Claim That Clinton's 'Signature' Means She Personally Approved It*, Washington Post Fact Checker (Apr. 26, 2013) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/post/issas-absurd-claim-that-clintons-signature-means-she-personally-approved-it/2013/04/25/58c2f5b4-adf8-11e2-a986-eec837b1888b_blog.html).

would refer to a report he signed—and touted at the time as his own—as 'someone else's report'."[15]

Chief of Staff to Former Secretary Powell:

Larry Wilkerson, who served as Chief of Staff to former Secretary of State Colin Powell, was interviewed by the Washington Post Fact Checker:

> I can say that from being there with one secretary and reviewing the work of many other secretaries in my academic research, there are many, many cables the secretary never sees.[16]

Under Secretary for Political Affairs to Former Secretary Rice:

R. Nicholas Burns, who served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs under former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, was interviewed by the Washington Post Fact Checker:

> "A very small fraction would be seen by the secretary of state," said R. Nicholas Burns, a career diplomat who was undersecretary of state for political affairs under Rice.
>
> Burns said he would only show a cable to Rice if it had very sensitive instructions for an ambassador and he wanted to be sure she agreed with his draft language. But generally he said the secretary is much too busy and would never see the cables. He added that sometimes even assistant secretaries would not view cables that are sent out under the secretary's "signature."
>
> Burns noted that the confusion over "signature" is a common misunderstanding about State Department cables. He frequently has to correct historians from overseas who mistakenly believe the secretary's name at the bottom of the cable has much meaning.[17]

Accountability Review Board Member and Former State Department Official:

On April 25, 2013, Richard Shinnick, a member of the independent Accountability Review Board and a former official at the Department of State, stated during an interview:

> It just doesn't make any sense to anybody who understands the State Department. ...

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[15] *Rep. Darrell Issa Disputes His Four Pinocchio Ratings*, Washington Post Fact Checker (Mar. 3, 2014) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2014/03/03/rep-darrell-issa-disputes-his-four-pinocchio-ratings/).

[16] *Issa's Absurd Claim That Clinton's 'Signature' Means She Personally Approved It*, Washington Post Fact Checker (Apr. 26, 2013) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/post/issas-absurd-claim-that-clintons-signature-means-she-personally-approved-it/2013/04/25/58c2f5b4-adf8-11e2-a986-eec837b1888b_blog.html).

[17] *Id.*

> Every single cable going out is signed "Clinton," it is the normal procedure. ...
>
> Millions of cables come into the operation center every year, not thousands, millions. And they are all addressed Hillary Clinton.
>
> So you can make a story that Hillary saw a cable and didn't act on it or sent a cable out; it's all bullsh*t, it's all total bullsh*t.[18]

State Department Foreign Affairs Handbook:

> Domestic telegrams originated within the Washington metropolitan area and transmitted through the 5th Floor Communications Center will bear the signature name of the Secretary at the end of the telegram.[19]

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[18] *Benghazi Review Panel Member: Fox-Promoted GOP Claims Against Clinton Are "Total Bullsh*t,"* Media Matters for America (Apr. 25, 2013) (online at http://mediamatters.org/blog/2013/04/25/benghazi-review-panel-member-fox-promoted-gop-c/193773).

[19] Department of State, *Foreign Affairs Handbook, Preparing Telegrams in the Department* (Dec. 17, 2009) (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/89317.pdf#page=15).

QUESTION:

Why was security in Benghazi inadequate despite repeated requests?

Rep. Trey Gowdy: "Why was our security footprint so light despite the repeated requests for more security?"

Source: *Charlie Rose,* PBS (May 6, 2014) (online at www.charlierose.com/watch/60387043).

ANSWER:

The independent Accountability Review Board concluded that the Special Mission in Benghazi had inadequate security because of "[s]ystemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department." The Board found several factors that led to support gaps, including a misplaced reliance on local security forces, short-term staffing challenges, and the temporary nature of the facility. Multiple Congressional investigations have confirmed these findings.

Accountability Review Board Report:

> Systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department (the "Department") resulted in a Special Mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place.
>
> Security in Benghazi was not recognized and implemented as a "shared responsibility" by the bureaus in Washington charged with supporting the post, resulting in stove-piped discussions and decisions on policy and security. That said, Embassy Tripoli did not demonstrate strong and sustained advocacy with Washington for increased security for Special Mission Benghazi.
>
> The short-term, transitory nature of Special Mission Benghazi's staffing, with talented and committed, but relatively inexperienced, American personnel often on temporary assignments of 40 days or less, resulted in diminished institutional knowledge, continuity, and mission capacity.[20]
>
> ...
>
> Special Mission Benghazi's uncertain future after 2012 and its "non-status" as a temporary, residential facility made allocation of resources for security and personnel

[20] Accountability Review Board, *Report on the Attacks in Benghazi, Libya, September 2012* (Dec. 18, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=4).

more difficult, and left responsibility to meet security standards to the working-level in the field, with very limited resources.[21]

...

At the same time, the SMC's [Special Mission Compound] dependence on the armed but poorly skilled Libyan February 17 Martyrs' Brigade (February 17) militia members and unarmed, locally contracted Blue Mountain Libya (BML) guards for security support was misplaced.[22]

...

Among various Department bureaus and personnel in the field, there appeared to be very real confusion over who, ultimately, was responsible and empowered to make decisions based on both policy and security considerations.[23]

...

Simply put, in the months leading up to September 11, 2012, security in Benghazi was not recognized and implemented as a "shared responsibility" in Washington, resulting in stove-piped discussions and decisions on policy and security.[24]

...

The DS [Diplomatic Security] Bureau showed a lack of proactive senior leadership with respect to Benghazi, failing to ensure that the priority security needs of a high risk, high threat post were met. At the same time, with attention in late 2011 shifting to growing crises in Egypt and Syria, the NEA [Near Eastern Affairs] Bureau's front office showed a lack of ownership of Benghazi's security issues, and a tendency to rely totally on DS for the latter. The Board also found that Embassy Tripoli leadership, saddled with their own staffing and security challenges, did not single out a special need for increased security for Benghazi.[25]

...

The unique circumstances surrounding the creation of the mission in Benghazi as a temporary mission outside the realm of permanent diplomatic posts resulted in significant disconnects and support gaps.[26]

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[21] *Id.* (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=5).

[22] *Id.*

[23] *Id.* (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=6).

[24] *Id.* (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=29).

[25] *Id.* (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=30).

[26] *Id.* (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=31).

> The Board found the short-term, transitory nature of Benghazi's staffing to be another primary driver behind the inadequate security platform in Benghazi. Staffing was at times woefully insufficient considering post's security posture and high risk, high threat environment.[27]
>
> ...
>
> As it became clear that DS [Diplomatic Security] would not provide a steady complement of five TDY [temporary duty assignment] DS agents to Benghazi, expectations on the ground were lowered by the daunting task of gaining approvals and the reality of an ever-shifting DS personnel platform.[28]

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee Bipartisan Report:

> The Department of State did not adequately support security requests from its own security personnel in Benghazi.[29]
>
> ...
>
> In the Department's late 2011 plan describing a transition to "locally staffed operations," one of the reasons given for that transition was that "DS does not have sufficient resources to sustain the current level of the security assets in Libya." [Deputy Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security Charlene] Lamb commented on this issue in her interview with the Committee, stating that it was hard to sustain large numbers of DS agents on short-term tours because there is not a floating pool of agents so that to fill a gap in Libya she needed to create a gap elsewhere.[30]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

> [T]he uncertain future of the Mission facility, due to its one-year expiration in December 2012, contributed to a lack of continuity for security staff and constrained decision-makers in Washington regarding the allocation of security enhancements to that facility.[31]

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[27] *Id.*

[28] *Id.*

[29] Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, *Flashing Red: A Special Report on the Terrorist Attack at Benghazi* (Dec. 30, 2012) (online at www.collins.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/81d5e2d9-cc8d-45af-aa8b-b937c55c7208/Flashing Red-HSGAC Special Report final.pdf#page=19).

[30] *Id.* (online at http://www.collins.senate.gov/public/_cache/files/81d5e2d9-cc8d-45af-aa8b-b937c55c7208/Flashing%20Red-HSGAC%20Special%20Report%20final.pdf#page=20).

[31] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan.15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=18).

Although the cable following the August 15 Emergency Action Committee [interagency security meeting held in Benghazi] stated that requests "for additional physical security upgrades and staffing needs" would be submitted separately to the Embassy in Tripoli, the Committee has not seen any evidence that those requests were passed on by the Embassy, including by the Ambassador, to State Department headquarters before the September 11 attacks in Benghazi.[32]

...

State Department headquarters made the decision not to request an extension of the SST's mission in August 2012, approximately one month prior to the attacks, because State believed that many of the duties of the SST could be accomplished by local security forces, DS agents, or other State Department capabilities.[33]

...

DoD confirmed to the Committee that Ambassador Stevens declined two specific offers from General Carter Ham, then the head of AFRICOM, to sustain the SST in the weeks before the terrorist attacks.[34]

House Oversight and Government Reform Democratic Committee Staff Report:

Benghazi lacked adequate security in part because it was a temporary post.[35]

...

Witnesses confirmed that Benghazi, as a temporary post, was "excepted from office facility standards" and "was not eligible" for security upgrades from the Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, a key finding of the ARB report.[36]

...

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[32] *Id.* (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=20).

[33] *Id.*

[34] *Id.* (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=21).

[35] Minority Staff, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *Status Update on Investigation of Attacks on U.S. Personnel and Facilities in Benghazi* (Sept. 19, 2013) (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status%20Update%20Report%2009-18-13.pdf#page=3).

[36] *Id.*

Individuals interviewed by Committee staff agreed that temporary deployments and personnel turnover were an ongoing challenge. The Diplomatic Security Desk Officer for Libya, for example, stated that the post could only take volunteers for security deployments, and that "everything that was provided to it had to come from somewhere else, someplace that something was already allotted to essentially." He said:

A: As a temporary mission, there was no allotted agents or a pool of agents which just—there were no full-time positions we could send to Benghazi. So we had to draw from a pool of resources. We sent only high-threat-qualified agents. That pool was also being utilized in other areas of the world, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen. During this time frame, it was the backdrop of what was the Arab Spring, which was, you know, in recent history, at least, it's an unprecedented time of political upheaval, which has caused numerous posts within NEA to actually go close, order departures, and have numerous security issues.

Q: So was this then a fairly shallow pool from which you could pull these resources at that point in time?

A: Yes. Relatively speaking. I mean, compared to all the agents that work with DS, it's a much smaller pool. Less than half.

Q: So resources were an issue then?

A: Yes, I would say so.[37]

...

State Department officials told Committee staff that, despite these requests, Charlene Lamb, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Programs within the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, decided in February 2012 to provide only three Diplomatic Security Agents to Benghazi. According to the Diplomatic Security Desk Officer, Deputy Assistant Secretary Lamb reportedly made this decision because she felt that Diplomatic Security Agents were being inappropriately used as drivers, a role that local staff could fill:

Q: Let me ask a question regarding that February period where DAS Lamb discovers that there are two DS agents being used as a driver as opposed to I guess conducting themselves as DS agents for movements or whatever their duties would require. I think you had mentioned that—at that point in time sets the number of five down to three? Is that what you said, something along those lines?

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[37] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status%20Update%20Report%2009-18-13.pdf#page=45).

A: That's correct. In conversations with—I don't recall exactly. It was around that time frame. But I definitely remember the meeting with DCM Polaschik, where it was set as three as far as, you know, DAS Lamb was my superior and my boss' superior. So when she said it was three, that's the number we tried to attain. And it was more of a program management is what we traditionally do in DS/IP, vice, hard skills, such as driving, which we would do doing protection but not overseas.

Q: And did you ask her why three? Or did you query her further about, okay, we thought it was going to be five or they're asking for five, but now you are saying three. Why three? Did you query her about that?

A: It was very clear to me that—from the conversations we had, that the prime reason that was made evident to me was the driving issue. And that is standard practice through the vast majority of the world is that LES or FSNs provide the drivers for the mission.

Q: But DAS Lamb then said, okay, so now we're only going to provide three?

A: She told me the number to provide was three.

Q: And how far into the future does that directive carry her?

A: That carried her right until I received word otherwise, which I never did. So three was the number that I always tried to obtain officially. As far as I was concerned, three.

Q: So, from your perspective, it was your marching orders given to you by DAS Lamb that three was the number of agents that you were to try to supply—

A: Yes.

Q: —to post.

A: Clearly, around the February 15, 16 time frame, that was made evidently clear to me.

Q: And when you say "evidently clear," she had a conversation with you?

A: Yes. We spoke about it, not just with me directly but with my supervisor as well.

Q: Was she emphatic about it?

A: That was the number she wanted, yes.

Q: And what about once post got LES drivers?

A: Which they did eventually. I believe in April, they started to get drivers. One TDY driver, for sure, went to Benghazi. And I know they hired two. At one point, I think one ended up leaving or something. But it remained at three, like I said, from February 15 until September 11.

Following a series of attacks against Western interests in June 2012, the Regional Security Officer in Libya, Diplomatic Security Desk Officer, and the Diplomatic Security Regional Director drafted and submitted a memorandum requesting five Diplomatic Security Agents for Benghazi, but Deputy Assistant Secretary Lamb did not approve the request. The Desk Officer described the process:

A: It was approved by my direct supervisors, and then it was upstairs for a while. And we didn't hear anything. We felt it urgent enough, my supervisor scheduled a meeting with DAS Lamb, and in the meeting with DAS Lamb, essentially the long and short of it, the memo was denied for additional resources, personnel-wise.

Q: Can you walk us through that in a little more detail? How long was it upstairs? So your immediate supervisor, that would be Mr. Bacigalupo?

A: At that time it was James Bacigalupo, correct.

Q: So he approved this action memorandum, and then it would go to Charlene Lamb. Is that correct?

A: It went to—I know it was in—I don't know where it went in between. Probably to her staff assistants or the deputy prior to her. But it definitely made it to her because that's who we had the meeting with.

Q: And how long was it up there before the meeting?

A: I think the memo actually didn't get sent up until after the incident with the UK protective detail, so it was probably mid-June, June 15th, I believe, the date on the memo. So I think it was late that week. Maybe June 18th. I can't recall it specifically.

Q: Okay. And what is your recollection of that meeting? Or why was it denied?

A: Well, I mean, by the memo, I thought it was pretty clear. I had outlined the anti-Western attacks. My feelings, along with the RSO's—and both RSOs opposed, and my superiors, we tried to advocate for additional security resources. It was denied. It wasn't outright denied. It was—she wanted to know specifically what programs that the additional agents would be working on.

Q: And so what was the response to that when she—was there an effort to justify the additional agents or—

A: Yes.

Q: And can you explain?

A: Certainly. I reached back to the RSO in Benghazi, and I told them the response that we had received from DAS Lamb and asked them to come up with what he would be doing, you know, what these agents would be—what programs they would be running. So he generated a list of items. The focus turned toward—after that, the focus turned toward physical security measures that could be implemented to help ease the workload of the agents that were already out there.

Q: I'm sorry. But given that there has been an attack on the consul, on the post, did you find it odd that the response from the requests—the recommendations for more agents—that the response back was, one of the programs—I mean, at least from my perspective, one of the programs, we would be protecting the compound. I mean, did you have any thoughts about that?

A: Obviously, I thought it should have been accepted. That's why I wrote it and sent it up.

Q: Sure.

A: I mean, I stand by the memo as it's written.[38]

Deputy Assistant Secretary Charlene Lamb:

On Oct. 10, 2012, Charlene Lamb, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Programs, testified at a hearing before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform that "we had the correct number of assets in Benghazi at the time of 9/11 for what had been agreed upon."[39]

She also had this exchange:

Q: Now, Agent Lamb, how do you respond to concerns that you failed to respond to requests for additional special agents in Benghazi? You know, that is a serious charge there.

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[38] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status%20Update%20Report%2009-18-13.pdf#page=47).

[39] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *Hearing on The Security Failures of Benghazi* (Oct. 10, 2012) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2012-10-10-Ser-No-112-193-FC-The-Security-Failures-of-Benghazi.pdf#page=57).

A: Yes, sir. And we have evaluated that; I have evaluated it both with Eric Nordstrom and with a senior RSO that spent TDY time there, as well. I asked them to do a serious assessment of the numbers that were needed there.

When Mr. Nordstrom and I discussed the duties of the agents out in Benghazi, they were using one agent to drive the vehicle, and they were using another agent to watch classified communications equipment 24/7. So these are not normally duties that are assigned to DS agents.

So I just—I asked Eric to review that. And when Renee Crowningshield, another RSO, went to Benghazi, was also asked to review the numbers.

And Eric worked closely with post management, asked them to hire a driver, and we hired a driver, trained a driver. And then the driver took the place of what the DS agent was doing. And then they came up, through technical security means, a way around the need to have the 24/7 coverage.[40]

Accountability Review Board Vice Chairman Admiral Michael Mullen:

On June 19, 2013, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Admiral Michael Mullen, Vice Chairman of the Accountability Review Board:

> That then all goes back, from my perspective, on to Mr. Boswell [Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security] and Ms. Lamb's lap in terms of making sure security is all right, and yet it was, in fact, over the next many months that she fought it, didn't resource it, bureaucratically didn't answer, made it incredibly difficult on those who were trying to improve the security to achieve any kind of outcome they deemed favorable, and she just beat them down over time.[41]
>
> ...
>
> In the end it's my view that Ms. Lamb won that debate, didn't want to extend it [DOD Site Security Team], wanted to—to quote her at one point in time—didn't want to be embarrassed by having DOD continue to provide security.[42]

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[40] *Id.* (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/2012-10-10-Ser-No-112-193-FC-The-Security-Failures-of-Benghazi.pdf#page=58).

[41] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Admiral Michael Mullen (June 19, 2013) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mullen-transcript.pdf#page=136).

[42] *Id.* (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mullen-transcript.pdf#page=100).

Accountability Review Board Chairman Ambassador Thomas Pickering:

On June 4, 2013, the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a deposition with Ambassador Thomas Pickering:

Q: And I wanted to talk to you about those repeated requests for more security staffing. Who did the ARB find was making those requests?

A: They came from generally DS, Diplomatic Security, personnel in Benghazi through Tripoli.

Q: And—

A: There also is reference here to Tripoli requests for additional staffing.

Q: And were those all on the DS side as in the RSO sending up requests for more security, or were there some requests coming also from the chief of mission?

A: Look, I'm not sure. It's conceivable that in the normal practice would be for one hand to support the other.

Q: Do you know who was sort of receiving the requests and not acting on them?

A: They went to Charlene Lamb, who had the responsibility for making the decisions.

Q: And what was happening at that point? Why was she not providing that additional security?

A: She explained—and I think it's available in the classified report, but if not, she explained that she felt that it was important to build up local staff; that the ratio of security personnel to substantive personnel in Benghazi was extremely out of sync; that the people who were assigned as security officers were doing jobs which local staff could have done, drivers, and they could have arranged a workaround for taking care of classified communications devices that they had to look after.

And so it was a combination of advice on ways to make better use of the people they had and/or to supplement those with local hires, all of which had been done in other places. On the other hand, it was clearly extremely very difficult to get reliable local hires in a place like Benghazi.

Q: And is that what you were talking about before when you were describing the sort of normalization term?

A: I would not use "normalization" or "new normal."

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But as I understood it, new normal related to the situation where the local—the foreign government was not able to provide or would not provide the protection required, and therefore you had to seek other ways of providing that protection. And this would have fitted into the category, because it was clear the local government was unable to provide the protection required in Benghazi for our facility.

Q: And when Ms. Lamb was making those decisions, was that based on a policy that she was getting from above her or direction she was getting from above her?

A: No. She said on several occasions it was related to her feel for the situation.

Q: So you didn't find that that new normal policy was sort of coming down on high to Ms. Lamb?

A: No. If you're asking about factors that may have played a role, on one occasion there was a memorandum that I believe she authored saying to a regional bureau, if you want more people, you fund them. On another occasion she referred in discussion to 20 percent cuts in the DS budget.

To some extent we attempted to take this into account in a broader discussion in the report where we talk about the State Department having a serious attitude—nothing wrong with it—of being very careful about how it spends its money, in large measure because it has such a hard time getting it. And so there was this tension between funding and money and providing security, which was one of another set of tensions. We discussed earlier the tensions between dangers and mission. And we were aware of that and reflected it in the report.

Q: So I appreciate that you brought that up, because Ms. Lamb, when she came before the committee, was asked about the role of funding in her decisions not to provide additional security. And my recollection of that is that she said that there was no role for funding in those decisions. Can you elaborate further on what the ARB found?

A: Well, I gave you two examples of Mrs. Lamb's own statements that seem at least to be inconsistent with the broader point she made. Someone would have to ask her what they meant. I don't want to speculate.

Q: Despite the repeated requests for more security, and I want to call your attention to page 4 of the report, in the second paragraph under the second finding, the report explains that Embassy Tripoli did not demonstrate strong and sustained advocacy with Washington for increased security for Special Mission Benghazi. Do you see that?

A: Yes, I do.

Q: Can you explain how the findings fit together; that there were repeated requests coming, but it was not strong and sustained advocacy?

A: Yes. The requests almost always originated in Benghazi. And because Benghazi was, since February 2011, considered a constituent post of the embassy at Tripoli, subordinate to it and dependent upon it, they were forwarded through either DS channels or open channel, regular channels from Benghazi to Tripoli to Washington. And there were cases, more than one, we believed, where Tripoli was not effective in following up and not strong in pushing forward the Benghazi concerns that it received from Benghazi.

Q: And who was it in Tripoli then who wasn't moving it forward? Was that someone on the DS side or the—

A: I think that principally on the DS side, but there was personnel churn. So the "who" relates to multiple personalities, and possibly the fact that there was such churn that past recommendations were not followed up well because the new people were not necessarily clued into the past recommendations or aware of the fact that they had to be followed up.[43]

AFRICOM Deputy Commander for Military Operations:

On March 20, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Vice Admiral Charles "Joe" Leidig, Jr., the Deputy Commander for Military Operations at Africa Command.

In response to a question about why the Site Security Team (SST) was not extended, he responded:

> My understanding was is [sic] that the situation had improved in Libya, and the Ambassador was comfortable with getting security from local Libyan sources, and he no longer needed the SST.[44]

Commander of Special Operations Command Africa:

On March 14, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Rear Admiral Brian Losey, former Commander of Special Operations Command Africa.

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[43] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Deposition of Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering (June 4, 2013) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Pickering-transcript.pdf#page=132).

[44] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Vice Admiral Charles J. "Joe" Leidig, Jr. (Mar. 20, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/8r%20-%20March%2020%2C%202014%20-%20Vice%20Admiral%20Charles%20Leidig%20Jr..pdf#page=12).

In response to a question about Ambassador Stevens declining offers to extend the SST, Rear Admiral Losey stated:

> I have no idea, but I do know this: The State Department was in control of whether they were going to have an SST or not. And it's because—the State Department made the decision on declining the SST. If Ambassador Stevens wanted to reinstate the SST, he could have so stated. There is no ambiguity on the notion that he wanted a reduction in the footprint.[45]

[45] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Rear Admiral Brian Losey (Mar. 14, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/6r%20-%20March%2014%2C%202014%20-%20Rear%20Admiral%20Brian%20Losey.pdf#page=20).

QUESTION:

Did Secretary of State Clinton order Secretary of Defense Panetta to "stand down?"

Rep. Darrell Issa: "We need to have an answer of when the Secretary of Defense had assets that he could have begun spinning up. Why there was not one order given to turn on one Department of Defense asset? I have my suspicions, which is Secretary Clinton told Leon to stand down, and we all heard about the stand down order for two military personnel. That order is undeniable."

Source: Republican Party of New Hampshire, Concord GOP Committee and Merrimack County GOP Committee, *Lincoln-Reagan Dinner w/Rep. Darrell Issa* (Feb. 17, 2014) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZEoEiAn_CQ).

ANSWER:

None of the nine congressional and independent investigations identified any evidence to support this assertion. AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham and other senior military officials directly refuted it, and the Washington Post Fact Checker gave it "Four Pinocchios"—its highest rating for inaccurate statements—on two separate occasions.

Washington Post Fact Checker:

On February 21, 2014, the Washington Post Fact Checker awarded Rep. Darrell Issa "Four Pinocchios" for his claim:

> It is correct that Issa poses a series of questions, but his repeated use of the phrase "stand down" and his personalizing of the alleged actions ("Secretary Clinton;" "Leon") leave a distinct impression that either Clinton or Obama delivered some sort of instruction to Panetta to not act as forcefully as possible. He even incorrectly asserts that not a single order was given to use any DOD asset. One could argue the response was slow, bungled or poorly handled. But Issa is crossing a line when he suggests there was no response—or a deliberate effort to hinder it. Four Pinocchios.[46]

During a subsequent television appearance, Chairman Issa disputed the Fact Checker's rating, claiming that he was not using the term "stand down" in "some sort of explicit way." On March

[46] *Issa's 'Suspicions' That Hillary Clinton Told Panetta to 'Stand Down' on Benghazi,* Washington Post Fact Checker (Feb. 21, 2014) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2014/02/21/issas-suspicions-that-hillary-clinton-told-panetta-to-stand-down-on-benghazi/).

3, 2014, the Fact Checker issued another report, concluding that "Issa's new explanations do not pass scrutiny" and reaffirming its award of "Four Pinocchios."[47]

House Armed Services Committee Republican Staff Report:

> "[A]s to specifics" of the U.S. reaction, Secretary Panetta testified to the Senate that the President "left that up to us." Secretary Panetta said the President was "well informed" about events and worried about American lives. He and General Dempsey also testified they had no further contact with the President, nor did Secretary of State Hillary Clinton ever communicate with them that evening. ...
>
> General Dempsey answered "no" when asked by the House Armed Services Committee if he had "any restrictions placed on whatever it is that you thought needed to get done to respond to ... Benghazi.[48]

AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham:

On April 9, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview with General Carter Ham, AFRICOM's Commander:

> Q: On the night of the attacks, did you or to your knowledge anyone in your command receive any order from then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to stand down?
>
> A: No, and we would not receive direct communications from the Secretary of State.[49]

AFRICOM Deputy Commander for Military Operations:

On March 20, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview with Vice Admiral Charles J. Leidig, AFRICOM's Deputy Commander for Military Operations:

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[47] *Rep. Darrell Issa Disputes His Four-Pinocchio Ratings*, Washington Post Fact Checker (Mar. 3, 2014) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2014/03/03/rep-darrell-issa-disputes-his-four-pinocchio-ratings/).

[48] House Committee on Armed Services, *Majority Interim Report: Benghazi Investigation Update* (Feb. 2014) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C4E16543-8F99-430C-BEBA-0045A6433426#page=15).

[49] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of General Carter Ham (Apr. 9, 2014) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9r%20-%20April%209%2C%202014%20-%20General%20Carter%20Ham.pdf#page=127).

Q: And just to follow up on that point, there have been some statements to this effect, and I would just like to ask for your comment on them, but on the night of the attacks, did you or to your knowledge anyone in your command receive any order from then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to stand down?

A: I never received any orders from the Secretary of State or heard of any orders from the Secretary of State.[50]

AFRICOM Director of Operations and Cyber:

On March 18, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview with Rear Admiral Richard Landolt, AFRICOM's Director of Operations and Cyber:

Q: This will be our final question, but there have been some public statements about some of the events or discussions, perhaps, in the interagency on the night of the attacks, and we would just like to ask you on the night of the attacks, did you or, to your knowledge, anyone in your command receive any order from then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to stand down?

A: Not at all. We did not.[51]

Department of State Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Policy Planning:

On September 12, 2013, staff of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview with Jake Sullivan, the Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Policy Planning at the State Department, who described Secretary of State Clinton's actions on the night of the attacks:

> She was deeply engaged. She not only was receiving regular reports and updates, but she was proactively reaching out. She spoke with Director David Petraeus. She spoke with the national security adviser on more than one occasion. She participated in the SVTS, and she made other phone calls that night, and from the time she first learned of it, this was the only thing that she was focused on.[52]

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[50] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Vice Admiral Charles J. "Joe" Leidig, Jr. (Mar. 20, 2014) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/8r%20-%20March%2020%2C%202014%20-%20Vice%20Admiral%20Charles%20Leidig%20Jr..pdf#page=54).

[51] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Rear Admiral Richard B. Landolt (Mar. 18, 2014) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/7r%20-%20March%2018%2C%202014%20-%20Rear%20Admiral%20Richard%20Landolt.pdf#page=64).

[52] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Jake Sullivan, Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Policy Planning, Department of State (Sept. 12, 2013) (referenced in Letter from Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings to Chairman Darrell E. Issa, House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform (Feb. 21, 2014) (online at

He also explained:

> She provided very clear guidance that whether it was the diplomatic security service, or it was our diplomats in Washington and out in Tripoli that no effort be spared to respond to this as effectively as possible. She communicated that same message to all of the interagency colleagues with whom she spoke that night.[53]

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www.democrats.oversight.house.gov/press-releases/cummings-to-issa-apologize-and-withdraw-baseless-accusation-that-clinton-personally-ordered-panetta-to-standdown-in-benghazi/)).

[53] *Id.*

QUESTION:

Was the CIA security team improperly prevented from departing for the Benghazi diplomatic compound?

Rep. Christopher Smith: "Why was the CIA security team repeatedly ordered to stand down after the attack began, and who made that decision?"

Source: House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Hearing on Benghazi: Where is the State Department Accountability* (Sept. 18, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg82842/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg82842.pdf#page=45).

ANSWER:

The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence interviewed not only the CIA security team members on the ground that night, but also their supervisors. According to the House Intelligence Committee's Ranking Member, Republicans and Democrats agreed that although "some security officers voiced a greater urgency to depart for the compound," senior officers "were concerned they might be sending their security team into an ambush so they tried to obtain better intelligence and heavy weapons before dispatching the team."

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Chairman:

On September 9, 2014, Rep. Mike Rogers, the Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, stated during an interview:

> We interviewed everybody in that chain of command, including the individual that they're calling "Bob" [their supervisor] on the compound, including the station chief who was in Tripoli at the time.
>
> So what I think they're referring to is these guys grouped up and they had an unofficial relationship with the mission force, meaning that there was no—there was not their responsibility to go and rescue them, right? Their job was to protect the annex, because it was a sizable annex, a lot of people there. Their job was to provide security there. But they had this unofficial relationship. Why? Because when they went to talk to the State Department agents, they realized then that they were not in a position to protect themselves.
>
> So these guys are heroes from the word go. I hope their book sells a million copies.
>
> The problem is, what happened was, the commander on the ground, this guy they're calling "Bob," when these folks came up, they got in the vehicle and said, "Hey, we made a promise, we're going." He said, "Wait a minute, I need to figure out (a) what's going

on, and (b) if I can get you any better weapons and maybe even some help to go. We don't know if there is 5 people attacking the place or 500."

And so that dispute ended up—it wasn't even a dispute—it was the commander on the ground making a decision. I think it took 23 minutes before they all, including that commander by the way, got in a car and went over and rescued those individuals.[54]

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Ranking Member:

On September 5, 2014, Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, issued a statement:

> The bipartisan, unanimously adopted report by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) found that, prior to the CIA security team departing for the Temporary Mission Facility (TMF), the Annex leadership deliberated thoughtfully, reasonably, and quickly about whether further security could be provided to the team. Although some security officers voiced a greater urgency to depart for the compound, no evidence was ever found by the Committee that CIA personnel were ever told to stand down. This finding is consistent with the Senate's report on Benghazi, as well.
>
> The security officers and contractors told HPSCI about the roughly 25 minutes between the time that the Temporary Mission Facility alerted the Annex to being under attack and the time that the Annex team departed for the TMF to provide security support. The team said they were prepped and ready to go within minutes, but the senior CIA officers responsible for the welfare of all Annex personnel were concerned they might be sending their security team into an ambush so they tried to obtain better intelligence and heavy weapons before dispatching the team. In fact, a high ranking CIA official told the Committee that, had things had turned out differently and those sent to rescue the personnel at the TMF were killed on arrival, he knew he would be responding to criticism about why additional rescue plan options were not more thoroughly evaluated, and therefore, he would not second guess leadership decisions made on the ground that night.
>
> After interviewing these individuals, including those writing the book, and all of the others on the ground that night, both Republicans and Democrats on the House Intelligence Committee and the Senate Intelligence Committee concluded that there was not, in fact, an order to stand down and no evidence was found to support such a claim.
>
> The Chief and the team should be praised for their heroic efforts in the middle of a crisis, not second-guessed or criticized two years after the fact.[55]

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[54] *Fox & Friends,* Fox News (Sept. 9, 2014) (online at http://video.foxnews.com/v/3775239942001/isis-update-what-does-rep-rogers-want-to-hear-from-obama/#sp=show-clips).

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Ranking Member:

On September 8, 2014, Rep. Jan Schakowsky, Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued a statement:

> As Ranking Member on the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, I was intimately involved in our committee's extensive investigation into what went on during the tragedy on September 11, 2012 that cost Ambassador Christopher Stevens and three other Americans their lives.
>
> The committee spent thousands of hours examining a wide variety of documentation and conducted hours upon hours of interviews with eyewitnesses and intelligence officials, including the same individuals stating that their annex chief issued a "stand down" order.
>
> I strongly disagree with their characterization of the situation. The House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence unanimously approved its bipartisan report that conclusively lays this and other issues to rest once and for all. The committee found no evidence that a "stand down" order was issued.
>
> Instead, what occurred that September night was a series of decisions and judgment calls made by individuals trying desperately to save American lives. The committee found that our personnel in Benghazi reacted to the attack in a heroic manner as they worked to take control of the situation. We rely on our personnel stationed abroad each and every day to make tough decisions in dangerous, stressful, and often life-threatening circumstances. The September 2012 attack in Benghazi was one of these cases. Throughout our exhaustive investigation, we found no evidence whatsoever that the decisions made on the ground that night cost American lives, or that different decisions would have achieved a better result. I have full confidence in the actions taken by the annex chief during this attack and I am certain he did whatever he could to meet the challenges of the situation.[56]

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Senior Member:

On September 5, 2014, Rep. Adam Schiff, a Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and the House Select Committee on Benghazi, issued a statement:

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[55] *Statement by Ranking Member Dutch Ruppersberger,* House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (Sept. 5, 2014) (online at http://democrats.benghazi.house.gov/news/press-releases/cummings-issues-statement-on-latest-benghazi-allegations).

[56] *Statement by Rep. Jan Schakowsky*, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (Sept. 8. 2014) (online at www.schakowsky.house.gov/press-releases/schakowsky-statement-on-renewed-allegations-of-a-supposed-stand-down-order-in-benghazi-libya/).

> These so-called new allegations were examined in detail by both the House and Senate Intelligence Committees, which concluded that there was no 'stand down' order. Instead, we found that our personnel acted heroically and appropriately in trying to secure local assistance and avoid ambush. Nor did we find any evidence that a different course of action would have saved—rather than jeopardized—more lives. To second guess these decisions made in the fog of battle is both unfair to the brave personnel involved and highly irresponsible.[57]

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Republican Update:

In January 2014, Republicans on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued an "Update on Benghazi":

> The Annex response team acted heroically to evacuate Americans at the Temporary Mission Facility (TMF).
>
> - The team responded to a call for help and almost certainly saved lives despite putting the Annex at increased risk and not being a part of the TMF's formal security plan.
>
> - The Annex team had necessary authority to depart for the TMF. Once prepared, officers engaged in a tactical discussion about the threat they faced at the TMF, and what weapons and external support to bring to TMF. During the discussion, there was a delay as the tactical situation was discussed, but HPSCI found no evidence that the team was ordered or directed to stand down.[58]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

> Two armored vehicles were prepared so the security team could respond from the Annex. Approximately 20-25 minutes after the first call came into the Annex that the Temporary Mission Facility was under attack, a security team left the Annex for the Mission compound. In footage taken from the Annex's security cameras, the security team can be observed departing the CIA Annex at 10:03 p.m. Benghazi time. During the period between approximately 9:40 p.m. and 10:03 p.m. Benghazi time, the Chief of Base and security team members attempted to secure assistance and heavy weapons (such as .50 caliber truck-mounted machine guns) from the 17th February Brigade and other militias that had been assisting the United States. Then, the team drove to the Mission facility and made their way onto the Mission compound in the face of enemy fire, arriving in the vicinity of the compound at approximately 10:10 p.m. Benghazi time. The Committee

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[57] *Statement by Rep. Adam Schiff*, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (Sept. 5, 2014) (online at www.schiff.house.gov/press-releases/rep-adam-schiff-responds-to-new-benghazi-allegations/).

[58] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *HPSCI January 2014 Update on Benghazi* (Jan. 2014) (online at www.intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/HPSCIBenghaziUpdateJan2014.pdf).

explored claims that there was a "stand down" order given to the security team at the Annex. Although some members of the security team expressed frustration that they were unable to respond more quickly to the Mission compound, the Committee found no evidence of intentional delay or obstruction by the Chief of Base or any other party.[59]

...

According to informal notes obtained from the CIA, the security team left for the Annex without the formal approval of the Chief of Base, *see* attachments to e-mail from CIA staff [REDACTED] to CIA staff [REDACTED], September 23, 2012. However, a Memorandum for the Record prepared by the Deputy Chief of Base specifically states that the Chief "authorized the move" and the Chief told the Committee: "We launched our QRF [Quick Reaction Force] as soon as possible down to the State [Department] compound."[60]

Accountability Review Board Report:

Just prior to receiving the TDY RSO's distress call shortly after 2142 local, the head of Annex security heard multiple explosions coming from the north in the direction of the SMC. The Annex security head immediately began to organize his team's departure and notified his superiors, who began to contact local security elements to request support. The Annex response team departed its compound in two vehicles at approximately 2205 local. The departure of the Annex team was not delayed by orders from superiors; the team leader decided on his own to depart the Annex compound once it was apparent, despite a brief delay to permit their continuing efforts, that rapid support from local security elements was not forthcoming.[61]

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[59] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=5).

[60] *Id.* at fn. 13 (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=6).

[61] Accountability Review Board, *Report on the Attacks in Benghazi, Libya, September 2012* (Dec. 18, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=23).

QUESTION:

Did the Pentagon order four military personnel in Tripoli to "stand down?"

Rep. Jason Chaffetz: "We had proximity, we had capability, we had four individuals in Libya armed, ready to go, dressed, about to get into the car to go to the airport to go help their fellow countrymen who were dying and being killed and under attack in Benghazi and they were told to stand down. ... [T]hat's as sickening and depressing and disgusting as anything I have seen. That is not the American way. We had people that were getting killed, we had people who are willing to risk their lives to go save them and somebody told them to stand down."

Source: *Hannity,* Fox News (May 6, 2013) (online at www.foxnews.com/on-air/hannity/transcript/2013/05/07/president-obamas-benghazi-lies-unravel).

ANSWER:

Multiple bipartisan investigations have determined that no "stand down" order was issued to military personnel in Tripoli on the night of the attacks. U.S. military officials throughout the chain of command report that an order was issued "to remain in place" in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance, which saved the lives of wounded evacuees.

House Armed Services Committee Republican Staff Report:

> There was no "stand down" order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. However, because official reviews after the attack were not sufficiently comprehensive, there was confusion about the roles and responsibilities of these individuals.[62]

Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee Chair:

On June 27, 2013, Rep. Martha Roby, the Chair of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services and a Member of the Select Committee on Benghazi, stated during an interview:

> We also learned that Commander Gibson was not ordered to "stand down" by higher command authorities in response to an understandable desire to lead Special Forces group

[62] House Committee on Armed Services, *Majority Interim Report: Benghazi Investigation Update* (Feb. 2014) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C4E16543-8F99-430C-BEBA-0045A6433426#page=3).

> to Benghazi in the wake of the attack. Rather, he was ordered to remain in Tripoli to defend Americans in anticipation of further attacks. Commander Gibson acknowledged that had he deployed to Benghazi, not only would Americans in Tripoli have been left defenseless, but his forces could not have arrived in Benghazi soon enough to make a difference. These are important facts to clarify because there have been rumors and reports to the contrary.[63]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

> The Committee has reviewed the allegations that U.S. personnel, including in the IC or DoD, prevented the mounting of any military relief effort during the attacks, but the Committee has not found any of these allegations to be substantiated.[64]

Commander of Special Operations Command Africa:

On June 26, 2013, Rear Admiral Brian Losey, Commander of Special Operations Command Africa, provided a transcribed briefing to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services:

> There was never any order from Commander Special Operations Command Africa, myself, nor Commander Joint Special Operations Task Force Trans-Sahara to any elements in Libya to, quote, "stand down from responding to Americans under attack." The team deployed to Libya and had the inherent authority, direction, approvals, and rules of engagement to protect Americans and American interests.[65]

On March 14, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted another transcribed interview of Rear Admiral Losey:

> There was never an order to stand down. The order, as I communicated it to the director of operations, was to remain in place and continue to provide security in Tripoli because of the uncertain environment. That's piece number one.
>
> ...

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[63] *Roby Provides Update on Benghazi Investigation,* Website of Rep. Martha Roby (June 27, 2013) (online at www.roby.house.gov/press-release/roby-provides-update-benghazi-investigation).

[64] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=30).

[65] House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Briefing on AFRICOM and SOCAFRICA and the Terrorist Attacks in Benghazi, Libya on September 11, 2012* (June 26, 2013) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=ACD8F08D-39B9-4FD8-B98C-210BF9D11CD9#page=105).

So Colonel [REDACTED] had the latitude to move with the initial element that responded to the attacks had he chosen to do so. He chose to remain in place because of the security situation in Tripoli, the uncertainties, and the possibility of a cascading effect or plans that we didn't know about.

I think the second piece—and you mentioned Americans under attack. And I note that, even as DCM Hicks recounted that evening's events, he said specifically that that four-man element would have moved forward to provide airfield security, which was our understanding at the time that we said, remain in Tripoli.

Because, at that point, our understanding was that the Americans had been consolidated. ... Coordination for aircraft to bring back the wounded were already in effect. And the aircraft that was to take Colonel [REDACTED] back to Benghazi could not go wheels-up until sunrise. And that sunrise time was 0649 in Tripoli.

If you count in before morning nautical twilight, which I think is 15 minutes or so, and an hour-and-a-half transit for 416 miles at 300 knots, you're looking at not getting there until well after Americans had consolidated.

And still the primary concern, uncertainties of the security situation in Tripoli. The only four Americans, military, that were providing situational awareness on what was happening in Tripoli: the medic that was there, and, again, DCM Hicks specifically mentioned his nurse, Jackie, that stayed on station there. Ryan Self was later awarded for his actions in saving some lives down there on the ground.

So we didn't see a lot of benefit; we saw a significant tradeoff. Four guys could've—could have—added some measure to the airfield in Benghazi, but it was Colonel [REDACTED] and his communicator and a medic and a weapons operator, a weapons NCO with a broken foot or a foot in a cast. And our calculus was, you know, the tactical value of that as opposed to the situational awareness they were already providing for us in Tripoli and the uncertainties there were part of what drove our decision.[66]

Commander of Special Operations Team in Tripoli:

On June 26, 2013, the Commander of the four-man Special Operations Team in Tripoli on the night of the attacks, provided a transcribed briefing to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services:

Q: At the May 8 hearing of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, Gregory Hicks, who was the Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy

[66] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Rear Admiral Brian Losey (Mar. 14, 2014) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/6%20-%20March%2014%2C%202014%20-%20Rear%20Admiral%20Brian%20Losey.pdf#page=48).

in Tripoli that you have referred to, on the day of Benghazi attacks, he was asked by a Member, and I quote, "You believed help was needed in Benghazi, and there was a SOF unit, Special Operations unit, ordered to stand down, correct?" And Mr. Hicks replied "yes" to this question.

Do you agree that you and your team were ordered to, quote, "stand down"?

A: Madam Chairman, I was not ordered to stand down. I was ordered to remain in place. "Stand down" implies that we cease all operations, cease all activities. We continued to support the team that was in Tripoli. We continued to maintain visibility of the events as they unfolded.

Q: And, in hindsight, which we have tried in asking a lot of these questions to make sure that we are looking at this situation based on what you knew at the time, and, of course, looking back on what we know now, should you and your team have gone to Benghazi?

A: Madam Chairman, if we would have went to Benghazi, it could have had catastrophic—are you talking about the first plane or the second plane, Madam Chairman?

Q: The second plane, when you were told not to go.

A: The Special Forces medic was instrumental in providing the support to the wounded that returned. We would not have been in Tripoli in order to provide that support if we would have got on the plane. The decision by my higher headquarters to not get on that plane was the correct decision, in hindsight.[67]

On March 5, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of the Commander of the four-man Special Operations Team:

Q: [C]an you elaborate a bit more on what the Special Forces medic did at the airport and why he was so valuable to that effort?

A: I can't speak to specifics, sir, because I sent the team to the airport. But the report that I got from the guys on the team whenever they got back is he provided aid in transportation along with the U.S. embassy nurse for the two that were wounded. One was severely wounded. As I recall, he had three—he had wounds on three of his extremities, one arm, two legs. And he was—quite honestly, that right there is a catastrophic wound.

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[67] House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Briefing on AFRICOM and SOCAFRICA and the Terrorist Attacks in Benghazi, Libya on September 11, 2012* (June 26, 2013) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=ACD8F08D-39B9-4FD8-B98C-210BF9D11CD9#page=87).

He was able to stabilize him and get him to the hospital until they could get Medivac out. And I guess once they got him stabilized, they then went back and received the remains of Ambassador Stevens and the other that were killed, murdered, and was able to secure those remains and keep them away from the Libyan authorities, that at the time it's my understanding they wanted to provide an autopsy on the Americans that were killed. And the medic is—he's an imposing man. And so he was able to dissuade them from doing that.

Q: And when you say that he provided invaluable medical assistance, is it possible—possible he saved that individual's life?

A: Not being a—not being a doctor, that's my assessment. And everything that I heard is that, yes, he was instrumental in that.

Q: Okay. Thank you.

A: And for those actions, sir, if you will read later on in my testimony, he was recommended for the Bronze Star for those actions.[68]

On April 9, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of General Carter Ham, Commander of Africa Command:

Q: Is it still an accurate reflection, that you weren't in direct contact with Lieutenant Colonel [REDACTED]—

A: That is correct.

Q: —on the night of the attacks?

General Ham, you then continued to state this—or the exchange continues [from June 26, 2013 briefing before the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations], and I quote, "Mr. Conaway: Whose decision was that?

"General Ham: Rear Admiral Losey, as the commander of the Special Operations Command Africa.

"Mr. Conaway: Okay. Did you agree with that decision, I guess?

"General Ham: I didn't know of it at the time. I certainly agree with it now," close quote.

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[68] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Commander of Special Operations Team in Tripoli (Mar. 5, 2014) (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/3%20-%20March%205%2C%202014%20-%20LTC%2C%20Military%20Trainer.pdf#page=41).

General, I'd just like to ask, do you still agree that the order given by Admiral Losey was—do you still agree with that decision? And if so, why?

A: I do agree with Admiral Losey's decision. At the time, the situation in Tripoli was very uncertain. There was a real concern, significant concern on the part of the Embassy that the Embassy and its personnel in Tripoli might be threatened. And so there was a necessity to make sure there was adequate security there.

And Lieutenant Colonel [REDACTED] and his team were among the only security elements that could have played out—or could have contributed to security. And they did. It's my understanding after the fact that they were very significantly involved in securing the movement of U.S. personnel from one facility to consolidate in a single facility.

And, importantly, Lieutenant Colonel [REDACTED] had with him a medical person, well-trained, that was necessary. And I think, if I remember the timeline right, had Lieutenant Colonel [REDACTED] and team moved to Benghazi, then by the time the people from Benghazi actually got to Tripoli, there would not have been a medical person in Tripoli.

So it is very, very understandable to me why Lieutenant Colonel [REDACTED] wanted to go to Benghazi. Had I been in his shoes, I believe I would have wanted to do the same thing. But I believe the decision to say, no, you have a valid mission in Tripoli, unknown threat, I think, was a sound military decision.[69]

Later in the interview, he explained:

Q: Turning back again, General, to Exhibit 4, the June 26, 2013, transcript, I would like to draw your attention to an exchange on—at the bottom of page 36, the top of page 37.

This is an exchange between you and the chairman, and the chairman states, and I quote, "Sure, this might be a good time to ask. At some point, you know, in the months that have gone by, the intervening time, I heard that you made the statement that you were prepared to go to their aid, and somebody told you no, and you said, We are going anyway. Is that all some supposition that comes from some reporter?

"General Ham: Yes, sir, no one ever told me no," close quote.

General, did anyone on the night of the attacks ever instruct you to stand down or not go to the aid of Americans in Benghazi?

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[69] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of General Carter Ham (Apr. 9, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9 - April 9%2C 2014 - General Carter Ham.pdf#page=71).

A: They did not.[70]

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey:

On June 12, 2013, General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified at a hearing before the Senate Committee on the Budget:

Q: I wanted to ask Chairman Dempsey, in follow-up to what Senator Johnson just asked you about the attack on the consulate in Benghazi, something that I have wanted to know an answer to, which is that on February 7th you testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, and you were asked a question by Senator Graham, and he asked you whether General Ham had issued a stand-down order to the military personnel in Tripoli or elsewhere who were preparing to go to assist those in Benghazi.

Then we heard before the House Oversight Committee that Mr. Hicks, who was the former Deputy Chief of Mission, said that Colonel Gibson, who was on the ground in Tripoli, did receive a stand-down order, and so, General Dempsey, I have not had an opportunity to follow up with you based on the February 7th testimony. Mr. Hicks testified that he believed this stand-down order came from AFRICOM or Special Operations Command in Africa.

General Dempsey, can you help me understand who issued the stand-down order and what happened there, why the special forces that wanted to go with, I understand it, under Colonel Gibson in Tripoli were told not to go and who gave them that order, from there they wanted to go and help in Benghazi on that night?

A: Yes, thanks, Senator. Based on that testimony I went back and—

Q: I had a feeling you would. That is why I wanted to—

A: Yes, of course. And there were two different groups of—there were six people, not all working for the same command. Two of them were working with Joint Special Operations Command. They were collocated with another agency of Government in Tripoli. And four were working under the direct line of authority of Special Operations Command Europe—or AFRICOM, AFSOC. And it was the four you are speaking about. The other two went. The other four, by the time they contacted their command center in Stuttgart, they were told that the individuals in Benghazi were on the way back and that they would be better used at the Tripoli airport because one of them was a medic, that they would be better used to receive the casualties coming back from Benghazi, and that if they had gone, they would have simply passed each other in the air. And that is the answer I received.

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[70] *Id.* (online at www.armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9%20-%20April%209%2C%202014%20-%20General%20Carter%20Ham.pdf#page=126).

Q: Okay. So—

A: So they were not told to stand down. A stand-down means do not do anything. They were told to—that the mission they were asked to perform was not in Benghazi but was at Tripoli airport.

Q: Can I ask you, General, they had requested to go, though.

A: That is correct.

Q: They asked to go to support what was happening in Benghazi from Tripoli, correct?

A: That is correct.

Q: And they were told, from what you are saying, not to go because of the timing—

A: Because of timing and that they would be—they would contribute more by going to the Tripoli airport to meet the casualties upon return.[71]

Accountability Review Board Vice Chairman Admiral Michael Mullen:

On June 19, 2013, staff and Members from the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Admiral Michael Mullen, Vice Chairman of the independent Accountability Review Board and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

A: In fact, when I heard Mr. Hicks' testimony, I went—I specifically went to look at that aspect of what had happened. And in fact the direction that was given, I think it's Colonel Gibson, Lieutenant Colonel Gibson, I think—I know the direction that was given him, after he and his forces had helped Mr. Hicks redeploy, if you will, the Americans from the embassy compounds to the annex, after he had helped do that.

Attorney: Just to clarify, that's in Tripoli.

A: This is in Tripoli.

He checked in with his command, which was SOCAFRICA. And he was given direction to hold in place.

There was never direction given to him to stand down. He was then remissioned consistent with what General Dempsey said in his testimony the other day.

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[71] Senate Committee on the Budget, *Hearing on The President's Fiscal Year 2014 Defense Budget* (June 12, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113shrg85718/pdf/CHRG-113shrg85718.pdf#page=348).

Q: The four-person team that we've talked about staying behind in Tripoli, you had mentioned something along the lines of this was Mr. Hicks' only security left or something along those lines. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but can you repeat what you were saying?

A: Well, he has got—he used these individuals most of the night to reposition people out to the Annex, the Annex in Tripoli, and they were the only military members left that could provide any kind of security capability and capacity, and so from my perspective—and what doesn't get much discussion in all this is sort of the backdrop of Tripoli which everybody was concerned about before Benghazi, the Benghazi incident, during it, and after.

So from a commander's perspective there's some wisdom in telling him to hold in place until we can kind of sort this out, combined with the fact that by every indication it was over out east and everybody was coming back.

Q: And that was going to be my follow-up question. Was it known that Tripoli wouldn't experience an attack that night?

A: No.

Q: So that was a possibility?

A: Absolutely.[72]

...

Had Gibson and the other three gotten on an airplane, they would have flown past the plane bringing those who—out of Benghazi, some of whom were wounded. And an untold story here is the heroic efforts of the medic actually on that airport coming from Benghazi to Tripoli, which there are those that believe kept a couple of those wounded alive to get them to Tripoli, which would then allow continued triage to put them on a C-17 pretty rapidly and get them up to Landstuhl. So I say that because the focus of the medical aspect on this and the medic who remained in Tripoli was absolutely critical. That's where the focus was at that time.[73]

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[72] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Admiral Michael Mullen (June 19, 2013) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mullen-transcript.pdf#page=56).

[73] *Id.* (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mullen-transcript.pdf#page=57).

PolitiFact Rated Claim as "False":

On May 6, 2013, PolitiFact's "Truth-O-Meter" issued the following "ruling" regarding this claim:

> **Our ruling**
>
> Chaffetz told Fox News that "we had people that were getting killed, we had people who are willing to risk their lives to go save them and somebody told them to stand down."
>
> But it's clear from Hicks' testimony that four Americans "getting killed" in Benghazi were already dead when the decision was made to keep the Special Forces team in Tripoli. The mortar attack was over. A Defense Department drone watched overhead in Benghazi as Libyan militia members helped Americans get to the airport.
>
> Chaffetz, however, says the team was available to go save "people that were getting killed," calling the order to stand down "sickening and depressing and disgusting." His office clarifies he meant that the team might have prevented additional casualties if attacks had continued—an explanation utterly missing from his national TV appearance. We rate the claim False.[74]

[74] *Jason Chaffetz Says Americans Ready to Save Men 'Getting Killed' in Benghazi Were Told to Stand Down,* PolitiFact, Tampa Bay Times (May 6, 2013) (online at www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2013/may/14/jason-chaffetz/rep-jason-chaffetz-says-special-forces-ready-save-/).

QUESTION:

Did the Pentagon fail to deploy military assets that could have saved lives on the night of the attacks?

Rep. Trey Gowdy: "Well, Greta, your viewers would still have the same unanswered questions that we have … why we didn't have any assets moving during the siege itself?"

Source: *On the Record,* Fox News (May 6, 2014) (online at www.youtube.com/embed/KqsogIdiEOg?rel=0&showinfo=0&autohide=1).

ANSWER:

Interviews with nine military officials in the chain of command, numerous congressional reports, and the independent Accountability Review Board have all examined the military response. Each investigation has concluded that although the military allocated and mobilized various assets to address the crisis, their response was limited by the availability of resources and the status of forces on the night of the attacks.

AFRICOM Deputy Commander for Military Operations:

On March 20, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, conducted a transcribed interview of Charles J. Leidig, who served as Deputy Commander for Military Operations at Africa Command:

> From my perspective, being in the AFRICOM Command Center, we were given access to every capability that was available and as quickly as it could move. I never saw at any moment during the evening where whatever we needed people weren't doing their absolute best effort to get us that capability.[75]

House Armed Services Committee Republican Staff Report:

> When the Department of State learned the SMC was being assaulted on September 11, officials notified DOD's National Military Command Center at the Pentagon. Thus began a chain of events that involved DOD allocating various forces to the crisis. The response decisions were based upon what forces were available and could readily be brought to bear on the situation as it was understood by senior leaders.

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[75] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Vice Admiral Charles J. "Joe" Leidig, Jr. (Mar. 20, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/8 - March 20%2C 2014 - Vice Admiral Charles Leidig Jr..pdf#page=45).

> The first step DOD took upon learning of the attack involved a U.S. drone that was overflying Darnah, a city in northeastern Libya. AFRICOM's operations officer immediately redirected the unarmed Predator to Benghazi, which was about an hour's flight time away. Separately, following the meeting in the White House, Secretary Panetta (in consultation with General Ham, General Dempsey, and others) verbally authorized three specific actions. First, two Marine FAST platoons in Rota, Spain were ordered to prepare to deploy; one bound for Benghazi and one destined for Tripoli. Second, a special operations unit assigned to the European Command, known as a Commander's In-Extremis Force (CIF), which was training in Croatia was ordered to move to a U.S. Naval Air Station in Sigonella, Italy and await further instructions. Third, a special operations unit in the United States was also dispatched to the region. These orders were issued approximately two to four hours after the initial attack on the SMC.[76]

House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon:

On April 10, 2014, Rep. Howard "Buck" McKeon, Chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services, stated during an interview:

> I think I've pretty well been satisfied that given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did.[77]

On May 1, 2014, Chairman McKeon issued a press release responding to allegations raised by Brigadier General Robert Lovell at a hearing before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform:

> BG Lovell did not serve in a capacity that gave him reliable insight into operational options available to commanders during the attack, nor did he offer specific courses of action not taken. The Armed Services Committee has interviewed more than a dozen witnesses in the operational chain of command that night, yielding thousands of pages of transcripts, e-mails, and other documents. We have no evidence that Department of State officials delayed the decision to deploy what few resources DoD had available to respond.[78]

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[76] House Committee on Armed Services, *Majority Interim Report: Benghazi Investigation Update* (Feb. 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C4E16543-8F99-430C-BEBA-0045A6433426#page=17).

[77] *Chairman Satisfied With Military on Benghazi,* Associated Press (Apr. 10, 2014) (online at http://bigstory.ap.org/article/chairman-satisfied-military-benghazi).

[78] *McKeon Responds to Oversight and Government Reform Committee Witness on Benghazi,* House Committee on Armed Services (May 1, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/press-releases?ContentRecord_id=1E08C96C-27D0-495C-AC8D-9773E3ED76DB).

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

> The Committee has reviewed the allegations that U.S. personnel, including in the IC or DoD, prevented the mounting of any military relief effort during the attacks, but the Committee has not found any of these allegations to be substantiated.[79]

Independent Accountability Review Board Report:

> The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time given the speed of the attacks for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference. Senior-level interagency discussions were underway soon after Washington received initial word of the attacks and continued through the night. The Board found no evidence of any undue delays in decision making or denial of support from Washington or from the military combatant commanders. Quite the contrary: the safe evacuation of all U.S. government personnel from Benghazi twelve hours after the initial attack and subsequently to Ramstein Air Force Base was the result of exceptional U.S. government coordination and military response and helped save the lives of two severely wounded Americans. In addition, at the State Department's request, the Department of Defense also provided a Marine FAST (Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team) as additional security support for Embassy Tripoli on September 12.[80]

Accountability Review Board Vice Chairman Admiral Michael Mullen:

On June 19, 2013, staff from the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Admiral Michael Mullen, Vice Chairman of the independent Accountability Review Board and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

> A: I personally reviewed, and as the only military member of the ARB, I personally reviewed all of the military assets that were in theater and available. ...
>
> And we walked through the force posture in Europe, notionally, and looked at every single U.S. military asset that was there, and what it possibly could have done, whether it could have moved or not.
>
> And it was in that interaction that I concluded, after a detailed understanding of what had happened that night, that from outside Libya, that we'd done everything possible that we could.
>
> Q: Okay. And did you have access to all of the information you needed to address this question, both paper, videotapes, any hard material that you needed as well as individuals?

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[79] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=30).

[80] Accountability Review Board, *Report on the Attacks in Benghazi, Libya, September 2012* (Dec. 18, 2012) (online at www.state.gov/documents/organization/202446.pdf#page=37).

A: Yes.

...

Q: So your conclusion based on your experience, 40 years of experience, is that the military and the U.S. Government did everything that they could to respond to the attacks?

A: Yes.

...

Q: And you were able to essentially take the night of the attacks and almost work backwards and say, show me where all the assets were in theater or in that region or around the world, and you were able to look at the time components and sort of the logistics of what it would take to move from point A to B, and this includes naval, aviation, ground forces, all components of the military?

A: I did that twice.

Q: And you were satisfied?

A: I am.

...

[I]t does not seem to be, at least from a public standpoint, widely understood, we moved a lot of forces that night. They don't move instantly. But we had a significant force that was deployed doing other things, Special Operations Force in Europe, in Croatia, which was redeployed to a base in Southern Europe. We had a significant force from the United States which was deployed to a base in Southern Europe. So there were a lot of forces moving. And you make those packages, if you will, as robust as possible because you don't know when it's going to end and you don't know exactly what's going to happen next. And I'm very confident that was done.

All of that, while you're trying to put together the picture as rapidly as possible, moving a drone over—a UAV, unarmed UAV over Benghazi as rapidly as possible to give your—give yourself better situational awareness. That was done. You're pulling every single spring you possibly can to find out what's going on, including those forces that are—and this isn't just the Pentagon. This is—I certainly saw this in the State Department. I saw this in the intelligence community. From my review if you will.

> And you're piecing all that together to try to put together a plan to take whatever the next step is going to be, and it's all happening simultaneously, and from what I could see, it certainly was that night.[81]

AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham:

On April 9, 2014, staff and Members from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of General Carter Ham, who at the time of the attacks was the Commander of Africa Command:

> Q: General Ham, do you agree with Admiral Mullen's findings that the military did everything it could on the night of the attacks?
>
> A: I do.
>
> Q: And do you believe that Admiral Mullen has the capacity to evaluate the military movements and issues on the night of the Benghazi attacks?
>
> A: I do.[82]

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey:

On October 10, 2013, General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, provided a transcribed briefing to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services:

> Soon after I received the initial reports of the Benghazi attack, I discussed the situation with the Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, and with President Obama in a meeting that we had already scheduled that day on another topic.
>
> The President instructed us to use all available assets to respond to the attacks to ensure the safety of U.S. personnel in Libya and to protect U.S. personnel and interests throughout the region. Because threat streams increased in a number of locations simultaneously, we postured our forces to respond regionally as well as specifically to the events in Libya.
>
> In response to events in Benghazi, we deployed a Marine Fleet Antiterrorism Security team, or FAS, team as you probably know it. Prepared a second FAS platoon to deploy and moved the special operations force that was training in Croatia to a staging base in

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[81] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Admiral Michael Mullen (June 19, 2013) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mullen-transcript.pdf#page=53).

[82] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of General Carter Ham (Apr. 9, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9 - April 9%2C 2014 - General Carter Ham.pdf#page=47).

> Italy. We also deployed a special operations force from the continental United States to an intermediate staging base in southern Europe.[83]

Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates:

On May 12, 2013, former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates stated during an interview:

> I listened to the testimony of—both Secretary Panetta and General Dempsey. And—and frankly had I been in the job at the time, I think my decisions would have been just as theirs were. We don't have a ready force standing by in the Middle East. Despite all the turmoil that's going on, with planes on strip alert, troops ready to deploy at a moment's notice. And so getting somebody there in a timely way—would have been very difficult, if not impossible.
>
> And frankly, I've heard "Well, why didn't you just fly a fighter jet over and try and scare 'em with the noise or something?" Well, given the number of surface to air missiles that have disappeared from Qaddafi's arsenals, I would not have approved sending an aircraft, a single aircraft, over Benghazi under those circumstances.
>
> ...
>
> [W]ith respect to—sending in special forces or a small group of people to try and provide help, based on everything I have read, people really didn't know what was going on in Benghazi contemporaneously. And to send some small number of special forces or other troops in without knowing what the environment is, without knowing what the threat is, without having any intelligence in terms of what is actually going on the ground, I think, would have been very dangerous.
>
> And personally, I would not have approved that because we just don't it's sort of a cartoonish impression of military capabilities and military forces. The one thing that our forces are noted for is planning and preparation before we send people in harm's way. And there just wasn't time to do that.[84]

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[83] House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Briefing on the Defense Department's Force Posture in Anticipation of September 12, 2012* (Oct. 10, 2013) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C628BC78-60B3-4E44-B6BC-D4A0920E57E5#page=6).

[84] *Face the Nation*, CBS News (May 12, 2013) (online at www.cbsnews.com/news/gates-some-benghazi-critics-have-cartoonish-view-of-military-capability/).

QUESTION:

Did the Pentagon fail to deploy F-16s that would have saved lives?

Senator John McCain: "[T]here are a number of questions still unanswered, like, why couldn't we get a—at least an F-16 to fly over at low altitude while this attack was going on. Believe me, that scares people."

Source: *Your World Cavuto,* Fox News (May 8, 2013) (online at www.foxnews.com/on-air/your-world-cavuto/2013/05/09/mccain-saddened-not-surprised-benghazi).

ANSWER:

The House Armed Services Committee, the independent Accountability Review Board, and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence determined that no F-16s or other strike aircraft could have responded in time to save lives. AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey, former Defense Secretary Robert Gates, and other military experts all explained that F-16s were not the appropriate military response given the posture of the forces and the risks involved.

House Armed Services Committee Republican Staff Report:

> The Department of Defense had no armed drones or manned aircraft prepared for combat readily available and nearby on September 11. Secretary Panetta told the Senate in February 2013 that armed Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), AC-130 ground attack gunships, or other similar planes "were not in the vicinity." Mr. Reid echoed this to the House Armed Services Committee in May 2013 when he declared "[g]iven the time and distance factors involved, dispatching an armed aircraft to Benghazi was not an option available to us at the time."
>
> As the result of a specific request from the committee, DOD accounted for the location of each of its AC-130 aircraft in the military's inventory. DOD reported to the committee that no AC-130s were in the region in the days before the Benghazi attack, including for maintenance, crew rest, or merely transiting through the area. However, DOD also reported to the committee that some of these planes were deployed to "southern Europe" on September 14, in order "to support operations in North Africa."
>
> Similarly, the U.S. Air Force F-16 fighters stationed at Aviano, Italy at the time were configured for training flights. None were on combat alert. Furthermore, unlike typical preparations during the Cold War, NATO allies also had no planes on war-fighting status. This meant other nations could not offer combat aircraft to respond on behalf of the United States.

In considering possible threats in the AFRICOM region before the Benghazi attack, General Ham told the committee he personally dismissed the prospect of requesting a higher alert status or repositioning some U.S. F-16s. This is because he doubted their utility to any threat his command might face on September 11. Even after the attack started, General Ham and others in the Department discounted the possibility of beginning the process to arm and dispatch one or more of these fighters. Officials also worried about the presence of shoulder-fired Surface-to-Air missiles in Libya, the difficulty of vectoring any planes safely over the desired location, and the challenge of distinguishing friend from foe on the ground.

Military leaders apparently believed that in the time needed to recall aircrews, and reconfigure planes from training to combat status, the events in Benghazi would have subsided. As Major General Roberson explained in a briefing to the U.S. Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence, sending a plane from Aviano would have required assembling munitions for the aircraft and then the military would need to "load weapons, get tankers to support it, and get [the fighter] there [to Benghazi]. There was no way that we were going to be able to do that."

As General Roberson described, it would have taken a long time to prepare aircraft and make aerial fueling arrangements so planes would have sufficient range to fly to Benghazi, loiter overhead, and then return to base. From their other responsibilities in overseeing DOD and from consultations with a recently-retired fighter pilot well acquainted with such matters, majority members are aware of many other complex elements that must have been considered before deciding (or not) to deploy planes for combat. For example, they must be equipped with countermeasures to defend against antiaircraft weapons and radar-equipped control aircraft (commonly known as AWACS), and search and rescue crews also typically need to be positioned in the area. Furthermore, it is necessary to have communications with friendly forces on the ground to ensure proper targeting.[85]

...

Although the committee will continue to gather and assess information on this topic, it seems that had the risks been deemed acceptable and one or more unarmed fighter aircraft were flown over Benghazi, the effort would probably have been ineffective. Even if such planes could have been dispatched in a timely manner, it would have been extraordinarily difficult for pilots (even with night vision capability) to identify and overfly attackers in very low light. Furthermore, to minimize the antiaircraft threat, an overflight would probably taken place at a relatively high altitude and this would have lessened the putative deterrent effect on enemy forces arrayed far below. This is especially the case because the Benghazi attackers demonstrated that they were the sort of experienced fighters that Major General Roberson warned might be less fearful of an

[85] House Committee on Armed Services, *Majority Interim Report: Benghazi Investigation Update* (Feb. 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C4E16543-8F99-430C-BEBA-0045A6433426#page=19).

unarmed overflight. Those who struck the U.S. facilities seemed to have carefully planned their actions, scouted the scene beforehand, and were able to skillfully and accurately employ mortar fire.

Nonetheless, some have suggested that dispatching unarmed aircraft should have been considered, at least as an interim step before more about the attack and potential response became known. In this reading, had one or more jets been launched, a recall order could have been issued before arriving over Benghazi if problems arose with refueling or overflight permissions, or if a preferable alternative was developed in the meantime. But, in light of all these factors, majority members believe the use of unarmed aircraft, with no countermeasure capability, refueling arrangements, or targeting assistance, amidst a dangerous antiaircraft environment, would have offered only a small likelihood of benefitting those under attack. It makes sense that this remote option was apparently not more actively contemplated.[86]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

There were no U.S. military resources in position to intervene in short order in Benghazi to help defend the Temporary Mission Facility and its Annex on September 11 and 12, 2012.[87] ...

According to Major General Darryl Roberson, Vice Director of Operations for the Joint Staff:

> There were no ships available to provide any support that were anywhere close to the facility at Benghazi. The assets that we had available were Strike Eagles loaded with live weapons that could have responded, but they were located in Djibouti, which is the equivalent of the distance between here [Washington D.C.] and Los Angeles. The other fighters that might have been available were located in Aviano, Italy. They were not loaded with weapons. They were not on an alert status. We would've had to build weapons, load weapons, get tankers to support it, and get it there. There was no way that we were going to be able to do that. Unfortunately, there was not a carrier in the Mediterranean that could have been able to support; the assets that we mobilized immediately were the only assets we had available to try to support.[88]

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[86] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C4E16543-8F99-430C-BEBA-0045A6433426#page=22).

[87] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=29).

[88] *Id.*

Accountability Review Board Vice Chairman Admiral Michael Mullen:

On September 19, 2013, Admiral Michael Mullen, Vice Chair of the independent Accountability Review Board and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified before the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform:

> [T]here has been great discussion given to fast movers: Could you get a jet over Benghazi because there are jets in Europe? We have—our readiness condition at that—on that particular night, there were no planes sitting at the ready. So it is 2:00 in the morning. There are no planes on alert. It is 2 and a half to 3 hours to fly there. Tanker support is 4 hours away. You need host nation support for where they are to get permission to fly, particularly combat-ready jets, out of that country. You have got to go get the bomb racks. You have got to stet the munitions together. You have got to plan the mission. There are a tremendous number of details that have to go on. You have to bring the pilots in, pre-brief them, et cetera. Takes hours and hours and hours to do if you are not sitting at the ready when this happened.[89]

His testimony continued with this exchange:

> Q: You said that no planes were at the ready. That was your testimony in Cairo, Admiral, with all due respect—
>
> A: At the time of the attack, Mr. Chaffetz, the readiness status there were no strip alert aircraft ready to go.
>
> …
>
> Q: Europe actually had more assets that were closer than Djibouti, correct?
>
> A: They were not in a readiness condition to respond.
>
> Q: And that's what we fundamentally do not understand. Did you talk to anybody who did want to move forward? Was there anybody that you came across that did want to engage—
>
> A: Everybody in the military wanted to move forward. Everybody in the military wanted to do as much they can. There were plenty of assets moving. It became a physics problem, and it's a time and distance problem. Certainly that is who we are, to try to help when someone is in harm's way.
>
> Q: And the fundamental problem is they didn't. They didn't get there in time. … There were other people that wanted to go. Like Lieutenant Colonel Gibson I wish you or the ARB had spoken to them, because it is an embarrassment to the

[89] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *Hearing on the Reviews of the Benghazi Attacks and Unanswered Questions* (Sept. 19, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg85095/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg85095.pdf#page=40).

United States of America that we could not get those assets there in time to help those people. We didn't even try, we didn't ask for permission, we didn't ask for flight clearances, we didn't even stand up the assets we had in Europe. We didn't even try.

A: I disagree with what you're saying, Mr. Chairman.

Q: You just told me that they did not even get to the ready. They were never asked. You presided as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs when we bombed Libya for months we did so in connection with our NATO partners and you never asked those NATO partners to help and engage that night.

A: I actually commanded NATO forces, and the likelihood that NATO could respond in a situation like that was absolutely zero.[90]

On June 19, 2013, staff and Members of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Admiral Mullen:

Q: [D]id you investigate whether the military could have sent fast-mover assets, such as F-16s, to Benghazi on the night of the attack? And, if so, what did you conclude?

A: We did—we did investigate that. And consistent with what I said previously, it was not realistic to think that we could task fast movers, jets, notionally in Aviano, Italy, 2 to 3 hours' flying time away, without tankers, which were a minimum of 4 hours away in the middle of the night with no previous tasking. So General Dempsey's testimony in February, and I think consistent with what Secretary Panetta said in terms of being able to move forces more rapidly, which we all wanted to do. I am particularly sympathetic to Mr. Hicks' frustration with what he was going through, can we get help now. There's no one I've ever met in the military that wouldn't want to get help there instantly. The physics of it, the reality of it, it just wasn't going to happen for 12 to 20 hours. And I validated that in my review when I went to the Pentagon to look at every single asset that was postured in theater, including those jets in Aviano.[91]

Wing Commander of the 31st Fighter Wing at Aviano Air Base in Italy:

On March 12, 2014, staff of the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee conducted a transcribed interview of Brigadier General Scott Zobrist, who at the time was the Wing Commander of the 31st Fighter Wing at Aviano Air Base in Italy:

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[90] *Id.* (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113hhrg85095/pdf/CHRG-113hhrg85095.pdf#page=56).

[91] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Admiral Michael Mullen (June 19, 2013) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mullen-transcript.pdf#page=58).

Q: The idea that you could send an unarmed, naked aircraft as rapidly as possible to Libya to do some sort of flyover the minute somebody heard that something was going on, do all the same limitations apply? And, if so, could you just sort of walk through that?

A: Yes, sir. Yes, the same limitations apply and even more so. I was, quite honestly, surprised that that had been insinuated as a viable option for a variety of reasons. First of all—

Q: I'm sorry. When you say "insinuated"—

A: In the press. I'm sorry. Thank you for clarifying.

When I read the press that there were individuals that had suggested that that should have been considered and, in fact, done, I won't take issue with considering—we should consider all options, because we have a flexible force. But the risks that would have been assumed by the military, by the United States of America, by the wing commander of the 31st Fighter Wing, and my airmen and their family would have been incredible.

And I don't think I would have been able to explain, should we have executed something like that, I could not have explained to that airman's spouse, when I handed him or her the flag, why I was doing this. And why we had done that.

There are some situations that, in my professional military opinion, there are some situations that—that warrant extremis types of military operations. But almost all of those situations involve a certain level of posturing. We have in extremis CAS, Close Air Support, in the desert that we are prepared to execute. That said, when it is executed, it's done very carefully, and they train to it and talk about it and it has been thought through.

To my knowledge, no United States military aircraft has ever taken off on no-notice or short-notice from a foreign country and overflown, unarmed, another foreign country with no resources, no support.

I did read a retired military officer said that you could have flown down there and punched off your fuel tanks and flown over and landed somewhere else. That would have been almost impossible to do. It's a thousand miles away. While this individual said they had flown at Aviano, I'm not sure that the same range is applied to the platform they were flying. Be very challenging to do.

And I think it's also worth noting, since you bring it up, that the concept of a show of force is—certainly not a new concept. And the concept of a show of force, the majority of people who think about it and talk about it have an understanding formed in Afghanistan and Iraq where there are certain conditions, I think, that would suggest a show of force may have the potential to be effective.

> The definition of "effective" probably in this case being whether or not the hostile activity ceases after you overfly it.
>
> And I would differentiate between Afghanistan and Iraq and the situation in Benghazi or something similar in the new normal where the hostile entities on the ground have to be conditioned so that they take some action when aircraft flies over. Why do they do that in Afghanistan or Iraq? Because for years, after the airplane flew over the first time, the next time the bomb blew somebody up. And so they understood that the noise meant that there was a threat.
>
> There are also certain conditions. Daytime, it tended to be more effective because you could—we had multiple sources of seeing non urban environment, because they know we're not going to drop bombs in an urban environment.
>
> So that the situation that developed in Benghazi was, even if you could have had airplanes overhead in an Afghanistan-style scenario, orbiting for many days on end, ready to go do that, it still would have been questionable whether or not the conditions were right for a show of force like that.
>
> Would I allow—would I have allowed my airmen to take off? Certainly not single ship. But even as a two ship, in the middle of the night, with no guidance on where to go, if the they could even get airborne, with the lack of flight plan, et cetera, I'm not sure that I would even, in my good military judgment, if I could let them do that. Nor do I think my commanders would ask me to do that because of the limitations, the probability of success would be so low and the risk would be so high, and we would actually make—potentially make the situation worse by having – now having to deal with a downed airman or a crash scenario. Or perhaps something else along those lines, a combat search and rescue. So it would have been very challenging to do that.[92]

He also stated:

> I personally would have a hard time sending an airman out the door without a decent awareness of the battlefield or the airspace in which they are going to go fly. And that night, I will just say that there was certainly a lot of confusion, and it was a rapidly changing environment, and we did not have a machine in place to handle this—the pop-up event. And so I believe that, again, I don't put words in the chairman's mouth but from an F-16 pilot's perspective, based on my experience, in F-16; or F-15E or any of our other fighter aircraft, would have limited effectiveness in dispersing a crowd or in an urban environment, especially with very little awareness.[93]

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[92] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Brigadier General Scott Zobrist (Mar. 12, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/5r%20-%20March%2012%2C%202014%20-%20Brigadier%20General%20Scott%20Zobrist.pdf#page=104).

[93] *Id* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/5r - March 12%2C 2014 - Brigadier General Scott Zobrist.pdf#page=59).

He also stated:

> The distances involved to the north part of Africa from the north part of Italy where we operated from was roughly 1,009 miles. The distance from D.C. to Kansas City. D.C. to KC is the way I think about it.
>
> That would require roughly two air refuelings. Again, a significant amount of planning goes into, if you are planning on the gas station being there when you are down below an eighth of a tank, it had better be there when you are driving a car, and the same goes for forward combat operations.
>
> So a significant amount of planning would need to go into getting a tanker in that area as well.[94]

AFRICOM Commander General Carter Ham:

On June 26, 2013, General Carter Ham, who at the time of the attacks was the Commander of U.S. Africa Command, provided a transcribed briefing to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services:

> And as I look back on the events of that night and say—and think in my own mind would air have made a difference? And in my military judgment, I believe the answer is no. It was a very uncertain situation in an environment which we know we had an unknown surface-to-air threat with the proliferation particularly of shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles, many of which remain unaccounted for. But mostly it was a lack of understanding of the environment, and hence the need for the Predator to try to gain an understanding of what was going on.
>
> So again, I understand that others may disagree with this, but it was my judgment that close air support was not the right tool for that environment.[95]

On April 9, 2014, staff and Members of the House Armed Services Committee and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee conducted a transcribed briefing with General Ham:

> Q: General, you touch on some examples here, but can you just maybe explain for us more what you mean when you say that the attack of fighter aircraft was, quote, "not the right tool for the environment," close quote?

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[94] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/5r - March 12%2C 2014 - Brigadier General Scott Zobrist.pdf#page=49).

[95] House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Briefing on AFRICOM and SOCAFRICA and the Terrorist Attacks in Benghazi, Libya on September 11, 2012* (June 26, 2013) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=ACD8F08D-39B9-4FD8-B98C-210BF9D11CD9#page=46).

A: In the days and weeks leading up to September 11th across the Africa Command area of responsibility, we had a lot of focus on what intelligence, is there intelligence that would indicate that an attack against U.S. persons or facilities or interests is imminent, how ought we best posture our force, and what's the nature of the type of attacks that we could, we might anticipate, and so, in that time, my assessment was with lots of input, obviously, from the staff and from the service component commanders of Africa, saying Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Special Operations, the view was if there is going, if there is going to be an attack on September 11th, to the best of my knowledge, there hadn't been an attack, a significant attack on the anniversary of September 11th prior, but if there was going to be an attack, it was likely to be an improvised explosive device or a car bomb or a sniper or a kidnapping, some mission like that or an attack like that against American persons or facilities or interests. If those were, and I thought they were, the more likely types of attacks that we could anticipate, then how ought we be best postured to militarily respond to that, to those kind of attacks? And in that consideration I considered, and the staff, we had obviously, it wasn't just a single person, but the staff helping me through this, I came to the conclusion that close air support was not a militarily appropriate response to the types of events that we envisioned, at least that I envisioned that might occur on September 11th. So based upon that, I could have but chose not to direct the air component commander to place strike aircraft on heightened alert because, again, in my assessment, that wasn't the nature of the response that we would need.

Q: And was there anything, did those circumstances change on the night of the attack? In other words, was there any information that would have caused you to revise or reassess that decision?

A: Again, as I look back to how the events were unfolding in real time, the staff I'm sure had, the Africa Command staff I'm sure had a more exhaustive conversation with the Air Component Command, but I did consider one of the responses that we did talk about, that I did talk about with my staff was, is there an air response to this? We looked at the posture of aircraft, but overriding that to me was, again, not the right military instrument to respond in this circumstance, and then, again, I will go back to my general overview that says, in my recollection, about an hour after the attack began, it largely subsided, and the team from the Annex had moved all the Americans, less the Ambassador, back to the Annex. Again, the fighting significantly subsided. It didn't appear that there was any specific significant military action directed against U.S. personnel in Benghazi at that point, and so, again, just in my mind reaffirmed my decision that air was not a good response and, at this point, not needed because the attack had largely subsided.

Q: Thank you, General, that's very helpful. So, on the night of, it does sound to us like you gave at least that option some sort of serious thought or you or at the Joint Staff level rather than something that was just quickly considered and dismissed, is that a fair assessment?

A: Yes. Again, when an incident like this occurs, the staff, the operations and intelligence staff at the Command is now again first trying to gain situational understanding and secondly, what are the best methods? You know, how ought we be prepared to respond? What are the options that we want to lay out? And certainly an air response was one of those considerations. Ultimately, it was my decision that said no, not the right response in this circumstance.

Q: General, many military experts have also added to this conversation and stated that not only the considerations that you just mentioned but that it would have also been impractical to deploy either attack or strike aircraft on the night of the attacks. For instance, Admiral Mullen, General Dempsey, they both publicly testified that some sort of fast mover in the region would have taken 20 hours to spool up and deploy. Was that fact generally well understood within AFRICOM, that it would take a significant amount of time to, given the alert status at the time, to prep an aircraft?

A: Yes. So there was—again, as the events were unfolding, one of the things the operations center does is make sure it has open lines of communication with the component. So the air component, which was headquartered in Ramstein, to have a clear understanding of what the capabilities would be. So I think there was a very clear understanding of the timelines that might be required for the deployment of air forces, and again as the attacks subsided, significantly subsided in Benghazi, it appeared that again that was perhaps the wrong instrument.

The other challenge, of course, I think, is a very uncertain environment. We knew there was a proliferation particularly of manned portable air defense systems, and—

Q: How serious was that threat?

A: Well, it was unknown. We knew there were manned portable systems since the collapse of the Qadhafi regime that were unaccounted for and certainly some large number of them in my view, and I think the intelligence would support this under, you know, under control of either militia or violent extremist organizations in Libya, so it was a very unclear situation there, and I think this applies generally with the whole idea of hypotheticals or, you know, what if. We don't really know what had happened, had I made a different decision, had strike aircraft deployed, we don't really know what the outcome would have been. Maybe it would have been positive, but maybe it would have got shot down. Maybe it would have killed civilians. I mean, there's so many unknowns if we go down the hypothetical path that I'm reluctant to do so.[96]

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[96] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of General Carter Ham (Apr. 9, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9r%20-%20April%209%2C%202014%20-%20General%20Carter%20Ham.pdf#page=66).

General Ham also had this exchange:

> Q: Is it accurate that you had assets that could have responded, but they did not because the request wasn't made of you?
>
> A: I think it, again, depends on one's perspective. There certainly were strike aircraft in Europe, and in some people's views, those strike aircraft were available to respond. In my military judgment, they were not the right instrument to apply in this particular circumstance. So, again, I think it probably depends on your point of view as to whether there were assets available that were not employed.
>
> As the combatant commander, again, I would say that any force that I requested of the Secretary of Defense, forces that I needed his approval to move, the Commander's In-Extremis Force, the Fleet Antiterrorism Support Team, [REDACTED] in each circumstance the Secretary of Defense, with the advice of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, gave verbal approval when I asked and then followed that up with written execution orders to deploy those forces.
>
> Q: But, again, with respect to the aviation assets, for instance, the reason you didn't deploy those was not because nobody asked you to but, rather, because you had reached some sort of independent determination or participated in some sort of consultative process, is that—
>
> A: I had. In the lead up to September 11th, the staff and I and the Air Component Commander considered heightening the alert status of strike aircraft. I chose not to do that because I did not feel that those assets were the right tool in response to the likely types of attacks that might occur or incidents that might occur on September 11th, and on the night of September 11th and 12th, again, I didn't think that, given the uncertainty of the situation, given the complexity of a large urban environment, and the fact that the first attack subsided pretty significantly about an hour or so after it began, that it was my military judgment that strike aircraft, close air support were not the appropriate tool.[97]

General Ham also had this exchange:

> Q: To talk just briefly about the fighter aircraft, the Aviano fighter wing, you've explained why that was an inappropriate tool to posture differently that day, on that day. I understand that explanation.
>
> Just for the record, I want to establish that, on the night of the attack, just as you considered fighter aircrafts at Aviano an inappropriate tool, in your mind, to use at the issue under way, presumably you considered NATO attack aircraft equally inapplicable to the scene, to the events in Benghazi?

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[97] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9r - April 9%2C 2014 - General Carter Ham.pdf#page=125).

A: My thought wasn't specific to Aviano. It was more a discussion of our strike aircraft; is close air support an appropriate tool to use in this circumstance. And my military judgment was, no, it was not.

Q: So—

A: I do not recall that we had a conversation that said, okay, you don't want to use American aircraft, would you use—I think it was—once I had made a decision and said, I don't think close air support is the right tool, I don't think there was a further discussion.[98]

AFRICOM Deputy Commander for Military Operations:

On March 20, 2014, staff of the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Vice Admiral Charles J. Leidig, who served as Africa Command's Deputy Commander for Military Operations:

Q: Sir, this exhibit is some testimony that was given before the Senate Armed Services Committee on February 7 of 2013. And it involves a discussion between a Senator and Joint Chiefs of Staff General Dempsey. And it's involving the F-16 issue, and about why F-16s from Aviano couldn't have been used. And if I can just draw your attention to page 30 at the bottom.

A: All right.

Q: And the question was, why couldn't these F-16s be used? And one of the answers was because, you know, it was going to take a considerable amount of time; in this case, he says, 20 hours to get them there. Do you generally agree with that assessment that it would have taken a—

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And then the other answer that he provides is he says it was the wrong tool for the job. And I am just wondering if you can opine on your expertise of this platform and whether or not it was in fact the wrong tool for the job, even assuming you could have gotten them there.

A: I mean, I think it's a hypothetical question from my perspective. I mean that my best answer is I was dealing with reality. They weren't available. And so that's not a tool that I have available in my tool kit. And so I wasn't able to use it in any way. I considered options for employment of F-16s, but in this case, since they weren't available, I didn't use them.

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[98] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/9r - April 9%2C 2014 - General Carter Ham.pdf#page=159).

Q: So you looked, they weren't available?

A: I looked at—what we specifically did is we asked what the military options are. Having fighter aircraft fly to Benghazi is an option. How would we employ them? We looked at options on how they might be employed. But then when you apply the final test is, is it an executable mission? The answer is it was not. They would not be available. For a guy dealing—for a guy like me commanding the crisis, it doesn't—it isn't worth my effort to spend much more time thinking about what to do with F-16s when they are not going to be available for, as the Chairman said, at least 20 hours.[99]

Admiral Leidig also stated:

> When I got a brief report and examined the availability of fighters, it was completely infeasible to have fighters available that night. There were no crews. There was no weapons. There was no pre-brief. They were on, the ones in Aviano are on an Italian airfield, and maybe you've heard all this before, and they can't get to Benghazi and back. They don't have enough gas to get there, so then you have to have tankers. The tankers are all in Europe or in northern—or in England or Northern Europe. Same thing, you have to call crews in, get them briefed, get them up, flight time, get them down there.
>
> Reconstruction that I recall after the event was that it would have taken at least 24 hours to get a fighter over to Benghazi, but we were looking into it, but there was no way we were going to get any aircraft there that night. So we were relying on the UAV; I believe it was a Predator that was up and overhead looking, but again, we weren't getting much information.[100]

AFRICOM Director of Operations and Cyber:

On March 18, 2014, staff of the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Rear Admiral Richard Landolt, Africa Command's Director of Operations and Cyber:

Q: And you and your team that were sitting in the room at this time throwing up options about fighter aircraft or the FAST, who was the final decision making authority in the room? Was there any heated debate about any of these topics where someone had to make a decision on—

A: There were no heated debates that evening. There were discussions, and Vice Admiral Leidig would take what we considered to General Ham, and I remember

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[99] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Vice Admiral Charles J. "Joe" Leidig, Jr. (Mar. 20, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/8r - March 20%2C 2014 - Vice Admiral Charles Leidig Jr..pdf#page=59).

[100] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/8r - March 20%2C 2014 - Vice Admiral Charles Leidig Jr..pdf#page=29).

at some point General Ham said with regard to getting attack aircraft, that we considered it and then said, I don't see a need for this.

Q: So that decision went all the way up to General Ham who—

A: It did.

Q: —ultimately decided against it.

A: I recall a Tandberg [teleconference] where this was discussed, and we said just said no. I think—I think now that was before 4 o'clock, before the second attack, kind of what we discussed what do we need to do here, so and then I remember N Plus 16 was given us by the Air Force folks, which means really you're not going to get anything there within 24 hours.

Q: Sorry, you mean for the FAST moving attack?

A: That's correct, out of Aviano.[101]

He also had this exchange:

Q: I think you said that you and Admiral Leidig and maybe General Ham had a discussion about the possibility of dispatching F-16s from Aviano. And did I understand you to say that in those discussions you decided that you could have or would have used the F-16s had we had them available?

A: Yeah. It gets back to the N+16. I mean, the N+16 immediately tells me they are not available this evening.

Q: So am I to understand then that had calls been made or word came back that F-16s are available, that would have been a tool that you would have considered utilizing that evening?

A: Well, sure. And, say, if I had an aircraft carrier off the coast or in the Med, you know, that would have been in the mix. I'm almost positive that Admiral Leidig talked to Lieutenant General Franklin, who is Air Force Africa commander, and once we heard N+16, you know, that's not helpful. And then I think Admiral Leidig had a conversation with General Ham saying, you want us to press and go ahead and get the F-16s, and he said no. I'm pretty sure General Ham said no on

[101] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Rear Admiral Richard B. Landolt (Mar. 18, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/7r%20-%20March%2018%2C%202014%20-%20Rear%20Admiral%20Richard%20Landolt.pdf#page=34).

F-16s knowing that N+16 doesn't give you anything, because it's a little too late.[102]

U.S. Army Lt. Colonel at Embassy Tripoli:

On February 28, 2014, staff of the House Armed Services Committee and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview with a Lieutenant Colonel serving in the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli on the night of the attacks:

Q: Did you ever have discussions about the possibility of ground troops of some sort arriving in Tripoli?

A: No, we did not discuss that.

Q: How about an AC-130?

A: Well, we didn't talk specific platforms. You are asking for a capability. Do you want a strike capability or do you want an evac, you know, a lift capability. We were focused on the lift capability. I know there was some discussion about having a strike capability, whatever that might be, whether—again, I don't get into the specific platforms, whether it is an F-15 or a C-130J gunship.

No, we didn't talk about those, but we also recognized up front we were primarily focused on evacuation, because if we didn't have a good picture on the ground, we weren't sure what a kinetic capability would be used for since we didn't have enough eyes forward to kind of determine what a target would be.

Q: So bear with me for just a second. So, in the strike capability, you had brief conversations about that, an extended conversation, a cursory conversation?

A: A brief conversation.

Q: And the upshot of those brief conversations was that such strike capability was not possible? Applicable?

A: At the time, we didn't think it was applicable, and the piece was, you know, I worked as a battle captain for Odyssey Dawn. I knew where the battle aircraft were located. I also kind of had—you know, I understand that they are probably coming out of Aviano at best. And just by doing the simply math in my head, knowing by the time they even got there, those aircraft would not be able to return. We still wouldn't know whether there were strikes. There was still no fuelers that were in the area. That I knew. So what I thought was focus on the

[102] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/7r%20-%20March%2018%2C%202014%20-%20Rear%20Admiral%20Richard%20Landolt.pdf#page=66).

evacuation capability because it was unlikely that a strike capability would be available.

Q: And in the strike capability aspect, speaking to that now, did you convey that to the others that you were working with within the TOC?

A: [REDACTED] and I had briefly talked about it saying what would be the pros and cons to it. Again, since we weren't sure what we had on the ground, we weren't sure that it could cause greater problems; it could cause the local indigenous forces to turn. You know, we had gone through all those options in our head. We figured, at the time, the best option was just to focus, get the evacuation assets as best we could.

Q: And did you have any indication for you personally to convey those impressions of the strike options to the deputy chief of mission?

A: I do not know. If that occurred, that occurred between [REDACTED] and the chief of mission. All I focused on again was I told him – he asked about fast movers.

Q: Who is "he"?

A: I am sorry, Greg Hicks, the DCM. At the time, we said not sure that could arrive any faster than the evacuation aircraft. We are working all options. All I know that the planners back at AFRICOM were also looking at all options. But that capability was kind of understood not to be readily available any faster than an evacuation capability.[103]

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey:

On February 7, 2013, General Martin Dempsey, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, testified at a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee:

> First, is that in order to deploy them it requires the—this was the middle of the night, now. These were not aircraft on strip alert. They're there as part of our commitment to NATO and Europe. So as we looked at the timeline, it was pretty clear that it would take up to 20 hours or so to get them there. Second, Senator, importantly, it was the wrong tool for the job.[104]

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[103] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Embassy Tripoli (Feb. 28, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/2r%20-%20February%2028%2C%202014%20-%20LTC%2C%20Office%20of%20Security%20Cooperation.pdf#page=53).

[104] Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearing on Department of Defense's Response to the Attack on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya and the Findings of Its Internal Review Following the Attack* (Feb. 7, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113shrg86489/pdf/CHRG-113shrg86489.pdf#page=42).

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta:

On February 7, 2013, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta testified at a hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee:

> Some have asked why other types of armed aircraft were not dispatched to Benghazi. The reason is because armed UAVs, AC–130 gunships, or fixed-wing fighters with the associated tanking—you've got to provide air refueling abilities—armaments—you've got to arm all the weapons before you put them on the planes—targeting and support facilities were not in the vicinity of Libya. And because of the distance, it would have taken at least 9 to 12 hours, if not more, to deploy these forces to Benghazi.
>
> This was, pure and simple, in the absence, as I said, of any kind of advance warning, a problem of distance and time. Frankly, even if we were able to get the F–16s or the AC–130s over the target in time, the mission still depends on accurate information about what targets they're supposed to hit, and we had no forward air controllers there. We had … no communications with U.S. personnel on the ground. And as a matter of fact, we had no idea where the Ambassador was at that point to be able to kind of conduct any kind of attacks on the ground.[105]

Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates:

On May 12, 2013, Robert Gates, who served as Secretary of Defense during both the Bush and Obama Administrations, stated during an interview:

> I listened to the testimony of—both Secretary Panetta and General Dempsey. And—and frankly had I been in the job at the time—I think my decisions would have been just as theirs were. We don't have a ready force standing by in the Middle East. Despite all the turmoil that's going on, with planes on strip alert, troops ready to deploy at a moment's notice. And so getting somebody there in a timely way—would have been very difficult, if not impossible. And frankly, I've heard "Well, why didn't you just fly a fighter jet over and try and scare 'em with the noise or something?" Well, given the number of surface to air missiles that have disappeared from Qaddafi's arsenals, I would not have approved sending an aircraft, a single aircraft—over Benghazi under those circumstances.[106]

Vice Director for Operations at the Department of Defense Joint Staff:

On May 21, 2013, Major General Darryl Roberson, Vice Director for Operations at the Joint Staff at the Department of Defense, provided a transcribed briefing to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services:

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[105] *Id.* (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113shrg86489/pdf/CHRG-113shrg86489.pdf#page=16).

[106] *Face the Nation*, CBS News (May 12, 2013) (online at www.cbsnews.com/news/face-the-nation-transcripts-may-12-2013-gates-pickering-ayotte-durbin-and-angelou/4/).

> They [American personnel] ended up moving to the annex. There was a long period in there where there was no activity. And so, again, the mentality of everybody was, it doesn't make sense to launch an F-16 now, given what we know about the situation. Now, in hindsight, 20/20, we know that there was another attack at 5:15 in the morning. But again, given the environment, the circumstances, what these systems are designed to do, the F-16s are not on a mission to respond. It is not like a fire station. We don't have assets to respond like a fire call, jump down the pole and respond for any American that is under fire anywhere in the world. That is not DOD's role. Our role is to support the State Department, whose primary responsibility is for security of their mission.[107]

He also had this exchange:

> Q: How many years have been involved with the F-16 fleet?
>
> A: Sir, I have been in the Air Force 30 years, and I have been associated with the F-16 most of that.
>
> Q: Is there any operation or mission involving an F-16 you haven't done personally?
>
> A: Sir, there probably is, but I have done most of them, yes.
>
> Q: In your best military judgment, was the use of F-16s appropriate, given the state of knowledge and the state of affairs in Libyan time late in the evening September 11th, 2012?
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> A: Sir, in my personal opinion, it was absolutely not.[108]

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[107] House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Briefing on Benghazi Update* (May 21, 2013) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=A5BE5DFD-FAA6-4485-9D40-BA30B550907C#page=34).

[108] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=A5BE5DFD-FAA6-4485-9D40-BA30B550907C#page=79).

QUESTION:

Did the U.S. engage in illegal gunrunning from Libya to arm rebels in Syria?

Sen. Rand Paul: "It's been in news reports that ships have been leaving from Libya and that they may have weapons. And what I would like to know is the annex that was close by, were they involved with procuring, buying, selling, obtaining weapons, and were any of these weapons being transferred to other countries? Any countries, Turkey included?"

Source: Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearing on Benghazi: The Attacks and The Lessons Learned* (Jan. 23, 2013) (online at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jriU_cPU9Vk).

ANSWER:

Republicans and Democrats on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence determined that the United States did not use the mission in Benghazi to facilitate illegal arms transfers to Syria. The Committee adopted a bipartisan report finding that there was "no illegal activity or illegal arms sales occurring at U.S. facilities in Benghazi," according to the Committee's Ranking Member.

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

In January 2014, Republicans on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued an "Update on Benghazi":

> All CIA activities in Benghazi were legal and authorized. On-the-record testimony establishes that CIA was **not** sending weapons (including MANPADS) from Libya to Syria, or facilitating other organizations or states that were transferring weapons from Libya to Syria.[109]

On July 31, 2014, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence adopted a bipartisan report after two years of investigation, and the Committee's Ranking Member, Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, issued this statement:

> The House Intelligence Committee spent nearly two years looking at every aspect of the Intelligence Community's activities before, during and after the attacks of September 11, 2012, in Benghazi Libya. The Committee spent thousands of hours in the course of the

[109] House Permanent Select Committee in Intelligence, *HPSCI January 2014 Update on Benghazi* (Jan. 2014) (online at http://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/HPSCIBenghaziUpdateJan2014.pdf) (emphasis in original).

> investigation, which included poring over pages of intelligence assessments, cables, notes and emails. The Committee held twenty briefings and hearings and conducted detailed interviews with senior intelligence officials and eyewitnesses to the attacks, including eight security personnel on the ground in Benghazi that night. The result is a bipartisan, factual, definitive report on what the Intelligence Community did and did not do.
>
> ...
>
> [T]he report demonstrates that there was no illegal activity or illegal arms sales occurring at U.S. facilities in Benghazi.[110]

Official State Department Response to Allegation:

On January 23, 2013, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton testified before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations. In response to a question from Committee Member Senator Rand Paul, she stated that she was unaware of this allegation.[111]

On February 11, 2013, the State Department followed up with an official statement for the record, which stated: "The United States is not involved with any transfer of weapons from Libya to Turkey."[112]

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[110] *Statement on HSPCI Benghazi Report by Ranking Member Dutch Ruppersberger*, House Permanent Select Committee in Intelligence (July 31, 2014) (online at http://democrats.intelligence.house.gov/press-release/rm-ruppersberger-statement-hspci-benghazi-report).

[111] Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearing on Benghazi: The Attacks and The Lessons Learned* (Jan. 23, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113shrg86780/pdf/CHRG-113shrg86780.pdf#page=47).

[112] *Id.*

QUESTION:

Did Ambassador Rice intentionally misrepresent the facts on the Sunday talk shows after the attacks?

Rep. Trey Gowdy: "[W]hy in the world would Susan Rice go on five Sunday talk shows and perpetuate a demonstrably false narrative?"

Source: House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *Hearing on Benghazi: Exposing Failure and Recognizing Courage* (May 8, 2013) (online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ct_PHtLkgWw).

ANSWER:

Bipartisan investigations have identified conflicting intelligence in the hours and days after the attacks, including questions about whether there was a demonstration, who carried out the attacks, and what motivated the attackers. Because of this lack of clarity, the Intelligence Community provided an inaccurate intelligence assessment to Ambassador Rice and to Congress. Ambassador Rice repeatedly cautioned that her information was preliminary.

United Nations Ambassador Susan Rice:

On September 16, 2012, Susan Rice, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, appeared on several Sunday talk shows:

- On ABC's This Week, Ambassador Rice stated that she was relying "on the information that we have at present" and the "current best assessment." She stated that "there's an FBI investigation that has begun and will take some time to be completed. That will tell us with certainty what transpired." She continued: "We'll wait to see exactly what the investigation finally confirms, but that's the best information we have at present."[113]

- On NBC's Meet the Press, she stated that she was relying on "the best information we have at present. First of all, there's an FBI investigation which is ongoing. And we look to that investigation to give us the definitive word as to what transpired." She continued: "[T]hat's our best judgment now. We'll await the results of the investigation."[114]

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[113] *This Week*, ABC News (Sept. 16, 2012) (online at http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/week-transcript-us-ambassador-united-nations-susan-rice/story?id=17240933).

[114] *Meet the Press*, NBC News (Sept. 16, 2012) (online at www.nbcnews.com/id/49051097/ns/meet_the_press-transcripts/t/september-benjamin-netanyahu-susan-rice-keith-ellison-peter-king-bob-woodward-jeffrey-goldberg-andrea-mitchell/#.VA27F2PvnNF).

- On Fox News Sunday, she stated: "[W]e will wait for the results of the investigation and we don't want to jump to conclusions before then. But I do think it's important for the American people to know our best current assessment."[115]

- On CBS's Face the Nation, Ambassador Rice said that her statements were "based on the best information we have to date." In response to a question about whether al-Qaeda participated in the attacks, she stated: "Well, we'll have to find out that out. I mean I think it's clear that there were extremist elements that joined in and escalated the violence. Whether they were al-Qaeda affiliates, whether they were Libyan-based extremists or al-Qaeda itself I think is one of the things we'll have to determine."[116]

On October 4, 2012, Ambassador Rice wrote a letter to Senator Kelly Ayotte:

> In my September 16 Sunday show appearances, I was asked to provide the Administration's latest understanding of what had transpired in Benghazi. In answering, I relied solely and squarely on the information the intelligence community provided to me and other senior U.S. officials, including through the daily intelligence briefings that present the latest reporting and analysis to policymakers. This information represented the intelligence community's best, current assessment as of the date of my television appearances, and I went out of my way to ensure that it was consistent with the information that was being given to Congress.[117]

On November 21, 2012, Ambassador Rice stated during a news conference at the United Nations:

> When discussing the attacks against our facilities in Benghazi, I relied solely and squarely on the information provided to me by the intelligence community. I made clear that the information was preliminary and that our investigations would give us the definitive answers. Everyone, particularly the intelligence community, has worked in good faith to provide the best assessment based on the information available.[118]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

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[115] *Fox News Sunday*, Fox News (Sept. 16, 2012) (online at www.foxnews.com/on-air/fox-news-sunday-chris-wallace/2012/09/16/amb-susan-rice-rep-mike-rogers-discuss-violence-against-americans-middle-east#p//v/1843960658001).

[116] *Face the Nation*, CBS News (Sept. 16, 2012) (online at http://www.cbsnews.com/news/face-the-nation-transcripts-september-16-2012-libyan-pres-magariaf-amb-rice-and-sen-mccain/).

[117] Letter from Ambassador Susan E. Rice, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, to Senator Kelly A. Ayotte (Oct. 4, 2012) (online at www.foreignpolicy.com/files/fp_uploaded_documents/121005_Letter to Senator Ayotte-1.pdf).

[118] U.S. Mission to the United Nations, *Remarks as Delivered by United Nations Ambassador Susan E. Rice at the Security Council Stakeout* (Nov. 21, 2012) (online at http://usun.state.gov/briefing/statements/200968.htm).

> A dearth of clear and definitive HUMINT [human intelligence] or eyewitness reporting led IC analysts to rely on open press reports and limited SIGINT [signals intelligence] reporting that incorrectly attributed the origins of the Benghazi attacks to "protests," over first-hand accounts from U.S. officials on the ground. CIA's January 4, 2013, Analytic Line Review found that "[a]pproximately a dozen reports that included press accounts, public statements by AAS [Ansar al-Sharia] members, HUMINT reporting, DOD [Department of Defense] reporting, and signals intelligence all stated or strongly suggested that a protest occurred outside of the Mission facility just prior to the attacks."
>
> Of the 11 reports cited by the CIA's Analytic Line Review, six were press articles, two were the public statements of Ansar al-Sharia, and the three others were intelligence reports. Specific open source reports and intelligence on which analysts appear to have based their judgments include the public statements by Ansar al-Sharia that the attacks were a "spontaneous and popular uprising." Also, there was protest activity in Egypt and approximately 40 other cities around the world and violent attacks against U.S. diplomatic facilities in Tunisia, Yemen, and Egypt from September 11-20, 2012. In addition, there were intelligence reports in the days following the Benghazi attacks that al-Qa'ida-associated terrorists hoped to take advantage of global protests for further attacks.[119]

The report also stated:

> According to a January 4, 2013, letter from the Acting Director of the CIA, Michael Morell, "[t]he nature of the attacks suggested they did not involve significant pre-planning." Although it may never be known with complete certainty, it is possible that the individuals and groups involved in the attacks had not planned on conducting those attacks until that day, meaning that specific tactical warning would have been highly unlikely. ... [T]he collective assessment of the IC remains that the attacks "were deliberate and organized, but that their lethality and efficacy did not necessarily indicate extensive planning."[120]
>
> ...
>
> Individuals affiliated with terrorist groups, including AQIM [al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb], Ansar al-Sharia, AQAP [al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula], and the Mohammad Jamal Network, participated in the September 11, 2012, attacks. Intelligence suggests that the attack was not a highly coordinated plot, but was opportunistic; however, well-armed attackers easily overwhelmed the Libyan security guards and the five U.S. Diplomatic Security agents present at the Temporary Mission Facility. It remains unclear if any group or person exercised overall command and control of the attacks or whether extremist group leaders directed their members to participate. Some

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[119] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan.15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=35).

[120] *Id.* (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=25).

> intelligence suggests the attacks were likely put together in short order, following that day's violent protests in Cairo against an inflammatory video, suggesting that these and other terrorist groups could conduct similar attacks with little advance warning.[121]

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

On July 31, 2014, Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, the Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, issued the following statement regarding his Committee's classified report, which was adopted on a bipartisan basis:

> The report also shows that the process used to develop the talking points was flawed, but that the talking points reflected the conflicting intelligence assessments in the days immediately following the crisis. ... And there was absolutely no evidence, in documents or testimony, that the Intelligence Community's assessments were politically motivated in any way.[122]

Director of National Intelligence Spokesperson:

On September 28, 2012, Shawn Turner, the spokesperson for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, issued the following statement:

> In the immediate aftermath, there was information that led us to assess that the attack began spontaneously following protests earlier that day at our embassy in Cairo. We provided that initial assessment to Executive Branch officials and members of Congress, who used that information to discuss the attack publicly and provide updates as they became available. Throughout our investigation we continued to emphasize that information gathered was preliminary and evolving.[123]

U.S. Army Lt. Colonel at Embassy Tripoli:

On February 28, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of a U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel who was working at Embassy Tripoli on the day of the attacks:

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[121] *Id.* (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=41).

[122] *Statement by Ranking Member Dutch Ruppersberger,* House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (July 31, 2014) (online at http://democrats.intelligence.house.gov/press-release/rm-ruppersberger-statement-hspci-benghazi-report).

[123] Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Statement by the Director of Public Affairs for ODNI, Shawn Turner, on the Intelligence Related to the Terrorist Attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya* (Sept. 28, 2012) (online at www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/press-releases/96-press-releases-2012/731-statement-by-the-odni-s-director-of-public-affairs-on-intelligence-related-to-the-terrorist-attack-on-the-u-s-consulate-in-benghazi).

Q: You said that they—you were aware that there was an attack, and then you corrected yourself, and you said "an issue." You weren't clear there was an attack?

A: No. At the time I wasn't clear there was an attack. During that time we weren't sure what we had. We were aware of protests during that night. A lot of us thought—didn't know what was going on, could be a protest. We were not aware of an attack, nor did we assume there was an attack right off the bat. I think, again, I'm talking revisionist, I'm looking back, but at the time we were not aware there was an attack. We knew that the embassy was being—we weren't sure if the embassy was being looted, if it was being—

Q: Embassy?

A: The consulate. I'm sorry, the consulate in Benghazi was be [sic] looted, what was happening out there. All we knew was that the Ambassador mentioned that the consulate was under attack. We weren't sure by what. And the term "attack" has a pretty broad meaning. It could be, you know, vandals are attacking. So we did not have a definition of what this was at the time.[124]

...

Q: You had mentioned during the last hour that prior to the attack, prior to the events unfolding in Benghazi, that you were aware of protests occurring elsewhere in the Middle East.

A: Correct.

Q: Could you just maybe elaborate on that and help us understand what your understanding was of the events unfolding across the region and how you became aware of those events?

A: We were just simply watching the news. We were aware of what was going on. We were aware of, you know, the film. But at the time, we were kind of focused on—I was kind of focused on—I had ongoing activities with the security cooperation. So I didn't get too involved in the understanding of what was going on regionally. At that time, again, I was focused on my engagement I had with the Libyan armed forces. So, again, it was broadly understand that based on what we were seeing in news reports and what we were generally talking about in the embassy was that this was going on, but I wasn't privy to any other conversations beyond that.

Q: So these events were unfolding throughout the day?

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[124] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/2r - February 28%2C 2014 - LTC%2C Office of Security Cooperation.pdf#page=31).

A: That is correct.

Q: And other embassy personnel or your military colleagues were also aware of the protests?

A: Correct.

Q: Can I just ask, were you watching television in the compound?

A: Yes.

Q: Is that how you first became aware of it?

A: We were all watching the televisions in our—we all had a home we were assigned to, so we were watching television.[125]

AFRICOM Deputy Commander for Military Operations:

On March 20, 2014, staff from the House Committee on Armed Services and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Vice Admiral Charles "Joe" Leidig, Jr., the Deputy Commander for Military Operations at Africa Command:

> The initial report was that there were protesters at the Ambassador's residence where he was staying in Benghazi, and that the protesters had overrun the facility he was in, and that he had went to a safe room with one other gentleman, and that they were fine in the safe room.[126]

Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Elizabeth Jones:

On July 11, 2013, staff of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview with Elizabeth Jones, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs. She explained that Deputy Chief of Mission Gregory Hicks initially informed her that Ansar al-Sharia had publicly claimed responsibility for the attacks, but the group later withdrew its claim:

A: Greg said they took responsibility for the attack. I had no judgment on whether they had undertaken the attack. Taking responsibility and undertaking the attack are two different things.

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[125] *Id.* (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/2r%20-%20February%2028%2C%202014%20-%20LTC%2C%20Office%20of%20Security%20Cooperation.pdf#page=58).

[126] House Committee on Armed Services and House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Vice Admiral Charles J. "Joe" Leidig, Jr. (Mar. 20, 2014) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/pdfs/8r%20-%20March%2020%2C%202014%20-%20Vice%20Admiral%20Charles%20Leidig%20Jr..pdf#page=19).

Q: Understood. I guess my question is, were you apprised of any information that changed your understanding of their claim of responsible—they had, in fact, claimed responsibility?

A: Yes. A couple of days later, I heard that they had withdrawn their claim of responsibility.[127]

Before Ansar al-Sharia withdrew its claim, however, Acting Assistant Secretary Jones spoke with the Libyan Ambassador to the U.S. and conveyed that "the group that conducted the attacks—Ansar Al Sharia—is affiliated with Islamic extremists."[128]

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[127] House Committee on Government Oversight and Reform, Interview of Elizabeth Jones (July 11, 2013) (referenced in Minority Staff, House Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Fact v. Fiction: Top Ten Unfounded Allegations About the Attacks in Benghazi* (Sept. 16, 2013) (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Fact%20v%20Fiction%20Benghazi%2009-16-13.pdf#page=15)).

[128] E-mail from [REDACTED] to William Burns, et al., *RE: Libya Update from Beth Jones* (Sept. 12, 2012) (referenced in Minority Staff, House Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Fact v. Fiction: Top Ten Unfounded Allegations About the Attacks in Benghazi* (Sept. 16, 2013) (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Fact%20v%20Fiction%20Benghazi%2009-16-13.pdf#page=15)).

QUESTION:

Did CIA Deputy Director Morell alter the talking points for political reasons?

Rep. Trey Gowdy:

"A: Every single change that Mike Morell made was calculated to cast the administration in a more favorable light.
Q: He has said that he felt no political pressure. You're saying you don't believe him?
A: In a word, yes. I'm saying I don't believe him, and I also think that his testimony has been something of an evolution."

Source: *The Lead with Jake Tapper,* CNN (May 7, 2014) (online at http://thelead.blogs.cnn.com/2014/05/07/rep-gowdy-cia-director-morell-wasnt-telling-the-truth-about-no-political-pressure-in-benghazi-hearing/).

ANSWER:

Former CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell has forcefully denied that he or anyone at the CIA altered the talking points for political reasons. According to the Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the Committee's classified, bipartisan report corroborates this testimony and concludes that "the process used to develop the talking points was flawed, but that the talking points reflected the conflicting intelligence assessments in the days immediately following the crisis."

Director of National Intelligence Spokesperson:

On September 28, 2012, Shawn Turner, the spokesperson for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, issued the following statement:

> In the aftermath of the terrorist attack on U.S. personnel and facilities in Benghazi, Libya, the Intelligence Community launched a comprehensive effort to determine the circumstances surrounding the assault and to identity the perpetrators. We also reviewed all available intelligence to determine if there might be follow-on attacks against our people or facilities in Libya or elsewhere in the world.
>
> As the Intelligence Community collects and analyzes more information related to the attack, our understanding of the event continues to evolve. In the immediate aftermath, there was information that led us to assess that the attack began spontaneously following protests earlier that day at our embassy in Cairo. We provided that initial assessment to Executive Branch officials and members of Congress, who used that information to discuss the attack publicly and provide updates as they became available. Throughout

> our investigation we continued to emphasize that information gathered was preliminary and evolving.
>
> As we learned more about the attack, we revised our initial assessment to reflect new information indicating that it was a deliberate and organized terrorist attack carried out by extremists. It remains unclear if any group or person exercised overall command and control of the attack, and if extremist group leaders directed their members to participate. However, we do assess that some of those involved were linked to groups affiliated with, or sympathetic to al-Qa'ida. We continue to make progress, but there remain many unanswered questions. As more information becomes available our analysis will continue to evolve and we will obtain a more complete understanding of the circumstances surrounding the terrorist attack.
>
> We continue to support the ongoing FBI investigation and the State Department review of the Benghazi terrorist attack, providing the full capabilities and resources of the Intelligence Community to those efforts. We also will continue to meet our responsibility to keep Congress fully and currently informed. For its part, the Intelligence Community will continue to follow the information about the tragic events in Benghazi wherever it leads. The President demands and expects that we will do this, as do Congress and the American people. As the Intelligence Community, we owe nothing less than our best efforts in this regard, especially to the families of the four courageous Americans who lost their lives at Benghazi in service of their country.[129]

Director of National Intelligence James Clapper:

On April 18, 2013, James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence, testified at a hearing before the Senate Committee on Armed Services:

> Q: You indicated here in your quick back and forth with Senator Ayotte that you thought that those talking points were right.
>
> A: They were the best we could do at the time. And also in light of our concerns from both an intelligence and investigatory standpoint, that is as much as we should say at the time. That is illustrative of the dilemma of speaking in public about intelligence things, which is somewhat—can often be an oxymoron.
>
> Q: But you believed that they were accurate at the time?
>
> A: It was our—it was—well, it wasn't completely accurate because there were some things, particularly from a source and methods and because of investigatory

[129] Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Statement by the Director of Public Affairs for ODNI, Shawn Turner, on the Intelligence Related to the Terrorist Attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, Libya* (Sept. 28, 2012) (online at www.dni.gov/index.php/newsroom/press-releases/96-press-releases-2012/731-statement-by-the-odni-s-director-of-public-affairs-on-intelligence-related-to-the-terrorist-attack-on-the-u-s-consulate-in-benghazi).

concerns that the FBI had. No, it wasn't completely accurate. It's the best we could do at the time and still protect those equities.

...

Q: I know there's an issue now. I'm saying when they were written did you, whoever wrote them, believe they were accurate?

A: We believed them to be, as tempered by our concerns for intelligence and investigatory equities.

Q: Okay, I understand that. Given all that temperance, at the time that they were produced you believed that they were accurate?

A: That was my response to Senator Ayotte, yes.

Q: Is that your response?

A: Yes.

Q: Now, those were the same talking points that Secretary Rice followed, right?

A: Yes.

Q: And when she was highly criticized for following them, what was your feeling inside, your own personal belief? Did you think it was fair that she be criticized?

A: Well, I thought it was—I thought it was unfair because the hit she took, I didn't think that was appropriate. She was going on what we had given her, and that was our collective best judgment at the time as to what should have been said.[130]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Report Majority Views:

The Majority concludes that the interagency coordination process on the talking points followed normal, but rushed coordination procedures and that there were no efforts by the White House or any other Executive Branch entities to "cover-up" facts or make alterations for political purposes. Indeed, former CIA Director David Petraeus testified to the Committee on November 16, 2012, "They went through the normal process that talking points—unclassified public talking points—go through." In fact, the purpose of the National Security Council (NSC) is to coordinate the many national security agencies of the government, especially when information about a terrorist attack is flowing in and being analyzed quickly—and the NSC used this role appropriately in the case of the talking points coordination. Furthermore, such coordination processes were also

[130] Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearing to Receive Testimony on the Current and Future Worldwide Threats to the National Security of the United States* (Apr. 18, 2013) (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-24 - 4-18-13.pdf#page=34).

standardized, often at the urging of Congress, following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks with the explicit goal of reducing information "stovepipes" between and among agencies.[131]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Report Minority Views:

> As the Committee began to receive intelligence relating to the attacks, it became clear that the narrative conveyed through the talking points and during the Sunday talk shows did not stand up to scrutiny. We now know that the talking points, as originally drafted by the CIA, included the words "al-Qa'ida," "Ansar al-Sharia," and "attacks," and spoke of other attacks against foreign interests in Benghazi. There was no mention of a protest gone awry outside the Temporary Mission Facility. Yet, through an "interagency process" that specifically included coordination with and by the White House, the message was recast to downplay or eliminate these references and minimize any potential embarrassment to the State Department for its failure to heed earlier security warnings.[132]

CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell:

On April 2, 2014, several months after the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence issued its report, Deputy Director Morell testified at a hearing before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. In his written statement, he explained:

> I am deeply troubled by allegations—made by several members of Congress as well as by certain media outlets—that I inappropriately altered and influenced CIA's classified analysis and its unclassified talking points about what happened in Benghazi, Libya in September 2012 and that I covered up those actions. These allegations accuse me of taking these actions for the political benefit of President Obama and then Secretary of State Clinton. These allegations are false.
>
> I am very appreciative that the Committee decided to conduct this hearing in open session. As the Committee is aware, I have testified three previous times on Benghazi in classified sessions—twice before this Committee and once before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI). Today, I appreciate the opportunity to speak directly to the American people about the facts on what really happened.[133]
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> ...

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[131] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Majority Views) (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=64).

[132] *Id.* (Minority Views) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=71).

[133] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Written Statement of Michael Morell, Deputy Director of the CIA, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=1).

[L]et me emphasize again: there is no truth to the allegations that the CIA or I "cooked the books" with regard to what happened in Benghazi and then tried to cover this up after the fact. Indeed, the facts show that the CIA and I faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the highest standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship. And, any allegation or insinuation to the contrary is just plain wrong.[134]

...

[T]he analysts' initial assessment regarding the particular issue of the presence of a protest was shown by subsequent information to have been incorrect. But, in my view, given the information the analysts had at the time, there was no other conclusion they could have come to other than that there was protest ongoing before the attacks. The analysts made this judgment because of the information that they had available to them when it was published—not because of any political pressure or interference. Indeed, there is not a shred of evidence to support the latter allegation.[135]

...

The first allegation is that I knew that there had not been a protest when I edited the talking points on 15 September. This allegation flows from an email sent by our Chief of Station (COS) in Tripoli to my staff—and to a number of other officials at CIA—on the morning of 15 September. The email was the latest in a series of daily reports updating the security situation in Libya (these had been requested by HQS and other COSs were doing the same). Near the end of the email was a reference to the COS's assessment that the Benghazi attack was "not/not an escalation of protests." I read the email as part of my morning reading on 15 September.

The COS' view on the issue of the protest jumped out at me immediately. Why? Because it contradicted what the analysts believed at that time and what they had written just two days before for senior policymakers. Because of this, I asked my Executive Assistant to request that the COS provide supporting information and logic for his view that there was no protest. My Executive Assistant sent this request at roughly 10:40 am on 15 September.

The COS' view was significant to me for two reasons. First, I took the views of any COS seriously because Chiefs of Station are the Agency's senior officers on the ground. They are closest to the action. And, secondly, I had a lot of confidence in COS Tripoli. I had worked closely with him when he worked at headquarters prior to his field assignment, and I found him to be an outstanding intelligence officer in every respect.

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[134] *Id.* (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=2).

[135] *Id.* (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=8).

In his initial email, the COS provided two data points as to why he thought there was no protest, but neither seemed convincing to me. His first point was that local press reports said there was no protest (this was not compelling because there were other press reports saying that there was a protest). His second point was that the CIA security officers who responded to the call for help from the State Department facility from the separate CIA base on the night of the attacks did not see a protest when they arrived (again, this was not compelling because these officers did not arrive until almost an hour after the attack started and the protesters could have dispersed by them). Also, in my mind at the time, was the fact that Tripoli Station—just the day before—disseminated an intelligence report indicating that there was a protest. In any case, I felt the analysts needed more from the COS if they were going to refine their judgment regarding a protest.

I want to be clear that I read the email from the COS before I edited the talking points. To guide my editing, I used what the analysts assessed at the time—that the attack in Benghazi evolved spontaneously from a protest. The revised talking points were signed off on by D/OTA as being an accurate depiction of what her analysts thought at that time. Operations officers at CIA headquarters—those officers in Washington who work most closely with a COS—also signed off on the revised talking points.[136]

...

The second allegation I want to address is that I deliberately lied to Senators Graham, McCain, and Ayotte in a meeting with them regarding Benghazi in late November 2012. The issue is over whether or not I was aware of the truth when I told them that the FBI had removed the reference to al-Qa'ida in the talking points when in fact the CIA had done so. I strongly regret that left the Senators with the impression that I deliberately misled them. I did not—nor did I intend to—do so.

Here are the facts. One of the three Senators asked me "Who removed al-Qa'ida from the talking points?" I made an error and said "the FBI." I made this error because I had not personally removed the language and because I was thinking about the change the FBI did make to the talking points—the one I mentioned earlier about the FBI not wanting to be too definitive about Islamic extremists having conducted the attack because the Bureau's investigation was just beginning—and I simply got the two changes mixed up. There was no deliberate attempt to mislead.

What was important was correcting the mistake. On the ride from Capitol Hill to CIA HQS, my Director of Congressional Affairs—who was with me in the meeting with the Senators—told me that he thought I had made a mistake. I responded immediately "Let's figure that out, and if I did make a mistake, let's correct the record." This work was completed very quickly, and my Director of Congressional Affairs informed Congressional Staff just a few hours after I made the error, much shorter than the 24

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[136] *Id.* (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=17).

> hours that some have alleged. Some have also said that I only corrected the record after the FBI called me to complain about my error. No one from the FBI ever called me to express displeasure."[137]

In addition to his written statement, Deputy Director Morrell also testified publicly at the hearing:

> Mr. Chairman, I want both the Committee and the American people to know that I take very seriously the allegations about how the CIA in general and about how I in particular handled the analysis and the talking points. As this Committee knows, the ethical code under which intelligence officers carry out their responsibilities calls for total objectivity. To call it like you see it. No matter what the audience wants to hear, no matter the implications for policy, and no matter the political consequences. In short, speak truth to power.
>
> I served the Central Intelligence Agency for 33 years and I always abided by that code. I served six presidents, three Republicans and three Democrats. I served as President George W. Bush's first daily intelligence briefer and I served as President Obama's Deputy Director and Acting Director of the CIA. During this entire service, I never allowed politics to influence what I said or did, never.
>
> I believe the facts in my written statement make clear that neither I nor anyone else at the CIA worked to alter the analysis or the talking points in a way that compromised our responsibility to the American people. We did not deliberately down play the role of terrorists in the Benghazi attack in our analysis or in the talking points. And neither I nor anyone else at the agency deliberately misled anyone in Congress about any aspect of the tragedy in Benghazi.
>
> Mr. Chairman, none of what I just said should be interpreted to mean that we at the CIA did everything right. No organization ever does. There are things we should have done differently. There are areas where the CIA's performance and my own performance could have been better. But none of our actions were the result of political influence in the intelligence process, none.
>
> Let me touch on three specific issues. One, the CIA analysts, the most talented and highly trained analysts in our government concluded less than 24 hours after the attack that a protest had preceded the assault on the State Department's facility in Benghazi. They arrived at this initial judgment with good reason and without any input from the White House, the State Department, or the CIA leadership. Their judgment was coordinated across the Intelligence Community which meant that it was a judgment of the entire community, not just the CIA.

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[137] *Id.* (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=19).

> As you know, subsequent information revealed this judgment to be incorrect. But, and let me emphasize this, our analysts reached their initial judgment because that is where the best available information at the time led them, not because of politics.
>
> Indeed, our analysts did what they are trained to do, make a judgment based on the best information at hand, make clear that judgment might change as new information becomes available, and then adjust the judgment as necessary. That is what I expected of them, it is what you expect of them and it is what the American people expect of them and it is exactly what they did.
>
> Two, the CIA's then most senior analyst on terrorism and outstanding officer whom this committee knows well wrote the first draft of the unclassified talking points. Neither the White House, the State Department nor I did so, as some have alleged. After our top analysts had the first draft, many changes were made to the talking points over a period of time including some by agency officers, some by other agencies and some by me.
>
> The process inside the CIA to produce the talking points could have been better in several respects and I discussed this in detail at my written testimony. But, to be very clear, the White House did not make any substantive changes to the talking points, nor did they ask me to make any substantive changes to the talking points. And while the talking points could have been better, the judgment that the attacks evolved from a protest was fully consistent with the Intelligence Community's classified analysis at the time.[138]

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

On July 31, 2014, Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger, the Ranking Member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, issued a statement regarding the Committee's report, which was adopted on a bipartisan basis and approved for declassification review:

> The House Intelligence Committee spent nearly two years looking at every aspect of the Intelligence Community's activities before, during and after the attacks of September 11, 2012, in Benghazi Libya. The Committee spent thousands of hours in the course of the investigation, which included poring over pages of intelligence assessments, cables, notes and emails. The Committee held twenty briefings and hearings and conducted detailed interviews with senior intelligence officials and eyewitnesses to the attacks, including eight security personnel on the ground in Benghazi that night. The result is a bipartisan, factual, definitive report on what the Intelligence Community did and did not do.
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> ...
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> The report also shows that the process used to develop the talking points was flawed, but that the talking points reflected the conflicting intelligence assessments in the days

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[138] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Testimony of Michael Morell, Deputy Director of the CIA, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at (online at www.c-span.org/video/?318648-1/benghazi-obama-administration).

immediately following the crisis. … And there was absolutely no evidence, in documents or testimony, that the Intelligence Community's assessments were politically motivated in any way.[139]

[139] *Statement on HSPCI Benghazi Report by Ranking Member Dutch Ruppersberger,* House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (July 31, 2014) (online at http://democrats.intelligence.house.gov/press-release/rm-ruppersberger-statement-hspci-benghazi-report).

QUESTION:

What is the origin of the idea that a video motivated the attacks?

Rep. Trey Gowdy: "Do you know the origin of this mythology that it [the attack] was spawned as a spontaneous reaction to a video? Do you know where that started? Do you know how we got from no evidence of that to that being the official position of the Administration?"

Source: *Remarks at Republican Press Conference* (Oct. 30, 2013) (online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=A1jeJmeeMjs).

ANSWER:

The attacks in Benghazi occurred in the context of dozens of protests against U.S. facilities around the world in response to an inflammatory film. There was significant uncertainty about the motivation for the Benghazi attacks, but press reports, public statements by the purported attackers, and intelligence reports indicated that some attackers in Benghazi may have been inspired by the video or by violent protests elsewhere earlier that day.

Congressional Research Service:

On September 20, 2012, the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service issued a report documenting protests and violent attacks at U.S. facilities around the world sparked by an anti-Islamic film called "The Innocence of Muslims":

> **Morocco:** Hundreds of Salafist demonstrators reportedly gathered outside the U.S. consulate in Morocco's commercial capital, Casablanca, on September 12, chanting slogans against the United States and burning a U.S. flag. The protests do not appear to have involved a direct attack on the U.S. facilities or any injuries of U.S. citizens. A heavy police presence was reported. News reports indicate that protests again occurred in the city of Tangiers and other urban centers on September 17, with total turnout estimated in the thousands. King Mohammed VI of Morocco publicly offered condolences to the American people and government following the attack in Benghazi, and also condemned "unacceptable provocations undermining the sacred values of Islam" in a phone call with Secretary of State Clinton. On September 13, in a public appearance in Washington, DC, marking the opening of a new U.S.-Morocco "Bilateral Strategic Dialogue," Moroccan Foreign Minister Saad Eddine al Othmani likewise expressed condolences and condemned the violence, stating that U.S. diplomats "should be protected."
>
> **Algeria:** Algerian security forces broke up a protest march of hundreds in the capital, Algiers, on September 14, and reportedly deployed preemptively throughout the city to deter such movements. On September 12, the U.S. Embassy in Algiers had warned of efforts by unspecified groups to organize demonstrations against "a range of issues" and

instructed Americans to avoid large gatherings and non-essential travel in and around official buildings. Among those arrested in connection with the demonstration was Ali Belhadj, the former deputy leader of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) party. On September 16, the speaker of the Libyan parliament accused Algerian nationals of being among those responsible for the killing of the U.S. Ambassador to Libya.

Tunisia: Security forces dispersed protests outside the U.S. Embassy in Tunis on September 13. The following day, protesters breached the outer walls of the embassy compound, reportedly hanging a black flag associated with Islamist extremists and setting fire to cars in the compound parking lot. Unidentified assailants also sacked an American school facility located near the embassy. Tunisia's President Moncef Marzouki condemned the attacks and reportedly dispatched members of the presidential guard to protect the embassy following a phone call from Secretary of State Clinton; Marzouki also called for the international prosecution of those who made the offending video. Tunisia's Interior Minister, Ali Laraydh, a senior member of the ruling Islamist party Al Nahda, apologized to the United States on national television the same day for failing to protect the embassy; on September 15, the ruling party also released a written statement condemning both the violence and the video. Tunisia's National Assembly subsequently held a hearing on the incidents, at which members expressed a range of opinions as to who was responsible for the violence; some called for Laraydh's resignation while others contended the U.S. government was at fault. The State Department has warned U.S. citizens against all travel to Tunisia and urged Americans to leave the country via the airport, noting that it has ordered the departure of all non-emergency U.S. government personnel.

Libya: U.S. Ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens and three other U.S. personnel were killed on September 11, 2012, during an assault by armed terrorists on two U.S. interim diplomatic office sites in Benghazi, Libya. U.S. officials have provided a preliminary account of the events that the ambassador and another officer died as a result of a fire started during an initial armed assault by several dozen attackers on the main office compound. A larger number of attackers subsequently assaulted a separate U.S. annex compound to which U.S. personnel had been evacuated, killing two more U.S. personnel and wounding several others. Ambassador Stevens' body was retrieved from a local hospital and remaining U.S. personnel were evacuated from the Benghazi airport. According to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, "American and Libyan security personnel battled the attackers together." Additional U.S. personnel have been deployed to Libya to secure U.S. facilities. Joint Libyan and U.S. investigations are ongoing.

Sudan: Protesters set fire to the German Embassy in Khartoum, and at least two protesters were killed by police during demonstrations on September 14 outside the U.S. Embassy. Reports suggest several thousand people were involved in the protests, which occurred after Friday prayers. On the same day, the Foreign Ministry reportedly summoned U.S. and German diplomats to convey an official protest against the video. The Foreign Ministry also denounced German Chancellor Angela Merkel for giving a press freedom award in 2010 to the Danish cartoonist whose work had prompted protests in 2006. Vice President Joseph Biden called his counterpart to reaffirm the Sudanese government's responsibility to protect diplomatic facilities and ensure the protection of

diplomats. The government deployed additional police to provide security near the embassies, but rejected a U.S. plan to deploy Marines for increased security of the embassy facilities and personnel. Non-emergency U.S. diplomatic personnel and family members have been evacuated from Khartoum, given damage done to the outside of the embassy building, and the State Department is evaluating the security posture of the Sudanese security forces. Sudan blocked access to YouTube's website in the country after unsuccessfully requesting that Google remove the film.

Egypt: The "Innocence of Muslims" film appears to have first gained international attention in the Egyptian media, where it was debated by Coptic Christian and Salafist Muslim outlets. On September 11 thousands of predominantly Salafist Egyptians protested at the U.S. Embassy in downtown Cairo, scaling the walls and replacing the U.S. flag with a black one inscribed with the Islamic creed, "There is no God but God and Mohammed is the prophet of God." Embassy officials reportedly directed non-essential personnel to avoid the embassy in anticipation of the protest and no U.S. injuries were reported in Cairo nor during subsequent demonstrations by several hundred protestors at the consulate in Alexandria.

On September 12, President Mohammad Morsi asked the U.S. government to take legal action against the makers of the film that sparked the protests, drawing criticism from some U.S. observers. Comments by State Department officials suggest that a September 13 conversation between Presidents Obama and Morsi likely influenced a dramatic improvement in police and military efforts to secure the U.S. Embassy. President Obama's efforts and critiques by other U.S. officials also may have motivated the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamists to alter a planned demonstration outside the embassy on September 14 and instead symbolically stage a rally of several thousand people in nearby Tahrir Square. Robust security operations cleared the area of most protestors over the weekend of September 15 and 16.

On September 13, President Morsi condemned the violent attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel during a meeting with the European Commission. In a separate series of short statements published by the Deputy Chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood Khairat al Shater, the Brotherhood stated the following:

> Our condolences to the American people for the tragic loss of Ambassador Stevens, and three Embassy staff in Libya. Breach of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo is illegal under international law, and police failure to protect embassy has to be investigated. We are relieved none of the U.S. Embassy Cairo staff were harmed and hope US-Egypt relations will sustain turbulence of Tuesday's events.

Militants in the Sinai, who were already engaged with Egyptian military forces attempting to pacify the area, may have used the protests as an opportunity to launch new attacks against foreign peacekeepers stationed there. On September 14, press reports indicate that militants attacked a Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) facility in the Al Gura area of north Sinai, injuring four MFO staff. The MFO mission monitors the implementation of the Israel-Egypt peace treaty.

Israel/West Bank-Gaza: Generally nonviolent protests have taken place since September 11 in various parts of Israel among Arabs, particularly in northern cities such as Nazareth. These protests have reached the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv. On September 14, hundreds of Arab Jerusalemites and Israeli Arabs marched from East Jerusalem following noontime prayers at the Al Aqsa Mosque and threw stones at Israeli riot police, in an unsuccessful probable attempt to approach the U.S. consulate. A smaller group assembled on September 15, presumably en route to the U.S. consulate, and Israeli police quickly dispersed the protest and arrested the organizer. Israeli reports indicated that most of the rallies have been called by the Israeli Arab Islamic movement. Reportedly, thousands of Palestinians protested in Gaza on September 14, and Palestinians in the West Bank have protested in Ramallah.

Lebanon: Violent protests by several hundred Sunni Arab extremists in the northern city of Tripoli resulted in property damage to two U.S. chain restaurants on Friday, September 14. Lebanese leaders have condemned the film and the resulting violence and have committed to protecting U.S. diplomatic facilities and personnel. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah appeared in public to address thousands of supporters and denounce the film. Hezbollah has called for a week of protests. The group's reaction to the controversy may be an attempt to overcome setbacks the group has suffered as a result of sectarian divisions and its unpopular policy toward the conflict in Syria.

Turkey: Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, seen by U.S. leaders as a potentially important influence on regional opinion, responded to the violence against U.S. installations on September 14 by saying, "Insulting the Prophet cannot be justified as freedom of expression. It cannot be a reason for innocent people to be attacked or harmed.... No one can, in the name of Islam, carry out actions of the kind that happened in Libya with the attack on the U.S. mission [in Benghazi]." Small protests involving an Islamist organization and workers' party outside the U.S. Embassy in Ankara led to the burning of an American flag on September 16.

Yemen: On September 13 hundreds of mostly young men stormed the compound of the U.S. Embassy in Sana'a, one of the most secure buildings in Yemen, causing destruction, looting, and setting fires. Up to 4 protestors were killed and 15 wounded in clashes with Yemeni security forces, 24 of whom were injured. President Abed Rabbo Mansour al Hadi apologized the same day and called for a swift investigation; on September 16 the Ministry of Interior announced it had made 13 arrests. Some videos of the incidents allegedly show security forces embracing fleeing protestors, possibly indicating collusion stemming from their allegiance to former President Ali Abdullah Saleh. Hadi had dismissed several pro-Saleh officials the night before the attack, and the government had announced the killing of a senior al Qaeda figure on September 11. Negotiations between U.S. and Yemeni officials resulted in the deployment of a platoon (50) of U.S. Marines to Yemen on September 14. On September 15, Yemen-based Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) called for more attacks, describing the video and related confrontations as "a new chapter in the crusades against Islam."

Qatar: An estimated 2,000 Qatari citizens and residents demonstrated in a peaceful gathering at the U.S. Embassy in Doha. In his September 14 sermon, Qatar-based cleric

Yusuf al Qaradawi condemned the film and said, "It's unfair to accuse all the U.S. community of wrongdoing." He added, "Expressing loyalty to the prophet does not mean that we should head out to foreign embassies to pelt them with stones or burn them, kill the ambassador and people accompanying him. We should not react this way."

Bahrain: After Friday prayers on September 14, about 2,000 protesters in a Shiite district outside the capital of Manama burned American and Israeli flags to protest the video. The government, which has been attempting to suppress a Shiite uprising since February 2011, did not deploy security forces against the protest. However, the Interior Ministry reportedly ordered media regulators to attempt to block access to the video in Bahrain.

Kuwait: On September 13, hundreds of Kuwaitis, including several Islamist members of its elected National Assembly, demonstrated opposite the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait City. The Islamist lawmakers had earlier called for the peaceful protest, but they reportedly left the demonstration when some protesters called for the storming of the embassy. Forewarned by the lawmakers' call for the protest, Kuwaiti security forces were deployed to push protesters away from the embassy security perimeter, and they successfully prevented any breaching of the facility.

Iraq: Hundreds of Iraqis protested against the United States and the video on September 13, 2012, calling the video inflammatory and anti-Islamic. In Baghdad, the protests took place mainly in the Shiite Muslim district called "Sadr City," home to many followers of hardline Shiite cleric Moqtada al Sadr. Similar protests took place in pro-Sadr neighborhoods of the predominantly Shiite cities of Najaf and Karbala. Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al Maliki strongly condemned the video but also called on demonstrators not to commit violence in expressing their anger at the video.

Iran: On September 13, 2012, about 500 people conducted a peaceful protest near the Embassy of Switzerland, which is the protecting power for U.S. interests in Iran. The Iranian government deployed hundreds of security people to prevent the crowd from approaching the compound. Subsequently, several leading Iranian political figures, officials, parliamentarians, and security organizations (Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps) issued statements denouncing the video as an example of what they asserted is U.S. anti-Islam bias and U.S. efforts to sow discord among major religions, operating in the guise of protecting free speech.

Afghanistan: Following several days in which the Afghan government attempted to block distribution of the "Innocence of Muslims" video, on September 17, 2012, several hundred to several thousand Afghans demonstrated outside a U.S. training facility for the Afghan security forces (Camp Phoenix), just east of central Kabul. Afghan police were deployed to prevent the demonstrators from entering that and nearby facilities, leaving 40 Afghan police injured. A few days before the demonstration, the office of President Hamid Karzai released a statement denouncing the video as a "desecrating act," but also saying that video's producer represents a "small radical minority," whose work should not be distributed in Afghanistan. Afghan clerics reportedly denounced the video but called for nonviolent responses in sermons on Friday, September 14. On September 18, a

young female suicide bomber targeted a vehicle in Kabul, killing 10 foreign workers in an attack claimed by Hezb-i-Islami "in response to the film insulting the Prophet Mohammed and Islam."

Pakistan: In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan—home to about 170 million Muslims—early public demonstrations were unexpectedly muted, given large-scale rioting that had occurred in response to previous perceived offenses against Islam. Police there have taken robust action to block violent protesters and to protect American diplomatic facilities. The country's legislative and executive branches both issued formal condemnations of the video clip. Yet many analysts see Islamabad's acute interest in preventing the further deterioration of ties with Washington keeping it from stirring the pot or acceding to demands from Islamist leaders that the top U.S. diplomat be ejected from the country. However, beginning on September 16, some protests in major Pakistani cities involved arson and rock-throwing. One person was killed in protests outside the U.S. consulate in Karachi, and police in Lahore pushed back rioters near the U.S. consulate in that city. The next day, as the turbulence continued, the prime minister ordered a suspension of access to YouTube to prevent further dissemination of "blasphemous material."

Evidence of public anger in Pakistan grew steadily in the week following the first protests. On September 19, a group of lawyers broke through the gate outside Islamabad's diplomatic enclave, where they burned American flags and held a brief sit-in. On the same day, personnel at the U.S. consulate in Lahore were moved to a secure location as a precautionary measure. In a reflection of widespread and possibly growing anger, the government took the unusual step of declaring Friday, September 21 as an official "day of peaceful protest."

India: A very small percentage of India's roughly 180 million Muslims displayed public opposition and anger to the video; notable protests were found in only three cities and have involved only minor violence. Police there have effectively protected American diplomatic facilities. An Indian External Affairs Ministry spokesman called the clip "offensive material." In Jammu and Kashmir—the country's only Muslim-majority state—Islamist leaders called for a general strike and organized street protests comprised of thousands of angry Muslims chanting anti-American slogans. A smaller-scale protest in the city of Chennai included rocks being thrown at the U.S. consulate there. Peaceful protests were also seen in Hyderabad.

Bangladesh: Approximately 10,000 demonstrated on Friday, September 14 in Dhaka after prayers but were blocked from approaching the U.S. Embassy by elements of the Rapid Reaction Battalion with armored personnel carriers and water cannons. The demonstrators chanted anti-U.S. slogans, threatened to besiege the embassy, burned the U.S. flag, and demanded an apology from the United States. Bangladesh police and security forces had reportedly tightened security around the embassy in anticipation of the protests. The Bangladesh government condemned the film and reportedly blocked YouTube after the film was not taken off the website. Bangladesh, with a population of 153 million, is approximately 90% Muslim.

Sri Lanka: About 300 demonstrators gathered in Colombo to denounce the film near the U.S. Embassy. Some of the protestors called for those who created the film to be hanged. Sri Lanka, with a population of 21 million, is largely Buddhist (69%) with Muslim (8%), Hindu (7%), and Christian (6%) minorities.

Indonesia: Police reportedly fired tear gas and used water cannons after hundreds of protesters marched to the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta on September 16, burning American flags, hurling rocks and Molotov cocktails, and setting tires alight. Protests against the film began on September 13, and have been led by a number of groups, including Hizbat Tharir Indonesia, the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI), and the Islamic People's Forum (FUI). The situation could serve as a test of influence for both hardline and moderate Islamic groups in Indonesia. Moderate religious leaders, including the head of the country's largest Muslim organization, Nahdlatul Ulama, have urged members not to react violently to the film. On September 16, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, who has condemned both the film and the Benghazi attack, urged the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to issue edicts against religious defamation. Imprisoned extremist cleric Abu Bakar al Ba'asyir reportedly said in an interview from his cell that "What happened in Libya can be imitated. If it is defaming God and the Prophet [Muhammad], the punishment should be death. [There are] no other considerations."

Malaysia: Around 30 protesters gathered at the U.S. Embassy on September 13, and local groups have promised further protests this week. The events could affect the outcome of nationwide parliamentary elections that must be held by March 2013. Officials from both the United Malays National Organization (UNMO), the largest party in the ruling coalition, and the Parti Islam se-Malaysia (PAS), Malaysia's largest opposition party, have condemned the video.

Australia: Australia, with a population of approximately 23 million, has a Muslim population of about half a million that represents 2.2% of the population. On September 15, about 400 demonstrators carrying placards reading "Behead all those who insult the Prophet" gathered outside the U.S. consulate in Sydney before clashing with police. The police used dogs and chemical sprays to disperse the protestors. Six police officers were injured and eight protestors were arrested in the incident. Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard, a self-described atheist, called on immigrants to leave old hatreds behind, learn English, and respect women while condemning the protests as extremism. A demonstration against the film had been called for September 23 in Melbourne, and some observers expressed concerned that such a gathering could become violent. Organizers subsequently cancelled the protest, and the Islamic Council of Victoria welcomed the move. Despite this, police remain concerned that a protest may occur and become violent.[140]

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[140] Congressional Research Service, *Recent Protests in Muslim Countries: Background and Issues for Congress* (Sept. 20, 2012) (online at www.hsdl.org/?view&did=723794#page=16).

Press Reports of Libyan Witnesses:

On December 28, 2013, the New York Times issued a report based in part on interviews with Libyan witnesses:

> The violence, though, also had spontaneous elements. Anger at the video motivated the initial attack. Dozens of people joined in, some of them provoked by the video and others responding to fast-spreading false rumors that guards inside the American compound had shot Libyan protesters. Looters and arsonists, without any sign of a plan, were the ones who ravaged the compound after the initial attack, according to more than a dozen Libyan witnesses as well as many American officials who have viewed the footage from security cameras.[141]
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> ...
>
> [O]n Sept. 8, a popular Islamist preacher lit the fuse by screening a clip of the video on the ultraconservative Egyptian satellite channel El Nas. American diplomats in Cairo raised the alarm in Washington about a growing backlash, including calls for a protest outside their embassy.
>
> No one mentioned it to the American diplomats in Libya. But Islamists in Benghazi were watching. Egyptian satellite networks like El Nas and El Rahma were widely available in Benghazi. "It is Friday morning viewing," popular on the day of prayer, said one young Benghazi Islamist who turned up at the compound during the attack, speaking on the condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.
>
> By Sept. 9, a popular eastern Libyan Facebook page had denounced the film. On the morning of Sept. 11, even some secular political activists were posting calls online for a protest that Friday, three days away.
>
> Hussein Abu Hamida, the acting chief of Benghazi's informal police force, saw the growing furor and feared new violence against Western interests. He conferred with Abdul Salam Bargathi of the Preventive Security Brigade, an Islamist militia with a grandiose name, each recalled separately, and they increased security outside a United Nations office. But they said nothing to the Americans.[142]
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> ...
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> Around dusk, the Pan-Arab satellite networks began broadcasting footage of protesters breaching the walls of the American Embassy in Cairo, pulling down the American flag and running up the black banner of militant Islam. Young men around Benghazi began

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[141] *A Deadly Mix in Benghazi*, New York Times (Dec. 28, 2013) (online at www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/benghazi/#/?chapt=0).

[142] *Id.* (online at www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/benghazi/#/?chapt=3).

> calling one another with the news, several said, and many learned of the video for the first time.[143]
>
> ...
>
> There is no doubt that anger over the video motivated many attackers. A Libyan journalist working for The New York Times was blocked from entering by the sentries outside, and he learned of the film from the fighters who stopped him. Other Libyan witnesses, too, said they received lectures from the attackers about the evil of the film and the virtue of defending the prophet.[144]
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> ...
>
> The leaders of Ansar al-Shariah, the hard-line Islamist group allied with Mr. Abu Khattala, declared in a statement read on television the morning after the attack that they had not participated in it. But they lauded the assault as a just response to the video. They, too, insisted that a "peaceful protest" had "escalated as a result of shooting that came from the consulate, which led to the ambassador's death by suffocation."[145]

On September 17, 2012, the New York Times published a map documenting protests throughout the world.[146]

Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Bipartisan Report:

> Individuals affiliated with terrorist groups, including AQIM, Ansar al-Sharia, AQAP, and the Mohammad Jamal Network, participated in the September 11, 2012, attacks. Intelligence suggests that the attack was not a highly coordinated plot, but was opportunistic; however, well-armed attackers easily overwhelmed the Libyan security guards and the five U.S. Diplomatic Security agents present at the Temporary Mission Facility. It remains unclear if any group or person exercised overall command and control of the attacks or whether extremist group leaders directed their members to participate. Some intelligence suggests the attacks were likely put together in short order, following that day's violent protests in Cairo against an inflammatory video, suggesting that these and other terrorist groups could conduct similar attacks with little advance warning.[147]

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[143] *Id.* (online at www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/benghazi/#/?chapt=4).

[144] *Id.*

[145] *Id.* (online at www.nytimes.com/projects/2013/benghazi/#/?chapt=5).

[146] *Spread of Protests Sparked by Anti-Muslim Video*, New York Times (Sept. 17, 2012) (online at www.nytimes.com/interactive/2012/09/13/world/middleeast/spread-of-protests-sparked-by-anti-muslim-video.html?_r=2&).

[147] Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, *Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012* (Jan. 15, 2014) (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=41).

The report also found:

> A dearth of clear and definitive HUMINT or eyewitness reporting led IC analysts to rely on open press reports and limited SIGINT reporting that incorrectly attributed the origins of the Benghazi attacks to "protests," over first-hand accounts from U.S. officials on the ground. CIA's January 4, 2013, Analytic Line Review found that "[a]pproximately a dozen reports that included press accounts, public statements by AAS members, HUMINT reporting, DOD reporting, and signals intelligence all stated or strongly suggested that a protest occurred outside of the Mission facility just prior to the attacks."
>
> Of the 11 reports cited by the CIA's Analytic Line Review, six were press articles, two were the public statements of Ansar al-Sharia, and the three others were intelligence reports. Specific open source reports and intelligence on which analysts appear to have based their judgments include the public statements by Ansar al-Sharia that the attacks were a "spontaneous and popular uprising." Also, there was protest activity in Egypt and approximately 40 other cities around the world and violent attacks against U.S. diplomatic facilities in Tunisia, Yemen, and Egypt from September 11-20, 2012. In addition, there were intelligence reports in the days following the Benghazi attacks that al-Qa'ida-associated terrorists hoped to take advantage of global protests for further attacks.
>
> As a result of evidence from closed circuit videos and other reports, the IC changed its assessment about a protest in classified intelligence reports on September 24, 2012, to state there were no demonstrations or protests at the Temporary Mission Facility prior to the attacks. This slow change in the official assessment affected the public statements of government officials, who continued to state in press interviews that there were protests outside the Mission compound. The IC continues to assess that although they do not think the first attack came out of protests, the lethality and efficacy of the attack "did not require significant amounts of preplanning." The IC continues to review the amount and nature of any preplanning that went into the attacks.[148]

The report also found:

> According to a January 4, 2013, letter from the Acting Director of the CIA, Michael Morell, "[t]he nature of the attacks suggested they did not involve significant pre-planning." Although it may never be known with complete certainty, it is possible that the individuals and groups involved in the attacks had not planned on conducting those attacks until that day, meaning that specific tactical warning would have been highly unlikely. ... [T]he collective assessment of the IC remains that the attacks "were deliberate and organized, but that their lethality and efficacy did not necessarily indicate extensive planning."[149]

The report also found that the first version of the unclassified talking points prepared by Intelligence Community analysts stated:

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[148] *Id.* (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=35).

[149] *Id.* (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=25).

> We believe based on currently available information that the attacks in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the protests at the US Embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault against the US Consulate and subsequently its annex.[150]

CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell:

On April 2, 2014, Michael Morell, Deputy Director of the CIA, testified at a hearing before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. He stated in his written testimony:

> The analysts' first thorough, fully coordinated, assessment of what happened in Benghazi was written on 12 September, less than 24 hours after the attacks, and disseminated to senior level policymakers and to the Congressional intelligence committees on 13 September. It was coordinated with analysts across the Intelligence Community. This means that the assessment represented the views of the Intelligence Community, not just CIA. It was approved for publication by a senior officer in CIA's Directorate of Intelligence and by a senior officer in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.
>
> The piece made four key points:
>
> - That the attack on the State Department facility in Benghazi was a spontaneous event that evolved from a protest in Benghazi. The title of the 13 September piece was: "Extremists Capitalized on Benghazi Protests." The key sentence read: "We assess the attacks on Tuesday against the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi began spontaneously …."
>
> - That the attackers were inspired by the breach of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo on 11 September. The first sentence of the piece said "…the attacks began spontaneously following the protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo…." There was no mention of the video defaming the Prophet Muhammad as a motivation for the attacks in Benghazi. In fact, there was no mention of the video at all.
>
> - That al-Qa'ida linked individuals and other extremists were involved in the attacks. ...
>
> - That the attacks did not involve significant pre-planning. The piece, in the first sentence, implied that the attackers decided to act after seeing events in Cairo several hours earlier but on the same day.[151]
>
> …

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[150] *Id.* (online at www.intelligence.senate.gov/benghazi2014/benghazi.pdf#page=46).

[151] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Written Statement of Michael Morell, Deputy Director of the CIA, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=3).

> Let me make clear that we know that the analysts had an evidentiary basis to make the judgment that there was a protest ongoing at the time of the attack. All together, there were roughly a dozen or so reports indicating that this was the case. Some of this information arrived at CIA Headquarters (HQS) on 12 September and some arrived on 13 September. These included press accounts—including public statements by the Libyan Government and by extremists. And they included intelligence reports from CIA, the National Security Agency, and the Department of Defense—including a report from CIA's Station in Tripoli that arrived at CIA HQS on 13 September.
>
> Let me provide some examples from the open source reporting:
>
> - The first Libyan Government statement about the incident said that a demonstration preceded the attack. In a press conference on 12 September, the Deputy Interior Minister for eastern Libya stated that the State Department facility was stormed after guards opened fire on a crowd gathered outside.
>
> - An Ansar al-Sharia extremist uploaded a video to YouTube on 12 September praising the attack as a spontaneous, popular uprising.
>
> It is important to note that, when the analysts wrote their assessment on 12 September, there was not a single piece of information in their possession denying there was a protest. The available evidence was expressly to the contrary. Indeed, for the analysts to have disregarded the reports indicating there was a protest would have required ignoring all of the information they had at that time. On what basis could the analysts possibly have done so? None that was apparent at the time.[152]
>
> ...
>
> [W]hile the initial judgment about the protest changed as more information became available, the other three key judgments in the analysis published on 13 September have held up. To this day, the analysts still believe that extremists with ties to al-Qa'ida participated in the attacks—that these were terrorist attacks—that the attacks were conducted with little preplanning, and that they were motivated by the success of attackers in Cairo and/or by Zawahiri's call for revenge of the death of Abu Yayha al-Libi.[153]

During his oral testimony, Deputy Director Morell had this exchange:

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[152] *Id.* (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=5).

[153] *Id.* (online at https://intelligence.house.gov/sites/intelligence.house.gov/files/documents/MorellSFR04022014.pdf#page=8).

Q: Do you recall whether there was any—whether the chief of station was willing at that time to ascribe this to Al-Qaeda per se?

A: So, in his detailed e-mail on the 16th, he said regarding motivation—he said we don't know what motivated the attackers, but he said I think there are three possibilities.

The first was an attack on the anniversary of 9/11, to use 9/11 as a—the 9/11 anniversary as a reason for the attack. The second reason—the second motivation was the call for revenge by Ayman Al-Zawahiri for the death of a senior Al-Qaeda leader in Pakistan named Abu Yehya Alibi just days before. The third motivation that he ascribed as a possible motivation was the YouTube video.

Q: So, in this detailed memorandum the station chief could not discount the possibility even then that the video played a role in the attacks on the facilities?

A: That is correct.[154]

Department of State Office Director for Maghreb Affairs:

On August 5, 2013, staff of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of William Roebuck, the State Department's Office Director for Maghreb Affairs.

Q: After the statements made by Ambassador Rice, you had some visibility into the disagreements in the process leading up. What was your reaction to the statements that were ultimately made on the Sunday talk shows?

A: I think that the first week after 9/11 there was significant uncertainty about what had happened and disagreement among key people who shaped opinion. And I don't mean people with ideas. I mean people with information. There was a disagreement about what had happened.[155]

...

Q: And so the attack in Cairo, would it be safe to say that it from a time perspective bleeds right into the Benghazi attack?

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[154] House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, Testimony of Michael Morell, Deputy Director of the CIA, *Hearing on the Benghazi Talking Points and Michael J. Morell's Role in Shaping the Administration's Narrative* (Apr. 2, 2014) (online at www.c-span.org/video/?318648-1/benghazi-obama-administration).

[155] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of William Roebuck (Aug. 5, 2013) (referenced in Minority Staff, House Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Status Update on Investigation of Attacks on U.S. Personnel and Facilities in Benghazi* (Sept. 19, 2013) (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=56)).

A: Yes, it was in the same timeframe, and to a certain degree it colored in the initial few days, it colored how people looked at that attack.

Q: And what do you mean colored?

A: Because it was the first, and there was incomplete and sort of changing information about what had happened in Benghazi. You had this other thing that happened in Cairo, and there was some confusion about have you had—was this the same thing, were these two incidents the same, were they different? The interagency was trying to sort that out. They were also trying to sort out the conflicting information from Benghazi itself.

Q: And immediately following the Benghazi incident, were there other incidents at other posts around the world?

A: There were. There were incidents in Sudan, in Pakistan.

Q: Can you give me some timeframes and dates? Was this months later or—

A: No, no, this was in the same—this was the week. I'm talking about the week from September 11 through, you know, 18 or 19.

Q: So all in the same week?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what was the basis for the other incidents at the other facilities?

A: They were protesting this film, this anti-Islam film.

Q: So would it be reasonable, then, if there are disagreements within the agency or within different departments or agencies at the U.S. Federal Government level that it would be hard to sort of tease out the root cause of one incident versus another?

A: I think it made it more difficult, and it probably slowed our getting to ground truth on Benghazi, absolutely.[156]

...

Q: There was also a discussion about the night of the attacks, and you had made reference to the fact that there was some agency disagreement as to the basis or the predicate for those attacks. Is that correct?

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[156] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=56).

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And how long did that last within the agency?

A: Six to 7 days.

Q: Okay. Would you characterize those disagreements as honest disagreements?

A: Yes.

Q: Were these people that you respected and are they generally well informed of global security or geopolitical issues?

A: Yes, they were the experts.

Q: And so if there was disagreement, in your opinion, that disagreement could be legitimate in that there was a basis for it?

A: Yes, absolutely.

Q: Okay. Was there also disagreement within differing agencies as to the basis for the attacks?

A: Yes.[157]

Department of State Assistant Secretary of Diplomatic Security:

On July 9, 2013, staff of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Eric Boswell, former Assistant Secretary of Diplomatic Security:

Q: In those immediate days when you were dealing with a lot of major issues going on, was there any specific understanding that what had happened in Benghazi was tied to the YouTube video or to what happened in Cairo?

A: I knew only what the press was—I had no other knowledge of what was going on. To this day I don't think the USG—and we'll know when the FBI finally comes out with its report and investigation—but to this day I don't think we have a good fix as the USG on what exactly caused that attack or was motivating that attack.[158]

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[157] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=58).

[158] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Eric Boswell (July 9, 2013) (referenced in Minority Staff, House Committee on Oversight and Reform, *Status Update on Investigation of Attacks on U.S. Personnel and Facilities in Benghazi* (Sept. 19, 2013) (online at

He also stated:

> I had to get briefed on what was—on what had been happening, what the state of play was not only in Benghazi, but in Tripoli. We were very concerned about Tripoli. Tripoli is an embassy that in some ways is similar to Benghazi ... just like Benghazi. So we were very concerned about Tripoli.
>
> But also things were starting to go haywire in other places. This was at the time, as you will recall, of what I call the odious video, the YouTube video, the blasphemous video that had led to—I believe had led to the original demonstration in Cairo where people came over the wall.
>
> I think it was the day after I got back, we had an attack on our embassy in Sana'a, Yemen, where demonstrators penetrated the perimeter, did a great deal of damage, milled around inside the compound, and in subsequent days there were other such demonstrations. So I had my hands full.
>
> We had a near invasion of a compound in Khartoum, Sudan, where very large—thousands of demonstrators—in each case there was thousands of demonstrators—saw thousands of demonstrators came up against the wall of this brand new mission, OSPB-compliant, SECCA-compliant, compliant-with-everything mission in Khartoum and tried very hard to get in. They did a lot of damage, but they didn't get in.
>
> Similarly, and I can't tell you exactly the date, I'd have to come back to you on that, but it was very soon there was a similar attack by a mob on our embassy in Tunis, another brand new facility. A large number of demonstrators penetrated into the—into the facility, milled around, did a lot of damage. It was a very alarming time.
>
> In the end, in all of those places, the systems that we had put in place to protect our people—and I want to underline this—the systems that we put in place to protect our people succeeded. It was a near-run thing, but it succeeded. There were no American casualties in any of those. They were very, very severe attacks on our missions.
>
> I can add that there were also enormous demonstrations in Pakistan. I don't want to undersell Pakistan in any of this. It was an area of great concern. I've said in the past and to you that I thought Peshawar was our most difficult mission in the Foreign Service. There were major demonstrations by tens of thousands of people against consulates in Karachi, in Lahore, and our embassy in Islamabad. The Embassy—the demonstration against our embassy in Islamabad by one count was 80,000 people. That focuses the attention when that happens.[159]

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http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status%20Update%20Report%2009-18-13.pdf#page=59)).

[159] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=60)).

Diplomatic Security Desk Officer:

On August 8, 2013, staff of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Brian Papanu, the Diplomatic Security Desk Officer in the Command Center on the night of the attacks:

Q: A minute ago, you testified that it was unprecedented in scope. There were a lot of armed individuals. Was that something that was communicated to you the night of or is that something you have learned subsequently?

A: Not in the initial report. I don't think the RSO had the numbers or—I believe he used the term "attack," which would indicate it is not a protest, people just climbing over the wall. He probably would have said so if that was the case. So, from my recollection, the RSO meant it as an attack. And then, obviously, as the night progressed and we started talking and getting more information, it appeared to be incredibly violent, and it was definitely not what we were seeing in Cairo, which was very malicious in nature. And to be honest with you, a breach of the compound perimeter is a serious security issue. But they weren't trying to break in. They didn't build battering rams or anything like that. It didn't look like they were there to hurt anybody from what we could tell. But in Benghazi, I mean, they went in initially and just started—one of the first reports I recall was they went in and instantly started lighting fires and also explosions and gunfire was heard at the onset of the attack like initially. So it appeared to be a terrorist attack.

Q: And there was nothing like that in Cairo, nothing like the fires?

A: No. No. But there were a lot of people in Cairo. A lot. I mean, it was unnerving to find out the numbers that that they had mobilized, I guess, would be the proper term.

Q: Do you remember when you first heard mention that the attacks in Benghazi might have been connected to a protest or a demonstration?

A: I don't. Probably the talking points that were put out. I mean, from my perspective, where I was, it was all meshing together as one. So we really didn't have time to analyze one in particular from another. It could have just—I mean, it's hard—everyone in Benghazi had guns. So who knows what their initial intent was or what their intent was. But the way they all—one of them right after another and then stopped, it seems to signify to me that they were related in some way, shape or form. And the only common thread that I can see is the video.

Q: So, in your opinion, at the time, Cairo was pretty clearly a demonstration or a protest that had become, you know, vandalism, some sort of hostility. But in your mind, it was clearly a protest in nature and might have had some connection to the

video. And because of the timing, the correlation with the Benghazi attack, you thought that there was a possibility that Benghazi was a similar event that had gotten even more violent, more dangerous?

A: I mean, that's part of it. I don't want to sit here and tell you exactly. I mean, I don't know. But some of the things I witnessed in Cairo, I mean, the protesters were doing a lot of tweeting. Are you familiar with what a flash mob is?

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And then when we were reacting or coordinating responses in the command center, the Twitter pages were going crazy. It was unbelievable to see how much Twitter traffic was transpiring during the attack. This is in Libya now. And it was amazing. I had never used Twitter. I don't use Facebook. I barely even use a computer, for that matter; emails are about it. But I was awestruck at the speed and the ability for them to communicate and then to get resources and people together where previously to that—at least historically, if you want to get a big demonstration together, you had to start making announcements, sending out flyers. If you are going to get a big turnout, you have to get the word out. And generally, we could pick up on those types of things. But with the Twitter and those things, then they can have a flash mob together very, very fast. And it's difficult for a host nation or us to respond. And there's no doubt in my mind that that was a strong part of it. The first phase of the attack on Benghazi, there was already Twitter stuff starting. In what I would call the second phase or the looting phase, that was all Twitter-fed. You could just tell. They are tweeting. And you know—it was—the mob—the number of tweets running up the screen. We had a huge screen, and it was just running. It was unbelievable.

Q: Do you remember how you found out that there was no demonstration in Benghazi prior to the attack?

A: I just relied on the conversations with my agents. They said they did not see one. They didn't know of one.

Q: Do you remember at what point you had those conversations? Was it the night of?

A: No, it was after the fact.

Q: How many days approximately?

A: I don't recall. I mean, they didn't even come back for several days. They were in Frankfurt, speaking with the FBI. So it was a week maybe. I don't know for sure.[160]

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[160] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Brian Papanu (Aug. 8, 2013) (referenced in Minority Staff, House Committee on Oversight and Government

Q: Since we are on this subject, can you walk through, starting with the Cairo attack, what DS was dealing with from Cairo to Benghazi and in the days of the additional incidents at other locations that you were responsible for?

A: Certainly. In Cairo, I believe that we had some prior notice of a demonstration in Cairo. I don't 100 percent recall. But I believe the post knew because they were already in—they weren't open for business, and it didn't appear—it appeared they were aware of it. It looked like they were ready for it. The demonstration began. And like I said, it lasted several hours. They breached the compound perimeter wall and were doing miscellaneous things, like I said, and that was going on for an extended period of time because the host nation wouldn't respond or couldn't respond to—

Q: Does DS at this point send something out to the other potentially affected posts that this is something you need to pay attention to?

A: Yes. It went out. I know for sure that Benghazi got that information.

Q: And what do you tell them?

A: I don't specifically remember the message going out. I didn't work on that aspect of it, but probably demonstrations in Cairo, breached perimeter, could be an ops alert or something to that effect.

Q: Okay. All right. And then Cairo bleeds into Benghazi?

A: Well, yes. For me it did. Like I said, it was going on for so long, we started to do shifts. So, at some point late in the morning, it started. And now we're talking late afternoon. And my shift had just ended down in the command center. So I was heading upstairs when the phone call came.

Q: And then what about the days after Benghazi, what's taking place?

A: I don't think—the day after Benghazi, I don't believe anything happened. It was the following day that the protests in Yemen occurred.

Q: And what was that like?

A: It was a very large demonstration. They breached the compound in Yemen and did a lot of significant damage to the—they didn't breach the chancery, but they did significant damage to the chancery grounds and our vehicles and—

Reform, *Status Update on Investigation of Attacks on U.S. Personnel and Facilities in Benghazi* (Sept. 19, 2013) (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status Update Report 09-18-13.pdf#page=62)).

Q: Was that serious?

A: —equipment there. Yes, I would say it was serious.

Q: And was Tunisia also one of the—

A: Yes. Tunisia occurred, I believe, the following day after Yemen. Tunisia and Khartoum were the same day. And once again, the protesters were able to gain access into the chancery compound. They weren't able to gain access into the chancery. And the same thing occurred there. They did a lot of physical damage. They started some fires. And they burned down an adjacent American school. It wasn't on our property, but it was across the street. So it was pretty significant there as well.

Q: Violent?

A: Yeah. Violent, yes. And destruction of property. And lighting fire.

Q: And you had mentioned that these were motivated by the videotape?

A: I mean, in my belief. I'm fairly certain that the Cairo, the Tunis, the Khartoum ones were—and Yemen were motivated by that tape. The Benghazi one was a little more—that's more conjecture on my part just because I don't think there was a direct link that I ever saw or heard.

Q: You said something to the effect of all events were related or that you still believe that they were related to the this tape?

A: I do.

Q: Why is that?

A: Well, the mere fact of the time frame of them together. It could have been a coincidence, of course. But now we are talking my perspective. And I believe, I read somewhere one of the local guards, contract guards that was in Benghazi, he was interviewed and said that when he was being beat up by the attackers that this was for making fun of Mohammed or something like that. And they made reference to it. So that's what I base my information on.[161]

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[161] *Id.* (online at http://democrats.oversight.house.gov/images/user_images/gt/Status%20Update%20Report%2009-18-13.pdf#page=64).

QUESTION:

Where was the President and what did he do on the night of the attacks?

Speaker John Boehner: According to Politico, "Boehner will even press to know the president's location on the night of the attacks. ... 'I do think it matters,' he said."

Source: *John Boehner's Shrinking Power*, Politico (May 27, 2013) (online at http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=B0BB58AF-B4DC-4AB9-A6B8-597C988BDE17).

ANSWER:

The President was in the White House in Washington D.C. on the night of the attacks. Senior officials, including the Secretary of Defense and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, have testified that they personally informed the President about the attacks, and the President immediately ordered the military to deploy all available assets to protect American lives. Military leaders report that the President was "well informed" and his staff was "in constant touch" with the Pentagon, which "is the way it would normally work."

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta:

On February 7, 2013, Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta testified at a hearing before the Senate Committee on Armed Services:

> Soon after the initial reports about the attack in Benghazi were received, General Dempsey and I met with President Obama and he ordered all available DOD assets to respond to the attack in Libya and to protect U.S. personnel and interests in the region. It's important to remember that, in addition to responding to the situation in Benghazi, we were also concerned about potential threats to U.S. personnel in Tunis, Tripoli, Cairo, Sanaa, and elsewhere that could potentially require a military response.
>
> In consultation with General Dempsey and AFRICOM Commander General Ham, I directed several specific actions. First, we ordered a Marine Fleet Antiterrorism Secure Team, a FAST team, stationed in Spain to prepare to deploy to Benghazi. A second FAST platoon was ordered to prepare to deploy to the embassy in Tripoli. A Special Operations Force which was training in Central Europe was ordered to prepare to deploy to an intermediate staging base in Southern Europe, Sigonella, and a Special Operations

> Force based in the United States was ordered to deploy to an intermediate staging base in Southern Europe as well at Sigonella.[162]

He also testified:

> This was one of our weekly meetings with the President. I should tell you that just before I went into that meeting I got an update that there had been the attack there. So it was something I introduced to the President.[163]

He had this exchange with Senator Kelly Ayotte:

> Q: Secretary Panetta, you said that you were in a briefing with the President of the United States.
>
> A: Yes.
>
> Q: I believe it was about 5 o'clock our time. And you had just learned about the incident on the consulate. What conversation did you have with the President? What did he ask you to do as a result of this attack? And throughout the night what communications were you having with him? Can you tell us on a time line as to who was calling the shots there; if it wasn't him, another member of the White House?
>
> A: At the time, we were concerned about Cairo and demonstrations in Cairo. And then we had just picked up the information that something was happening, that there was an apparent attack going on in Benghazi. And I informed the President of that fact, and he at that point directed both myself and General Dempsey to do everything we needed to do to try to protect lives there.
>
> Q: Did he ask you how long it would take to deploy assets, including armed aviation—
>
> A: No.
>
> Q: —to the area?
>
> A: He basically said, do whatever you need to do to be able to protect our people there.

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[162] Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Hearing to Receive Testimony on Department of Defense's Response to the Attack on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and the Findings of Its Internal Review Following the Attack* (Feb. 7, 2013) (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-02 - 2-7-13.pdf#page=9).

[163] *Id.* (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-02 - 2-7-13.pdf#page=16).

Q: Did you have any—so he didn't ask you what ability we had in the area and what we could do?

A: No, I think—I mean, he relied on both myself as Secretary and on General Dempsey's capabilities. He knows generally what we've deployed into the region. We've presented that to him in other briefings. So he knew generally what was deployed out there. But as to specifics about time, etcetera, etcetera, no, he just left that up to us.[164]

He also had this exchange with Senator Lindsey Graham:

A: As a former chief of staff to the President of the United States, the purpose of staff is to be able to get that kind of information, and those staff were working with us.

Q: Do you think it's a typical response of the President of the United States to make one phone call, do what you can, and never call you back again to ask you, how is it going, by the way? Show any frustration we don't have any assets in there to help these people for over seven hours?

A: The President is well informed about what is going on. Make no mistake about it.[165]

He also added in response to questioning from Chairman Carl Levin:

> [O]bviously our staffs were in constant touch with the White House to alert them as to what was taking place and what information we had. So there—it's just the nature of the White House that Presidents of the United States make use of a broad sphere of staff that are involved with these issues to work these issues and continue to be in touch with him as to what's taking place.[166]

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Martin Dempsey:

On February 7, 2013, General Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff also testified at the hearing before the Senate Committee on Armed Services alongside Secretary Panetta. They had this exchange with Senator Lindsey Graham:

Q: Your testimony as I understand it, Secretary Panetta, is that you talked to the President of the United States one time?

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[164] *Id.* (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-02 - 2-7-13.pdf#page=31).

[165] *Id.* (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-02 - 2-7-13.pdf#page=38).

[166] *Id.* (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-02 - 2-7-13.pdf#page=66).

Secretary Panetta: Talked to him on September 11 with regards to the fact that we were aware that this attack was taking place.

Q: One time?

A: Right.

Q: What time did you tell him that?

A: I think that was approximately about 5:00.

Gen. Dempsey: Yes, about 5:00.

Secretary Panetta: About 5 o'clock.

Q: General Dempsey, did you ever talk to the President of the United States at all?

A: I was with the Secretary when—at that same time.

Q: Did you talk to the President?

A: Yes.

Q: You talked to him how many times?

A: The same one time.

Q: How long did that conversation last?

A: We were there in the office for probably 30 minutes.

Q: So you talked to him for 30 minutes one time and you never talked to him again, either one of you?

A: Until afterwards.

Q: Until after the attack was over?

A: That's right.[167]

General Dempsey also testified:

> I would if I could just correct one thing. I wouldn't say there was no follow-up from the White House. There was no follow-up to my knowledge with the President, but his staff

[167] *Id.* (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-02 - 2-7-13.pdf#page=35).

> was engaged with the National Military Command Center pretty constantly through the period, which is the way it would normally work.[168]

On October 10, 2013, General Dempsey provided a briefing before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations of the House Committee on Armed Services:

> Soon after I received the initial reports of the Benghazi attack, I discussed the situation with the Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, and with President Obama in a meeting that we had already scheduled that day on another topic.
>
> The President instructed us to use all available assets to respond to the attacks to ensure the safety of U.S. personnel in Libya and to protest U.S. personnel and interests throughout the region. Because threat streams increased in a number of locations simultaneously, we postured our forces to respond regionally as well as specifically to the events in Libya.[169]

Accountability Review Board Vice Chairman Admiral Michael Mullen:

On June 19, 2013, staff and Members of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform conducted a transcribed interview of Admiral Michael Mullen, the Vice Chairman of the independent Accountability Review Board and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

> I think it's important in my experience with two Presidents is that when something like this happens, the Presidents say do everything you possibly can do. And that's all the guidance I need to move forces and certainly with two Secretaries of Defense that I served with that's all the—all the guidance Secretary Gates and Secretary Panetta would need.
>
> So we're—and in fact in this situation, it does not seem to be, at least from a public standpoint, widely understood, we moved a lot of forces that night. They don't move instantly. But we had a significant force that was deployed doing other things, Special Operations Force in Europe, in Croatia, which was redeployed to a base in Southern Europe. We had a significant force from the United States which was deployed to a base in Southern Europe. So there were a lot of forces moving. And you make those packages, if you will, as robust as possible because you don't know when it's going to end and you don't know exactly what's going to happen next. And I'm very confident that was done.
>
> All of that, while you're trying to put together the picture as rapidly as possible, moving a drone over—a UAV, unarmed UAV over Benghazi as rapidly as possible to give your—

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[168] *Id.* (online at www.armed-services.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/13-02 - 2-7-13.pdf#page=32).

[169] House Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, *Briefing on the Defense Department's Force Posture in Anticipation of September 12, 2012* (Oct. 10, 2013) (online at http://armedservices.house.gov/index.cfm/files/serve?File_id=C628BC78-60B3-4E44-B6BC-D4A0920E57E5#page=6).

> give yourself better situational awareness. That was done. You're pulling every single spring you possibly can to find out what's going on, including those forces that are—and this isn't just the Pentagon. This is—I certainly saw this in the State Department. I saw this in the intelligence community.[170]

Secretary of State Clinton:

On January 23, 2013, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton testified at a hearing before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:

> Regarding what I was doing on September 11, I was at the State Department all day and late into the night. During most of the day prior to getting notice of the attack on our compound at Benghazi, we were very focused on our Embassy in Cairo. That was under assault by a group of protesters.
>
> We were assessing the security of our Embassy, which is, as those of you who have been there, certainly well defensed. But there were crowds that were intent upon trying to scale the wall, and we were in close communication with our team in Cairo.
>
> I was notified of the attack shortly after 4 p.m. Over the following hours, we were in continuous meetings and conversations, both within the Department, with our team in Tripoli, with the interagency, and internationally. I instructed our senior Department officials and our diplomatic security personnel to consider every option, to just break down the doors of the Libyan officials to get as much security support as we possibly could, to coordinate with them.
>
> I spoke to the National Security Adviser, Tom Donilon, several times. I briefed him on developments. I sought all possible support from the White House, which they quickly provided. Tom was my first call.
>
> I spoke with our chargé in Tripoli to get situation updates. I spoke with former CIA Director Petraeus to confer and coordinate, given the presence of his facility, which, of course, was not well known but was something that we knew and wanted to make sure we were closely lashed up together. I talked with the then-Libyan National Congress President to press him on greater support not only in Benghazi, but also in Tripoli.
>
> I participated in a secure video conference of senior officials from the intelligence community, the White House, and DOD. We were going over every possible option, reviewing all that was available to us, any actions we could take. We were reaching out to everyone we could find to try to get an update about Ambassador Chris Stevens, also our information specialist, Sean Smith. So it was a constant, ongoing discussion and sets of meetings.

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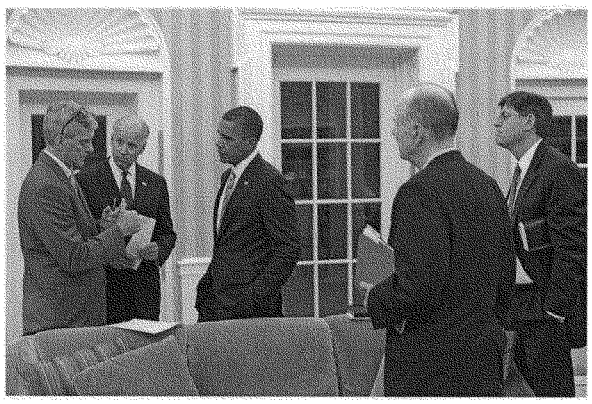
[170] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Interview of Admiral Michael Mullen (June 19, 2013) (online at http://oversight.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Mullen-transcript.pdf#page=65).

I spoke with President Obama later in the evening to bring him up to date, to hear his perspective. Obviously, we kept talking with everyone during the night. Early in the morning on the 12th, I spoke with General Dempsey, again with Tom Donilon.[171]

White House Photo Showing President Being Briefed on September 11, 2012:



Caption: "Denis McDonough, Deputy National Security Advisor, left, updates the President and Vice President on the situation in the Middle East and North Africa. National Security Advisor Tom Donilon and Chief of Staff Jack Lew are at right."[172]

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[171] Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Hearing on Benghazi: The Attacks and the Lessons Learned* (Jan. 23, 2013) (online at www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-113shrg86780/pdf/CHRG-113shrg86780.pdf#page=17).

[172] Official White House Photo, Pete Souza (Sept. 11, 2012) (online at www.flickr.com/photos/whitehouse/8341829398/in/photostream).

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- *Trey Gowdy Said the United States Was 'The Last Flag Flying in Benghazi,'* PolitiFact, Tampa Bay Times (May 16, 2014) (online at http://www.politifact.com/truth-o-meter/statements/2014/may/16/trey-gowdy/trey-gowdy-says-we-were-last-flag-flying-benghazi/).

Mr. CUMMINGS. The problem is that, rather than accepting these facts, Republicans continue to spin new conspiracy theories that are just as outlandish and inaccurate.

For example, the chairman recently tried to argue that Sidney Blumenthal was Secretary Clinton's primary advisor on Libya. And, this past Sunday, Representative Pompeo claimed on national television that Secretary Clinton relied on Sidney Blumenthal for most—for most—of her intelligence on Libya. Earlier this week, the Washington Post Fact Checker awarded this claim four Pinocchios, its worst rating.

Here is the bottom line: The select committee has spent 17 months and $4.7 million of taxpayer money. We have held four hearings and conducted 54 interviews and depositions. Yes, we have received some new emails from Secretary Clinton, Ambassador Stevens, and others. And, yes, we have conducted some new interviews. But these documents and interviews do not show any nefarious activity. In fact, it is just the opposite. The new information we have obtained confirms and corroborates the core facts we already knew from eight previous investigations. They provide more detail, but they do not change the basic conclusions.

It is time, and it is time now, for the Republicans to end this taxpayer-funded fishing expedition. We need to come together and shift from politics to policy. That is what the American people want: shifting from politics to policy.

We need to finally make good on our promises to the families. And the families only asked us to do three things: one, do not make this a political football; two, find the facts; three, do everything in your power to make sure that this does not happen again.

And so we need to start focusing on what we here in Congress can do to improve the safety and security of our diplomatic corps in the future.

And, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

[Prepared statement of Mr. Cummings follows:]

Chairman GOWDY. The chair thanks the gentleman from Maryland.

Madam Secretary, you are recognized for your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF HILLARY CLINTON, FORMER SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cummings, members of this committee.

The terrorist attacks at our diplomatic compound and later at the CIA post in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11, 2012, took the lives of four brave Americans: Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods.

I'm here to honor the service of those four men, the courage of the Diplomatic Security agents and the CIA officers who risked their lives that night, and the work their colleagues do every single day all over the world.

I knew and admired Chris Stevens. He was one of our nation's most accomplished diplomats. Chris' mother liked to say that he had sand in his shoes because he was always moving, always working, especially in the Middle East that he came to know so well.

When the revolution broke out in Libya, we named Chris as our envoy to the opposition. There was no easy way to get him into Benghazi to begin gathering information and meeting those Libyans who were rising up against the murderous dictator Qadhafi, but he found a way to get himself there on a Greek cargo ship, just like a 19th-century American envoy.

But his work was very much 21st-century, hard-nosed diplomacy. It is a testament to the relationships that he built in Libya that, on the day following the awareness of his death, tens of thousands of Libyans poured into the streets in Benghazi. They held signs reading, "Thugs don't represent Benghazi or Islam"; "Sorry, people of America. This is not the behavior of our Islam or our prophet"; "Chris Stevens, a friend to all Libyans."

Although I didn't have the privilege of meeting Sean Smith personally, he was a valued member of our State Department family. An Air Force veteran, he was an information management officer who had served in Pretoria, Baghdad, Montreal, and The Hague.

Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty worked for the CIA. They were killed by mortar fire at the CIA's outpost in Benghazi, a short distance from the diplomatic compound. They were both former Navy SEALs and trained paramedics with distinguished records of service, including in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As Secretary of State, I had the honor to lead and the responsibility to support nearly 70,000 diplomats and development experts across the globe. Losing any one of them, as we did in Iraq, Afghanistan, Mexico, Haiti, and Libya, during my tenure was deeply painful for our entire State Department and USAID family and for me personally.

I was the one who asked Chris to go to Libya as our envoy. I was the one who recommended him to be our Ambassador to the President. After the attacks, I stood next to President Obama as Marines carried his casket and those of the other three Americans off the plane at Andrews Air Force Base.

I took responsibility. And, as part of that, before I left office, I launched reforms to better protect our people in the field and help reduce the chance of another tragedy happening in the future.

What happened in Benghazi has been scrutinized by a nonpartisan, hard-hitting Accountability Review Board, seven prior congressional investigations, multiple news organizations, and, of course, our law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

So today I would like to share three observations about how we can learn from this tragedy and move forward as a nation.

First, America must lead in a dangerous world, and our diplomats must continue representing us in dangerous places.

The State Department sends people to more than 270 posts in 170 countries around the world. Chris Stevens understood that diplomats must operate in many places where our soldiers do not, where there are no other boots on the ground and safety is far from guaranteed. In fact, he volunteered for just those assignments.

He also understood we will never prevent every act of terrorism or achieve perfect security and that we inevitably must accept a level of risk to protect our country and advance our interests and values.

And make no mistake, the risks are real. Terrorists have killed more than 65 American diplomatic personnel since the 1970s and more than 100 contractors and locally employed staff. Since 2001, there have been more than 100 attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities around the world.

But if you ask our most experienced ambassadors, they'll tell you they can't do their jobs for us from bunkers. It would compound the tragedy of Benghazi if Chris Stevens' death and the deaths of the other three Americans ended up undermining the work to which he and they devoted their lives.

We have learned the hard way, when America is absent, especially from unstable places, there are consequences. Extremism takes root, aggressors seek to fill the vacuum, and security everywhere is threatened, including here at home. That's why Chris was in Benghazi. It's why he had served previously in Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jerusalem during the Second Intifada.

Nobody knew the dangers of Libya better—a weak government, extremist groups, rampant instability. But Chris chose to go to Benghazi because he understood America had to be represented there at that pivotal time. He knew that eastern Libya was where the revolution had begun and that unrest there could derail the country's fragile transition to democracy, and if extremists gained a foothold, they would have the chance to destabilize the entire region, including Egypt and Tunisia.

He also knew how urgent it was to ensure that the weapons Qadhafi had left strewn across the country, including shoulder-fired missiles that could knock an airplane out of the sky, did not fall into the wrong hands. The nearest Israeli airport is just a day's drive from the Libyan border.

Above all, Chris understood that most people, in Libya or anywhere, reject the extremists' argument that violence can ever be a path to dignity or justice. That's what those thousands of Libyans were saying after they learned of his death. And he understood there was no substitute for going beyond the embassy walls and doing the hard work of building relationships.

Retreat from the world is not an option. America cannot shrink from our responsibility to lead. That doesn't mean we should ever return to the go-it-alone foreign policy of the past, a foreign policy that puts boots on the ground as a first choice rather than a last resort. Quite the opposite. We need creative, confident leadership that harnesses all of America's strengths and values, leadership that integrates and balances the tools of diplomacy, development, and defense.

And at the heart of that effort must be dedicated professionals, like Chris Stevens and his colleagues, who put their lives on the line for a country, our country, because they believed, as I do, that America is the greatest force for peace and progress the world has ever known.

My second observation is this: we have a responsibility to provide our diplomats with the resources and support they need to do their jobs as safely and effectively as possible.

After previous deadly attacks, leaders from both parties and both branches of government came together to determine what went wrong and how to fix it for the future.

That's what happened during the Reagan administration when Hezbollah attacked our embassy and killed 63 people, including 17 Americans, and then, in a later attack, attacked our Marine barracks and killed so many more. Those two attacks in Beirut resulted in the deaths of 258 Americans.

It's what happened during the Clinton administration when Al Qaeda bombed our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, killing more than 200 people, wounding more than 2,000 people, and killing 12 Americans. And it's what happened during the Bush administration after 9/11.

Part of America's strength is we learn, we adapt, and we get stronger.

After the Benghazi attacks, I asked Ambassador Thomas Pickering, one of our most distinguished and longest-serving diplomats, along with Admiral Mike Mullen, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff appointed by President George W. Bush, to lead an Accountability Review Board.

This is an institution that the Congress set up after the terrible attacks in Beirut. There have been 18 previous Accountability Review Boards. Only two have ever made any of their findings public: the one following the attacks on our embassies in East Africa and the one following the attack on Benghazi.

The Accountability Review Board did not pull a single punch. They found systemic problems and management deficiencies in two State Department bureaus. And the Review Board recommended 29 specific improvements. I pledged that by the time I left office every one would be on the way to implementation, and they were. More Marines were slated for deployment to high-threat embassies. Additional Diplomatic Security agents were being hired and trained. And Secretary Kerry has continued this work.

But there is more to do, and no administration can do it alone. Congress has to be our partner, as it has been after previous tragedies. For example, the Accountability Review Board and subsequent investigations have recommended improved training for our officers before they deploy to the field, but efforts to establish a modern joint training center are being held up by Congress. The men and women who serve our country deserve better.

Finally, there is one more observation I would like to share. I traveled to 112 countries as Secretary of State. Every time I did, I felt great pride and honor representing the country that I love. We need leadership at home to match our leadership abroad, leadership that puts national security ahead of politics and ideology.

Our nation has a long history of bipartisan cooperation on foreign policy and national security. Not that we always agree—far from it—but we do come together when it counts.

As Secretary of State, I worked with the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to pass a landmark nuclear arms control treaty with Russia. I worked with the Republican leader, Senator Mitch McConnell, to open up Burma, now Myanmar, to democratic change. I know it's possible to find common ground, because I have done it.

We should debate on the basis of fact, not fear. We should resist denigrating the patriotism or loyalty of those with whom we disagree.

So I'm here. Despite all the previous investigations and all the talk about partisan agendas, I'm here to honor those we lost and to do what I can to aid those who serve us still.

My challenge to you, members of this committee, is the same challenge I put to myself: let's be worthy of the trust the American people have bestowed upon us. They expect us to lead, to learn the right lessons, to rise above partisanship, and to reach for statesmanship. That's what I tried to do every day as Secretary of State, and it's what I hope we will all strive for here today and into the future.

Thank you.

[Prepared statement of Mrs. Clinton follows:]

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON
STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD
HOUSE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI
WASHINGTON, DC
OCTOBER 22, 2015

The terrorist attacks in Benghazi, Libya on September 11, 2012 took the lives of four brave Americans: Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Glen Doherty, and Tyrone Woods.

I knew and admired Chris Stevens. He was one of our nation's most accomplished diplomats, previously serving in Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jerusalem during the second intifada.

I didn't have the privilege of meeting Sean Smith personally, but he was also a valued member of our State Department family. An Information Management officer, he was a veteran of the U.S. Air Force, and served in embassies and consulates in Pretoria, Baghdad, Montreal, and The Hague.

Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty, who worked for the CIA and were killed at the Agency's outpost in Benghazi, were both former Navy SEALs and trained paramedics with distinguished records of service, including in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As you know, what happened in Benghazi has been scrutinized by an Accountability Review Board, seven previous Congressional investigations, multiple news organizations, and law enforcement and intelligence agencies. Along with other senior Obama administration officials, I also testified about this matter before both the Senate and the House. Today, I would like to summarize the statement I provided to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on January 23, 2013.

* * *

First, the terrorist attacks in Benghazi are part of a broader strategic challenge to the United States and our partners in North Africa.

It's important we understand the context for this challenge, as we work together to protect our people and honor our fallen colleagues. Any clear-eyed examination of

this matter must begin with this sobering fact: Since 1988, there have been 19 Accountability Review Boards investigating attacks on American diplomats and their facilities. Since 1977, 65 American diplomatic personnel have been killed by terrorists.

In addition to those who have been killed, we know what happened in Tehran, with hostages being taken in 1979; our embassy and Marine barracks bombed in Beirut in 1983; Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1996; our embassies in East Africa in 1998; consulate staff murdered in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia in 2004; the Khost attack in Afghanistan in 2009; and too many others.

But I also want to stress the list of attacks that were foiled, crises averted, and lives saved, is even longer. We should never forget that the security professionals get it right more than 99 percent of the time against difficult odds, because the terrorists only need to get it right once. That's why, like all my predecessors, I trusted the diplomatic security professionals with my life.

Administrations of both parties, in partnership with Congress, have made concerted and good-faith efforts to learn from the tragedies that have occurred, to implement recommendations from the review boards, to seek the necessary resources to better protect our people in a constantly-evolving threat environment. In fact, of the nineteen Accountability Review Boards that have been held since 1988, only two have been made public. I want to stress that, because the two that have been made public, coming out of the East Africa embassy bombings, and this one regarding Benghazi, were honest attempts by the State Department, by the Secretary -- Secretary Albright and myself -- to be as transparent and open as possible.

We wanted to be sure that whatever these independent, non-partisan boards found would be made available to the Congress, and to the American people. Because as I said many times since September 11th, I take responsibility. And I was determined to leave the State Department and our country safer, stronger, and more secure.

Now, taking responsibility meant not only moving quickly in those first uncertain hours and days to respond to the immediate crisis, but also to make sure we were protecting our people and posts in high-threat areas across the region and the world.

It also meant launching an independent investigation to determine exactly what

happened in Benghazi and to recommend steps for improvement. It also meant intensifying our efforts to combat terrorism, and support emerging democracies in North Africa and beyond.

Let me share briefly the lessons we have learned. First, let's start on the night of September 11th itself, and those difficult early days. I directed our response from the State Department and stayed in close contact with officials from across our government and the Libyan government.

So I did see firsthand what Ambassador Pickering and Chairman Mullen called "timely and exceptional coordination." No delays in decision-making, no denials of support from Washington, or from our military.

And I want to echo the review board's praise for the valor and courage of our people on the ground, especially our security professionals in Benghazi and Tripoli. The board said our response saved American lives in real time, and it did.

The very next morning, I told the American people, "Heavily-armed militants assaulted our compound," and vowed to bring them to justice. And I stood later that day with President Obama as he spoke of an act of terror.

At this same time period, we were also seeing violent attacks on our embassies in Cairo, Sana'a, Tunis, and Khartoum, as well as large protests outside many other posts from India to Indonesia, where thousands of our diplomats serve. So I immediately ordered a review of our security posture around the world, with particular scrutiny for high-threat posts. And I asked the Department of Defense to join interagency security assessment teams, and to dispatch hundreds of additional Marine security guards.

I named the first Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for high-threat posts so that missions in dangerous places would get the attention they need. And we reached out to Congress, to help address physical vulnerabilities, including risks from fire, and to hire additional diplomatic security personnel, and Marine security guards.

Second, even as I took these steps, I quickly moved to appoint the Accountability Review Board, because I wanted them to come forward with their report before I left, because I felt the responsibility, and I wanted to be sure that I was putting in motion the response to whatever they found. What was wrong? How do we fix it?

I accepted every one of their recommendations. Our Deputy Secretary for

Management and Resources, Tom Nides, led a task force to ensure that all 29 were implemented quickly, and completely, as well as pursuing additional steps above and beyond the board.

Implementation began on all 29 recommendations. They were translated into 64 specific action items and assigned to specific bureaus and offices with clear timelines for completion.

We also took a top to bottom look to rethink how we make decisions on where, when, and whether our people should operate in high-threat areas, and how we respond. We initiated an annual high-threat post review, chaired for the first time by the Secretary of State. And ongoing reviews by the deputy secretaries to ensure that pivotal questions about security reach the highest level. And we worked to regularize protocols for sharing information with Congress.

In addition to the immediate action we took, and the review board process, we moved on a third front: addressing the broader strategic challenge in North Africa, and the wider region. Benghazi did not happen in a vacuum. The Arab revolutions scrambled power dynamics, and shattered security forces across the region.

The United States must continue to lead, in the Middle East, in North Africa, and around the globe. When America is absent, especially from unstable environments, there are consequences. Extremism takes root, our interests suffer, and our security at home is threatened. That's why Chris Stevens went to Benghazi in the first place. I asked him to go. During the beginning of the revolution against Gadhafi, we needed somebody in Benghazi who could begin to build bridges with the insurgents and to begin to demonstrate that America would stand against Gadhafi.

Nobody knew the dangers, or the opportunities better than Chris. First during the revolution, and then during the transition. A weak Libyan government, marauding militias, even terrorist groups, a bomb exploded in the parking lot of his hotel. He never wavered. He never asked to come home. He never said, let's shut it down, quit and go somewhere else, because he understood it was critical for America to be represented in that place, at that pivotal time.

So, we do have to work harder and better to balance the risks and the opportunities. Our men and women who serve overseas understand that we do accept a level of risk to represent and protect the country we love. They represent the best traditions of a bold and generous nation.

They cannot work in bunkers and do their jobs. But it is our responsibility to make sure they have the resources they need to do those jobs and to do everything we can to reduce the risks they face.

For me, this is not just a matter of policy, it's personal because I had the great honor to lead the men and women of the State Department and USAID -- nearly 70,000 serving here in Washington and at more than 275 posts around the world. They get up, and go to work every day, often in difficult, and dangerous circumstances, thousands of miles from home, because they believe the United States is the most extraordinary force for peace and progress the earth has ever known. And when we suffer tragedies overseas, the number of Americans apply to the Foreign Service actually increases.

That tells us everything we know about the kind of patriots I'm talking about. They do ask what they can do for their country, and America is stronger for it.

After traveling nearly a million miles and visiting 112 countries as Secretary of State, my faith in our country and our future is stronger than ever. Every time that blue and white airplane carrying the words "United States of America" touched down in some far off capital, I felt again the honor it was to represent the world's indispensable nation.

Chairman GOWDY. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I did not cut off your opening at all, nor would I think about doing so, because the subject matter is critically important, and you deserve to be heard. I would just simply note that—and I don't plan on cutting off any of your answers.

Our members have questions that we believe are worthy of being answered, so I would just simply note that we do plan to ask all of the questions. And whatever precision and concision that you can give to the answers without giving short shrift to any of the answers would be much appreciated.

And, with that, I would recognize the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Roskam.

Mr. ROSKAM. Good morning, Secretary Clinton.

Jake Sullivan, your chief foreign policy advisor, wrote a "tick tock on Libya" memo on August 21, 2011. And this was the day before the rebels took Tripoli. He titles it, "Secretary Clinton's leadership on Libya," in which he describes you as, "a critical voice" and, "the public face of the U.S. effort in Libya and instrumental in tightening the noose around Qadhafi and his regime."

But that didn't come easy, did it? Because you faced considerable opposition—and I can pause while you are reading your notes from your staff.

Mrs. CLINTON. No, that's fine. I'm listening. I can do more than one thing at a time, Congressman. Thanks.

Mr. ROSKAM. Okay.

That didn't come easy, did it, that leadership role and that public face and so forth that I just mentioned?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, Congressman. I know this is an issue that the committee has raised, and it really boils down to why were we in Libya, why did the United States join with our NATO and European allies, join with our Arab partners to protect the people of Libya against the murderous planning of Qadhafi, why did we take a role alongside our partners in doing so.

There were a number of reasons for that. And I think it is important to remind the American people where we were at the time when the people of Libya, like people across the region, rose up demanding freedom and democracy, a chance to chart their own futures.

And Qadhafi——

Mr. ROSKAM. I take your point——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Qadhafi threatened them with genocide, with hunting them down like cockroaches.

And we were then approached by, with great intensity, our closest allies in Europe, people who felt very strongly, the French and the British but others as well, that they could not stand idly by and permit that to happen so close to their shores, with the unintended consequences that they worried about, and they asked for the United States to help.

We did not immediately say yes. We did an enormous amount of due diligence in meeting with not only our European and Arab partners but also with those who were heading up what was called the Transitional National Council. And we had experienced diplomats who were digging deep into what was happening in Libya

and what the possibilities were before we agreed to provide very specific, limited help to the European and Arab efforts.

We did not put one American soldier on the ground. We did not have one casualty. And, in fact, I think by many measures, the cooperation between NATO and Arab forces was quite remarkable and something that we want to learn more lessons from.

Mr. ROSKAM. Secretary Clinton, you were meeting with opposition within the State Department, from very senior career diplomats in fact, and they were saying that it was going to produce a net negative for U.S. military intervention.

For example, in a March 9, 2011, email discussing what has become known as the "Libya options memo," Ambassador Stephen Mull, then the Executive Secretary at the State Department and one of the top career diplomats, said this: "In the case of our diplomatic history, when we've provided material or tactical military support to people seeking to drive their leaders from power, no matter how just their cause, it's tended to produce net negatives for our interests over the long term in those countries."

Now, we will come back to that in a minute. But you overruled those career diplomats. I mean, they report to you, and you are the chief diplomat of the United States.

Go ahead and read the note if you need to.

Mrs. CLINTON. I have to—I have to——

Mr. ROSKAM. I'm not done with my question. I'm just giving you the courtesy of reading your notes.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's all right.

Mr. ROSKAM. All right.

They were pushing back, but you overcame those objections. But then you had another big obstacle, didn't you, and that was the White House itself? There were senior voices within the White House that were opposed to military action: Vice President Biden, Department of Defense, Secretary Gates, the National Security Council, and so forth.

But you persuaded President Obama to intervene militarily. Isn't that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I think it's important to point out there were many in the State Department who believed it was very much in America's interest and in furtherance of our values to protect the Libyan people, to join with our European allies and our Arab partners.

The Ambassador who had to be withdrawn from Libya because of direct threats to his physical safety but who knew Libya very well, Ambassador Cretz, was a strong advocate for doing what we could to assist the Europeans and the Arabs.

I think it's fair to say there were concerns and there were varying opinions about what to do, how to do it, and the like.

At the end of the day, this was the President's decision, and all of us fed in our views. I did not favor it until I had done, as I said, the due diligence, speaking with not just people within our government and within the governments of all of the other nations who were urging us to assist them but also meeting in person with the gentleman who had assumed a lead role in the Transitional National Council.

So it is, of course, fair to say this was a difficult decision. I wouldn't sit here and say otherwise. And there were varying points of view about it. But at the end of the day, in large measure because of the strong appeals from our European allies, the Arab League passing a resolution urging that the United States and NATO join with them, those were unprecedented requests, and we did decide in recommending to the President that there was a way to do it.

The President, I think, very clearly had a limited instruction about how to proceed. And the first planes that flew were French planes. And I think what the United States provided was some of our unique capacity, but the bulk of the work militarily was done by Europeans and Arabs.

Mr. ROSKAM. Well, I think you are underselling yourself. You got the State Department on board. You convinced the President. You overcame the objections of Vice President Biden and Secretary of Defense Gates, the National Security Council.

And you had another obstacle then, and that was the United Nations. And you were able to persuade the Russians, of all things, to abstain. And had you not been successful in arguing that abstention, the Security Council Resolution 1973 wouldn't have passed because the Russians had a veto.

So you overcame that obstacle, as well. Isn't that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, it is right that, after doing my due diligence and reviewing the various options and the potential consequences of pursuing each of them, I was in favor of the United States joining with our European allies and our Arab partners. And I also was in favor of obtaining U.N. Security Council support, because I thought that would provide greater legitimacy.

In that, of course, our Ambassador to the U.N. was very uninfluential and successful in making the case to her colleagues. But this was at the behest of and the direction of the President once he was presented with the varying arguments.

And, you know——

Mr. ROSKAM. And you presented the argument——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Congressman, I have been in a number of Situation Room discussions. I remember very well the very intense conversation over whether or not to launch the Navy SEALs against the compound we thought in Abbottabad that might house bin Laden. There was a split in the advisors around the President. Eventually the President makes the decision.

I supported doing what we could to support our European and Arab partners in their effort on a humanitarian basis, a strategic basis, to prevent Qadhafi from launching and carrying out mass massacres.

Mr. ROSKAM. There was another obstacle that you overcame, and that was the Arabs themselves. Jake Sullivan sent you an email, and he said this: "I think you should call. It will be a painful ten minutes, but you will be the one who delivered Arab support." And that's a Jake Sullivan email of March 17 to you asking you to call the Secretary General of the Arab League.

So, to put this in totality, you were able to overcome opposition within the State Department, you were able to persuade the President, you were able to persuade the United Nations and the inter-

national community, you made the call to the Arabs and brought them home. You saw it, you drove it, you articulated it, and you persuaded people.

Did I get that wrong?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I was the Secretary of State. My job was to conduct the diplomacy. And the diplomacy consisted of a long series of meetings and phone calls, both here in our country and abroad, to take the measure of what people were saying and whether they meant it.

We had heard sometimes before from countries saying, "Well, the United States should go do this." And when we say, "Well, what will you do in support of us?", there was not much coming forth. This time, if they wanted us to support them in what they saw as an action vital to their respective national security interests, I wanted to be sure that they were going to bear the bulk of the load.

And, in fact, they did. What the United States did, as I've said, was use our unique capacities. As I recall, if you want it in monetary terms, slightly over a billion dollars, or less than what we spend in Iraq in one day, is what the United States committed in support of our allies.

You know, we ask our——

Mr. ROSKAM. Reclaiming my time——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Allies to do a lot for us, Congressman——

Mr. ROSKAM. My time is expiring. Let me reclaim my time.

Mrs. CLINTON. They had asked for us to help them.

Mr. ROSKAM. Let me reclaim my time because it's expiring.

Actually, you summed it up best when you emailed your senior staff and you said of this interchange, you said, "It's good to remind ourselves and the rest of the world that this couldn't have happened without us." And you were right, Secretary Clinton. Our Libya policy couldn't have happened without you because you were its chief architect.

And I said we're going to go back to Admiral Mullen's warning about using military for regime change. And he said, "Long term, things weren't going to turn out very well." And he was right. After your plan, things in Libya today are a disaster.

I yield back.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, we'll have more time, I'm sure, to talk about this, because that's not a view that I will ascribe to.

Chairman GOWDY. I thank the gentleman from Illinois and recognize the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Madam Secretary, again, I want to thank you for being here.

I want to start with the number one question that Republicans claim has not been answered in the eight previous investigations. Yesterday, the chairman wrote an op-ed, and he said this is his top unanswered question about Benghazi. And it is, "why our people in Libya and Benghazi made so many requests for additional security personnel and equipment and why those requests were denied." I will give you a chance to answer that in a minute.

Secretary Clinton, as you know, this exact question has been asked many times and answered many times.

Let's start with the Accountability Review Board. Now, a moment ago, you talked about Admiral Mullen, but you also appointed another very distinguished gentleman, Ambassador Pickering. And, of course, Admiral Mullen served under Republican administrations. And Ambassador Pickering, who I have a phenomenal amount of respect for, served 40 years, as you know, as part of our diplomatic corps. He served under George H.W. Bush, and he also served as U.N. Ambassador under Reagan.

Now, I am just wondering—let me go back to that question, why our people in Libya and Benghazi made so many requests?

And then I want you to comment. There seems to be an implication that the ARB, the Accountability Review Board, was not independent. And I think the chairman said they were handpicked by you. Of course, that is done by law.

But would you comment on those two things, please?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes. I would be happy to.

You know, as I said in my opening statement, I take responsibility for what happened in Benghazi. I felt a responsibility for all 70,000 people working at the State Department and USAID. I take that very seriously.

As I said with respect to security requests in Benghazi back when I testified in January of 2013, those requests and issues related to security were rightly handled by the security professionals in the Department. I did not see them, I did not approve them, I did not deny them.

Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen make this case very clearly in their testimony before your committee and in their public comments. These issues would not ordinarily come before the Secretary of State, and they did not in this case.

As Secretary, I was committed to taking aggressive measures to ensure our personnel and facilities were as safe as possible. And, certainly, when the nonpartisan, critical report from the Accountability Review Board came forward, I took it very seriously. And that's why I embraced all of their recommendations and created a new position within the Diplomatic Security Bureau specifically to evaluate high-risk posts.

I think it's important also to mention, Congressman, that the Diplomatic Security professionals who were reviewing these requests, along with those who are serving in war zones and hotspots around the world, have great expertise and experience in keeping people safe. If you go on codels, they are the ones who plan your trip to keep you safe. They certainly did that for me. But, most importantly, that's what they do every day for everybody who serves our country as a diplomat or a development professional. And I was not going to second-guess them. I was not going to substitute my judgment, which is not based on experience that they have in keeping people safe, for theirs.

And the changes that were recommended by the Accountability Review Board are ones that we thought made sense and began quickly to implement.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, the ARB, after conducting, Madam Secretary, more than 100 interviews, identified a specific employee at the State Department who denied these requests. It was Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Diplomatic Security Charlene

Lamb. And, again, she did come before the Oversight Committee. The ARB report was very critical of her. It was also critical of her two supervisors, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary and the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security.

The Oversight Committee found the same answer as the ARB. It found that this official denied these requests, and it found no evidence that you approved or denied them. The problem is that Republicans just keep asking the same question over and over again and pretend they don't know the answer. In 2013, the Republican chairmen of five House committees issued a report falsely accusing you personally of denying these requests in a cable over your signature. The next day—the next day—the chairman of the Oversight Committee, Darrell Issa, went on national television and accused you of the same thing.

Can we play that clip, please?

[Video shown.]

Mr. CUMMINGS. Do you remember that allegation, Madam Secretary?

Mrs. CLINTON. I do.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Well, when the Washington Post Fact Checker examined this claim, they gave it four Pinocchios. They called it a whopper. It turns out that the Republicans had a copy of that cable, but they didn't tell the American people that your so-called signature was just a stamp that appears on millions of cables from the State Department every single year. Is that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, Madam Secretary, my goal has always been to gather facts and to defend the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Last year, I asked our staff to compile an asked-and-answered database, and this particular issue was answered thoroughly.

On Monday, we put out another report, and this issue was addressed yet again. But the Republicans want to keep this attack going, so they are now trying to argue that we have new emails that raise new questions.

The truth is that we have reviewed these emails, and they don't contradict our previous conclusions; they confirm them. They corroborate them. We've reviewed emails from Ambassador Stevens, and they show that he asked Charlene Lamb for more security. Nothing we have obtained, not the new interviews or the new emails, changes the basic facts we have known for three years.

Secretary Clinton, let me ask one final question, and please take as much time as you want to answer this. There's no evidence to support the Republican claims that you personally rejected security requests. So some have argued that since you knew the danger was increasing in Libya, you should have been in there making detailed decisions about whether there should be five, seven, or even nine security officers at any given post. Madam Secretary, I know you have answered this over again. You might want to just elaborate, and just—I'll give you—I have a minute and seven seconds.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, thank you, Congressman. I think there has been some confusion, and I welcome the opportunity to try to clarify it to the best of my ability. With respect, as you rightly point out, the claims that were made about the cables, I think you have

explained the fact, which is that it's the longstanding tradition of the State Department for cables from around the world to be sent to and sent from the State Department under the signature, over the signature of the Secretary of State. It's a stamp. It's just part of the tradition. There are millions of them, as you point out. They are sorted through and directed to the appropriate personnel. Very few of them ever come to my attention. None of them with respect to security regarding Benghazi did.

Then the other point, which I thank you for raising so that perhaps I can speak to this one as well, there is, of course, information that we were obtaining about the increasingly dangerous environment in Libya, across the country but in particular in eastern Libya. And we were aware of that, and we were certainly taking that into account.

There was no actionable intelligence on September 11 or even before that date about any kind of planned attack on our compound in Benghazi. And there were a lot of debates, apparently, that went on within the security professionals about what to provide because they did have to prioritize. The Accountability Review Board pointed that out. The State Department has historically and certainly before this terrible incident not had the amount of money that we thought would be necessary to do what was required to protect everyone, so of course there had to be priorities. And that was something that the security professionals dealt with. I think that both Admiral Mullen and Ambassador Pickering made it very clear that they thought that the high-threat posts should move to a higher level of scrutiny, and we had immediately moved to do that.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you.

Chairman GOWDY. I thank the gentleman.

The chair would now recognize the gentlelady from Indiana, Mrs. Brooks.

Mrs. BROOKS. Good morning, Secretary Clinton.

Mrs. CLINTON. Morning.

Mrs. BROOKS. Thank you for being here today.

And drawing on what you just said, that very few, but no requests for Benghazi came to your attention, I'd like to show you something. This pile represents the emails that you sent or received about Libya in 2011, from February through December of 2011. This pile represents the emails you sent or received from early 2012 until the day of the attack. There are 795 emails in this pile. We've counted them. There are 67 emails in this pile in 2012. And I'm troubled by what I see here, and so my questions relate to these piles.

In this pile in 2011, I see daily updates, sometimes hourly updates, from your staff about Benghazi and Chris Stevens. When I look at this pile in 2012, I only see a handful of emails to you from your senior staff about Benghazi. And I have several questions for you about this disparity because we know from talking to your senior advisors that they knew—and many of them are here today seated behind you—they knew to send you important information, issues that were of importance to you. And I can only conclude by your own records that there was a lack of interest in Libya in 2012.

So let's first focus, though, on this pile and what was happening in Libya in 2011. We have an Ambassador to Libya, Ambassador

Cretz, but you've told us that—and you told us in your opening you hand-picked Chris Stevens to be your Special Representative in Benghazi, and you sent him there. And by your own emails—most provided last February, a few provided just a few weeks ago—they show that in March of 2011, so we're in March of 2011, you had Chris Stevens join you in Paris, where you were meeting with the leader of the Libyan revolution. And after Paris, that is when, as you talked about, Chris Stevens went into Benghazi, I believe on April 5 of 2011, on that Greek cargo ship.

How long was he expected to stay? What were Chris Stevens' orders from you about Libya and about Benghazi specifically?

Mrs. CLINTON. Chris Stevens was asked to go to Benghazi to do reconnaissance to try to figure out who were the leaders of the insurgency who were based in Benghazi, what their goals were, what they understood would happen if they were successful. It was, as I said, the hard-nosed 21st century diplomacy that is rooted in the old-fashioned necessary work of building relationships and gathering information.

Mrs. BROOKS. How long was he anticipated to stay in Benghazi? Do you recall?

Mrs. CLINTON. There were—it was open ended. We were, in discussing it with him, unsure as to how productive it would be, whether it would be appropriate for him to stay for a long time or a short time. That was very much going to depend upon Chris' own assessment. We knew we were sending someone who understood the area, who understood the language, who understood a lot of the personalities because of the historical study that he used to love to do, and we were going to be guided by what he decided.

Mrs. BROOKS. I'd like to draw your attention to an email. It's an email found at tab 1. It's an Ops Center email that was forwarded to you from Huma Abedin on Sunday, March 27, that says at the bottom of the email: "so the current game plan is for Mr. Stevens to move no later Wednesday from Malta to Benghazi." But the bottom of the email says the goal of this one-day trip is for him to lay the groundwork for a stay of up to 30 days.

So just to refresh that recollection, I believe initially the goal was to go in for 30 days. Were you personally briefed on his security plan prior to him going into Libya, because——

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Mrs. BROOKS [continuing]. At that time, if I'm not mistaken—I'm sorry to interrupt—Qadhafi's forces were still battling the rebels. Correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That—that—that's right.

Mrs. BROOKS. And so what were—were you personally briefed before you sent Mr. Stevens into Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. I was personally told by the officials who were in the State Department who were immediately above Chris, who were making the plans for him to go in, that it was going to be expeditionary diplomacy. It was going to require him to make a lot of judgments on the ground about what he could accomplish and including where it would be safe for him to be and how long for him to stay. And I think the initial decision was, you know, up to 30 days and reassess, but it could have been ten days, it could have

been 60 days, depending upon what he found and what he reported back to us.

Mrs. BROOKS. And possibly what was determined about the danger of Benghazi.

Who were those officials, Secretary Clinton?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, there were a number of officials who were working——

Mrs. BROOKS. That were advising you on the security specifically.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, with respect to the security, this was a particular concern of the Assistant Secretary for the bureau in which Chris worked, and——

Mrs. BROOKS. And I'm sorry. What was that person's name?

Mrs. CLINTON. Assistant Secretary Jeff Feltman.

Mrs. BROOKS. Thank you.

Mrs. CLINTON. And it was also a concern of the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security as well as other officials within the State Department. And I think it's fair to say, Congresswoman, this was, we all knew, a risky undertaking. And it was something that was, as I said in my opening statement, more reminiscent of the way diplomacy was practiced back in the 19th century because we didn't have the internet; we didn't have instantaneous communications. You would send diplomats and envoys into places and not hear from them for maybe months. This was obviously not of that kind, but it was not that different in degree from what we have done before. And it was a risky undertaking and one which Chris volunteered for and was anxious to undertake.

Mrs. BROOKS. And it was so risky, I'd like to pull up another email from the Ops Center that was forwarded to you from Ms. Abedin on Sunday, April 10. So he had been there about five days, and it indicates that the situation in Ajdabiya had worsened to the point where Stevens is considering departing from Benghazi. This is within five days of him going in. Were you aware of that concern within the first five days that he had gone in——

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Mrs. BROOKS [continuing]. And did anyone share that with you——

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Mrs. BROOKS [continuing]. And who did you share that with you?

Mrs. CLINTON. We were aware because we were really counting on Chris to guide us and give us the information from the ground. We had no other sources. You know, there was no American outpost. There was no, you know, American military presence. Eventually, other Americans representing different agencies were able to get into Benghazi and begin to do the same work, but they, of course, couldn't do that work overtly, which is why we wanted a diplomat who could be publicly meeting with people to try to get the best assessment. But it was always going to be a constant risk, and we knew that.

Mrs. BROOKS. And so let me go back to the risk in 2011 because there was a lot of communication, again, once again from your senior staff, from the State Department to you or from you in 2011. And, in fact, that is when Qadhafi fell. He fell in 2011. But then when we go to 2012, Libya, Benghazi, Chris Stevens, the staff

there, they seem to fall off your radar in 2012, and the situation is getting much worse in 2012. It was getting much worse.

And let me just share for you, in your records that we have reviewed, there is not one email to you or from you in 2012 when an explosive device went off at our compound in April. There's not a single email in your records about that explosive device.

So my question is: this was a very important mission in 2011. You sent Chris Stevens there, but yet when our compound is attacked in 2012, what kind of culture was created in the State Department that your folks couldn't tell you in an email about a bomb in April of 2012?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congresswoman, I did not conduct most of the business that I did on behalf of our country on email. I conducted it in meetings. I read massive amounts of memos, a great deal of classified information. I made a lot of secure phone calls. I was in and out of the White House all the time. There were a lot of things that happened that I was aware of and that I was reacting to. If you were to be in my office in the State Department, I didn't have a computer. I did not do the vast majority of my work on email. And I bet there's a lot of Sid Blumenthal's emails in there from 2011 too.

Mrs. BROOKS. Well, we'll go into that later.

Mrs. CLINTON. And so I think that there were—I don't want you to have a mistaken impression about what I did and how I did it. Most of my work was not done on emails with my closest aides, with the officials in the State Department, officials in the rest of the government, as well as the White House, and people around the world.

Mrs. BROOKS. And thank you for sharing that because I'm sure that it's not all done on emails, Madam Secretary, and there are meetings, and there are discussions. And so then when our compound took a second attack on June 6, when a bomb blew a wall through the compound then, no emails, no emails at all, but I am interested in knowing who were you meeting with, who were you huddling with, how were you informed about those things, because there is nothing in the emails that talks about two significant attacks on our compounds in 2012?

Mrs. CLINTON. I was meeting——

Mrs. BROOKS. There is a lot of information in 2011 about issues in security posture and yet nothing in 2012.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I'd be happy to explain. Every morning when I arrived at the State Department, usually between 8:00 and 8:30, I had a personal one-on-one briefing from the representative of the Central Intelligence Agency, who shared with me the highest level of classified information that I was to be aware of on a daily basis. I then had a meeting with the top officials of the State Department every day that I was in town. That's where a lot of information, including threats and attacks on our facilities, was shared. I also had a weekly meeting every Monday with all of the officials, the Assistant Secretaries and others, so that I could be brought up-to-date on any issue that they were concerned about. During the day, I received hundreds of pages of memos, many of them classified, some of them so top secret that they were brought into my office in a locked briefcase that I had to read and immediately return

to the courier. And I was constantly at the White House in the Situation Room meeting with the National Security Advisor and others. I would also be meeting with officials in the State Department, foreign officials and others.

So there was a lot going on during every day. I did not email during the day, and—except on rare occasions when I was able to. But I didn't conduct the business that I did primarily on email. That is not how I gathered information, assessed information, asked the hard questions of the people that I worked with.

Mrs. BROOKS. It appears that leaving Benghazi, with respect to all of that danger, leaving Benghazi was not an option in 2012.

And I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, if I could just quickly respond. There was never a recommendation from any intelligence official in our government, from any official in the State Department, or from any other person with knowledge of our presence in Benghazi to shut down Benghazi, even after the two attacks that the compound suffered. And perhaps, you know, you would wonder why, but I can tell you that it was thought that the mission in Benghazi, in conjunction with the CIA mission, was vital to our national interests.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady from Indiana yields back.

The chair will now briefly recognize Mr. Cummings and then Ms. Duckworth.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to clarify, when I was asking Secretary Clinton a question a moment ago, I mentioned an email that had gone from Ambassador Chris Stevens to Deputy Secretary Lamb. What I meant to say was a cable, and I just wanted to make sure the record was clear.

Chairman GOWDY. The record will reflect that.

Ms. Duckworth.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Clinton, I'm pleased that you finally have the opportunity to be here.

Before I start my line of questioning, I just want to clarify with regard to the April, June 2012 incidents, I believe that the procedure that the State Department had for these types of incidents was to actually hold what are called Emergency Action Committee hearings on the ground immediately. And, in fact, there were at least five on the record for June alone on the ground in both Tripoli and Benghazi. And that is the correct procedure for handling such instances. Is that not correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you.

Secretary Clinton, my focus and my job on this committee is to make sure that we never put brave Americans, like Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty, ever on the ground again anywhere in the world without the protection that they so rightly deserve. Having flown combat missions myself and in some dangerous places, I understand the dedication of our men and women who choose to serve this country overseas.

I have a special affinity for the diplomatic corps because these are folks who go in without the benefit of weapons, without the

benefit of military might, armed only with America's values, diplomatic words and a handshake to forward our Nation's interests globally. So I am absolutely determined to make sure that we safeguard, in the name of our heroic dead, our men and women in the diplomatic corps wherever they are around the world.

So the bottom line for me—I'm a very mission-driven person. The bottom line for me is, with respect to examining what went wrong in Benghazi, clear: let's learn from those mistakes, and let's figure out what we need to do to fix them.

I've only been in Congress not quite 3 years, almost 3 years. And in this time, I've actually served on two other committees in addition to this one that looked at the Benghazi attacks, both Armed Services and Oversight and Government Reform, so I've had a chance to really look at all of these documents. One of the things that I saw—and I'd like to discuss this with you—is that the Department of State and the Department of Defense at the time seem to have not had the most ideal cooperation when it came to threat or security analysis. I do know, however, that over the past decade, they've established a tradition of working together on the ground in dangerous regions that has increased over time.

However, as a member of the Armed Services Committee, which also looked at the Benghazi attacks, I'm concerned that the interagency cooperation between State and DOD was not sufficient in the weeks and months leading up to the September 11, 2012, attacks. For example, the joint contingency planning and training exercises, if we had conducted any joint interagency planning and training exercises, this may have actually helped State and DOD to identify and fix existing vulnerabilities in the temporary mission facility in Benghazi.

Moreover, regular communications between AFRICOM, which is the DOD command, and the Special Mission Benghazi could have facilitated the prepositioning of military assets in a region where there were very real questions over the host country's ability to protect our diplomatic personnel.

Secretary Clinton, within the weeks of the terrorist attacks in Benghazi happening, following that, I understand you partnered with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to establish and deploy five Interagency Security Assessment Teams to assess our security posture and needs at at least the 19 high-threat posts in 13 different countries. In fact, Deputy Secretary Nides testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in December of 2012 that the State Department and DOD ISAT initiative created a roadmap for addressing emerging security challenges.

Why did you partner with the Department of Defense to conduct such a high-priority review, and was it effective in addressing the shortfalls in Benghazi and applying it for other locations?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, thank—Congresswoman, thank you very much, and thanks for your service and particularly your knowledge about these issues arising from your own military service and the service on the committees here in the House.

It's very challenging to get military assets into countries that don't want them there. And, in fact, that has been a constant issue that we have worked between the State Department and the Department of Defense. The Libyans made it very clear from the very

beginning they did not want any American military or any foreign military at all in their country. And what I concluded is that we needed to have these assessments because even if we couldn't post our own military in the country, we needed to have a faster reaction.

Now, I certainly agree 100 percent with the findings of the Armed Services Committee here in the House and other investigations. Our military did everything they could. They turned over every rock. They tried to deploy as best they could to try to get to Benghazi. It was beyond the geographic range. They didn't have assets nearby because we don't have a lot of installations and military personnel that are in that immediate region.

So following what happened in Benghazi, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Dempsey, and I agreed to send out mixed teams of our diplomatic security and their top security experts from the Defense Department to get a better idea of the 19 high-threat posts. And that's exactly what we did. And it gave us some guidance to try to have better planning ahead of time.

I know Admiral Mullen testified that it would be beyond the scope of our military to be able to provide immediate reaction to 270 posts, but that's why we tried to narrow down.

And, of course, we do get help from our military in war zones. The military has been incredibly supportive of our Embassy in Kabul and our Embassy in Baghdad, but we have a lot of hot spots now and very dangerous places that are not in military conflict areas where we have American military presence, so we wanted to figure out how we could get more quickly a fast reaction team to try to help prevent what happened in Benghazi.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you. So this ISAT process with the joint teams of DOD and State that goes out and initially looked at the 19 posts, that's great that they come out—back with a report. It's kind of like, you know, the seven reports for this, and now we have another committee. We can keep having committees to look into Benghazi, but we never act on them. It doesn't help our men and women on the ground, and that's what I'm focused on.

So what I want to know is with these ISATs, so they came back with their recommendations to you. Have they been resourced? Are they institutionalized? What has been done with this process so that it's not a snapshot in time in reaction to the Benghazi attack? And I want to make sure that, you know, at the very least, we are continuing the cooperation, or at least there's some sort of institutionalization of the review process to make sure that if it's not those 19 posts, if the shift now is there's 20 posts or some other posts. What has been done to make sure it's institutionalized?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that was one of the changes that I instituted before I left, and I'm confident that Secretary Kerry and his counterpart, Secretary Carter, at the Defense Department, are continuing that because I think it was very useful. Certainly it was useful for our security professionals and our diplomats to be partnered in that way with the Defense Department.

You know, historically the only presence at some of our facilities has been Marines. And as you know well, Marines were there not for the purpose of personnel protection; they were there to destroy classified material and equipment.

And so part of the challenge that we have faced in some of these hot-spot, dangerous areas is, how will we get more of a presence? And after Benghazi, we were able to get Marines deployed to Tripoli. So this is a constant effort between the State Department and the Defense Department, but it's my strong belief that the ISAT process has been and should be institutionalized, and we just keep learning from it.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I'd like to touch on the quadrennial reviews. Again, coming from Armed Services, even as a young platoon leader out in, you know, a platoon, we got and read the Defense Quadrennial Review, which is a review that happens on a periodic basis that gives the individual soldier an idea of what the Defense Department is trying to do. And I understand you initiated something similar——

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Ms. DUCKWORTH [continuing]. In the State Department. And this goes to—there has been discussion already about the culture at the State Department, especially when it comes to security. I find that the Department of Defense Quadrennial Review is really good at instilling culture throughout the Department.

Can you talk a little bit about how and why you decided to do the review for the State Department? Was it useful? Is it useful? Is it getting out there? Is it a waste of time, and we shouldn't be wasting money on it, and we should be doing something else?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I hope it's not the latter. I learned about the Quadrennial Defense Review serving on the Armed Services Committee in the Senate during my time there.

I agree with you completely, Congresswoman. It's a very successful roadmap as to where we should be going, and I'm impressed that as a platoon leader, it was something that you took into account.

So when I came to the State Department, there had never been anything like this done; there was no roadmap. And the State Department and USAID would come up and fight for the money that they could get out of Congress, no matter who was in charge of the Congress, every single year. It's 1 percent of the entire budget, and it was very difficult to explain effectively what it is we were trying to achieve, so I did institute the first ever Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review.

And one of the key questions that we were addressing is, what is this balance between risk and reward when it comes to our diplomats and our development professionals? Because the first thing I heard when I got to the State Department was a litany of complaints from a lot of our most experienced diplomats that they were being hamstrung, that the security requirements were so intense that they were basically unable to do their jobs. And, of course, then from the security professionals, who were all part of this, what we call the QDDR, they were saying: We don't want you to go beyond the fence. We can't protect you in all of these dangerous circumstances.

How you balance that—and it is a constant balancing of risk and reward in terms of what we hope our diplomats and development professionals can do. So it's been done twice now. Secretary Kerry in his tenure has done the second QDDR. And I hope it becomes

as important and as much of a roadmap as the QDR has for our Defense Department and our military services.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you.

I'm out of time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. I thank the gentlelady from Illinois.

The chair would now recognize the gentlelady from Alabama, Mrs. Roby.

Mrs. ROBY. Good morning.

Mrs. CLINTON. Good morning.

Mrs. ROBY. Secretary Clinton, my colleagues have focused on your relationship with the Ambassador, Chris Stevens, and why you sent him into Benghazi in 2011 as part of your broader Libya initiative, but it's not so clear from everything that we've reviewed that you had a vision in Benghazi going forward into 2012 and beyond. It appears that there was confusion and uncertainty within your own Department about Libya. And, quite frankly, Secretary Clinton, it appears that you were a large cause of that uncertainty.

And we've seen all the day-to-day updates and concern early in 2011. And I heard what you said to my colleague, Mrs. Brooks. And I'll get to that in a minute. But showing that Libya and, for that matter, Benghazi, belonged to you in 2011, it was yours, so to speak. And from your own records that we have, we saw a drop in your interest in Libya and Benghazi in 2012.

Not only do the records show your drop in interest in Benghazi, it was even noticed by your own staff. I want to point this out to—I say this because I want to point you to an email in early February 2012 between two staffers at your Libya desk that says you didn't know whether we still even had a presence in Benghazi. Let's not use my words. Let's use theirs. This can be found at tab 31. The email says—and it's dated February 9, 2012. One writes to the other about an encounter that she had with you, quote: "Also, the Secretary asked last week if we still have a presence in Benghazi. I think she would be upset to hear that yes, we do, but because we don't have enough security, they are on lockdown," end quote.

And I say that this is very troubling to me because it raises several issues that I'd like to ask you about. I'm struck by the first part, "The Secretary asked last week if we still have a presence in Benghazi." Now, you pointed out to Mrs. Brooks in her last line of questioning based upon the email stacks here that you engaged in a lot of conversations and briefings, so I'm assuming that this conversation with this member of your staff took place in one of those briefings, but then she sent this email asking about this.

So how can this be that two of your staffers are emailing about whether or not you even knew that we had a presence in Benghazi in 2012, with all your interest in Libya in 2011, including your trip in October of 2011, and that months later, we come to find out that you didn't even know if we had a presence there?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I can't comment on what has been reported. Of course, I knew we had a presence in Benghazi. I knew that we were evaluating what that presence should be, how long it should continue, and I knew exactly what we were doing in Libya.

And I think it's important since you—you have some very legitimate questions about what we were doing. You know, the United

States played a major role in the first election that the Libyan people had in 51 years. It was a successful election by every count, and they voted for moderates. They voted for the kind of people they wanted to govern them. We had a very successful effort that the United States supported, getting rid of Qadhafi's remaining chemical weapons, which we led and supported the United Nations and others in being able to do.

We were combating the proliferation of weapons. That's one of the reasons why there was a CIA presence in Benghazi because we were trying to figure out how to get those weapons out of the wrong hands and get them collected in a way and destroyed, and, in fact, we began reducing those heavy weapons stocks.

We were, you know, working on providing transition assistance to the Libyans. I met with the Libyans. I telephoned with the Libyans. I saw the Libyans all during this period. And it was hard because a lot of them knew what they wanted, but they didn't know how to get from where they were to that goal. And we did an enormous amount of work. My two deputies, Tom Nides and Bill Burns, went to Libya. Other officials in the State Department went to Libya. So there was a constant continuing effort that I led to try to see what we could do to help.

Now, one of the problems we faced is that the Libyans did not really feel that they could welcome a peacekeeping mission, they couldn't welcome foreign troops to their soil. That made it really difficult. And it——

Mrs. ROBY. Secretary——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Didn't have to be American troops. It could have been troops from anywhere in the world under a U.N. mandate that might have helped them begin to secure their country.

Mrs. ROBY. Secretary Clinton, if I may, I hear what you're saying, but this email says something very, very different.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I can't speak to that. I can just tell you what I was doing, and I——

Mrs. ROBY. Sure. But these——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Was doing a lot.

Mrs. ROBY. This was your staff, and I——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, who——

Mrs. ROBY. How can they wonder——

Mrs. CLINTON. What were the——

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. If they had this conversation with you, why they would make it up, but I wanted to move on.

This email, you know, makes me wonder about the vision for Benghazi because they're asking if you—they're saying that you asked if we still had a presence, but if you—you know, we look at the second part of the email, "and I think she would be upset to hear yes, we do"——

Mrs. CLINTON. I——

Mrs. ROBY. This——

Mrs. CLINTON. You know, Congresswoman, I'm sorry. I have no—no recollection of or no knowledge of—of course.

Mrs. ROBY. Well, please turn to tab 31——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I——

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. Because it's right there.

Mrs. CLINTON. I trust that you have read it, but I also tell you that we had a presence in Benghazi. We had members of the administration and Congress visiting Benghazi, so, of course, I knew we had a presence in Benghazi. I can't speak to what someone either heard or misheard, but I think what's important, and I understand the underlying point of your question, is, what were we doing about——

Mrs. ROBY. Right. And I've heard——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Libya after Qadhafi fell, and that's what I'm trying to explain to you about——

Mrs. ROBY. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. What we were doing.

Mrs. ROBY. I want to get to the second part of the email that suggests that we were in lockdown, that you would have been upset to know yes. I've heard the first part of your answer. But that we were in lockdown, and you've said on numerous occasions, including in your opening statement on point number one, you know, America must lead and we must represent in dangerous places, "They can't do their jobs for us in bunkers." And essentially what we know is that there weren't the required number of security on the ground in order for an individual to even move about the country to provide you with what you have reiterated on numerous occasions as being very important at that time, which is political reporting.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, could you tell me who is—who are the names on this email that you're talking about?

Mrs. ROBY. Sure, I can. Turn to tab 31. You have a book in front of you. It is Alyce Abdalla and—I'm going to pronounce it wrong—Evyenia Sidereas? Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. They were not on my staff. I'm not in any way, you know, contradicting what they think they heard or what they heard somebody say, but the people that I——

Mrs. ROBY. Can you tell me who they were if they were not on your staff?

Mrs. CLINTON. They were not on my—they were—they—they were in the State Department along with thousands of other people. They were not part of the Secretary's staff.

But I get what you're saying, Congresswoman, and I want to focus on this because I think it's a fair and important question. The facility in Benghazi was a temporary facility. There had been no decision made as to whether or not it would be permanent. It was not even a consulate. You know, our Embassy was in Tripoli. Obviously, much of the work that we were doing was going through the Embassy. There was a very vigorous discussion on the part of people who were responsible for making a recommendation about Benghazi as to what form of consulate, what form of facility it should be. Chris Stevens believed that it should be a formal consulate, but that was something that had to be worked out, and there had not yet been a decision at the time that the attack took place. So it was not a permanent facility, and, you know, there were a number of questions that people were asking about whether it could or should be.

Mrs. ROBY. I want to drill down on the security issue, but I also want to say it's frustrating for us here on this panel asking these

questions to hear you in your opening statement talk about the responsibility you took for all 70,000-plus employees, yet I read you an email that is a conversation between two of those employees, and it seems as though you're just kind of brushing it off as——

Mrs. CLINTON. No. I——

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. Not having any knowledge.

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm just saying I have no recollection of it, and it doesn't correspond with the facts of what we were doing on a regular basis.

Mrs. ROBY. Well, we talked for just a minute about the security. I've got a few seconds left. In 2011, during the revolution, then Envoy Stevens had ten agents with him on the ground in Benghazi. And then we know, in 2012, where the security situation had deteriorated even further, there were only three agents assigned to Benghazi. Again, can't even move anybody off of the facility to do the necessary political reporting.

And my question is, you know, why did you not acknowledge, because of your interest in 2011, the importance of having those security officers there to do what was so important to you, which was the political reporting? Then in 2011, ten; and when the Ambassador was there, three; and he brought two of his own the night of the attack, which would meet the requisite five; but there was really only three there at any given time. So if you could address that again. I'm a little short on time.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, he did have five with him on September 11, and he——

Mrs. ROBY. Well, he brought two, right? He brought two——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. With him. There were three there——

Mrs. CLINTON. Right. But——

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. And there was supposed to be five there.

Mrs. CLINTON. But the point was they were personal security, so they were there to secure him. So, yes, he did bring two, and when he got there, he had five.

Mrs. ROBY. Can you address the discrepancy?

Mrs. CLINTON. The day before, on September 10, he went into Benghazi, he went to a luncheon with leading civic leaders, business leaders in Benghazi. So he felt very comfortable. It was his decision. Ambassadors do not have to seek permission from the State Department to travel around the country that they are assigned to. He decided to go to Benghazi. By taking two security officers with him and having three there, he had the requisite five that had been the subject of discussion between the Embassy and the State Department security professionals.

I'm not going to in any way suggest that he or the Embassy got everything they requested. We know that they didn't, from the Accountability Review Board, from investigations that were done by the Congress. We know that there were a lot of discussions about what was needed, particularly in Benghazi, and that the day that he died, he had five security officers.

A lot of security professionals who have reviewed this matter, even those who are critical that the State Department did not do enough, have said that the kind of attack that took place would have been very difficult to repel. That's what we have to learn

from, Congresswoman. You know, there are many lessons going back to Beirut, going back to Tehran and the takeover of our embassy, and going all the way through these years. And sometimes we learn lessons and we actually act and we do the best we can, and there's a perfect terrible example of that with respect to what happened in Benghazi.

Mrs. ROBY. Certainly. My time has expired. And we'll certainly never know what would have—what the outcome would have been if there had been more agents that night.

I yield back.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that's not what the professionals, that's not what the experts in security have concluded. If you read the Accountability Review Board——

Mrs. ROBY. I have read it, Secretary Clinton, and it says that security was grossly inadequate.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it said that there were deficiencies within two bureaus in the State Department, which we have moved to correct, and it also pointed out that the Diplomatic Security officers who were there acted heroically. There was not one single question about what they did. And they were overrun, and it was unfortunate that the agreement we had with the CIA annex, and when those brave men showed up, that it was also not enough.

Mrs. ROBY. Certainly. And we'll discuss this more.

I have to yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady's time has expired.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from Washington.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary, for being here.

Just to clarify, you knew we had a presence?

Mrs. CLINTON. Of course, I knew. I knew, Congressman, of course.

Mr. SMITH. And then going back to an earlier question, you were also aware of those two attacks on our compounds, even though you didn't email about it?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I was aware.

Mr. SMITH. And that, I think, you know, sort of points out, I mean, after 17 months and $4.7 million, as the ranking member pointed out in his opening statements, and then as we've seen today, this committee is simply not doing its job. And I don't really think it should have been formed in the first place, but what we've heard here is, well, first of all, an obsession with email.

The idea that two fairly junior level staffers might not have gotten something wrong in what they heard or the information in an email might in fact not be accurate are certainly not things that should be news to anybody, but it is the obsession with the emails that takes us off of what should have been the task of this committee.

I also find it interesting that Mrs. Roby's final comments were to quote the ARB report.

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. SMITH. And, yes, the ARB report, I think, was very good. I think we absolutely had to have it. And I think it was appropriate for the committees and Congress to do the investigations that they

did, but all of that begs the question as to why we've spent the $4.7 million that we have spent on this.

And even in the chairman's opening remarks, it was primarily a defense of the committee's existence, not any new information, not here's what we in those 17 months and $4.7 million have figured out that is new and different. There's nothing. In fact, we've heard nothing, even in today's hearing, not a single solitary thing that hasn't already been discussed repeatedly. So we've learned absolutely nothing.

And, yes, we've uncovered a trove of new information. In this age, there—I don't think there's ever an end to the emails. We could probably go on for another two years, and we'd find more.

But the question is, have we found anything substantively that tells us something different about what happened in Benghazi? And the answer to that question is no.

And, look, I didn't think this committee should have been formed in the first place, but if it was going to be formed, the least we could do would be to actually focus on the four brave Americans who were killed, why they were killed, and focus on Benghazi. And we have not.

I mean, Mr. Roskam's questions I found to be the most interesting. Basically, I don't know, it was like he was running for President. He wanted to debate you on overall Libya policy as to why we got in there in the first place. And that's debatable, and I think you will argue that quite well. But that's not about the attack on Benghazi. That's not about what we could have done in Benghazi to better protect them.

So, again, I think we've seen that this committee is focused on you. And I'm, you know, the ranking member of the Armed Services Committee. I don't see the Department of Defense here. I don't see the CIA here. There were many, many other agencies involved in this, and yet yours has been the one that they have obsessively focused on. And I, I think that's a shame for a whole lot of reasons, but for one thing, this committee, as it's been in the news the last several weeks, has been yet one more step in denigrating this institution. And I happen to think this institution needs more support, not less, so I wish we would stop doing that. And you mentioned Beirut, and that was the first thought that occurred to me when this happened, was a Democratic Congress at the time did a fair and quick investigation of what was an unspeakable tragedy, two separate suicide bombings 4 months apart. And there was clearly inadequate security, but the focus there was not on partisanship, not on embarrassing the Reagan administration, but on actually figuring out what happened and how we can better protect Americans.

Now, I want to talk just—and ask questions about what I think is the central issue, and that is, how do we have that presence in the world that you described in what is an increasingly dangerous world? Because as I've traveled to Pakistan and Afghanistan and Yemen and other places, I am consistently amazed by the willingness of our diplomatic corps to put their lives at risk. And I wonder, how do you balance that very difficult decision because, frankly, what I've heard more often from that diplomatic corps is that they chafe at the restrictions. I mean, I remember vividly being in

Peshawar, which is, you know—I mean, I don't like to ride from the airport to the Embassy, which was 10 minutes, and we were there for, I don't know, a few hours and then out. You know, the State Department personnel, they lived there and went out amongst the community.

How do you try and strike that balance of, you know, being present and at the same time meeting the security obligations? And then, most importantly, who drives that decision because it seems to me in most instances, it is driven by the diplomatic corps there? If they take risks, it's because they have decided to do it. They're there. They know the security situation certainly better than the Secretary and better than most everybody else. But what is the proper way to strike that balance going forward to protect our personnel and still fulfill their mission?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, I think that is the most important question, and I would certainly welcome congressional discussion and debate about this because it's what we tried to do, going back to Congresswoman Duckworth's question, what we tried to begin to do in the Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, the first one that was ever done, because that's exactly what we were facing.

You know, we have had diplomats and development professionals in war zones now for a number of years. We've had them in places that are incredibly unstable and dangerous because of ongoing conflicts. It is, I think, the bias of the diplomacy corps that they be there because that's what they signed up for, and they know that if America is not represented, then we leave a vacuum, and we lose our eyes and our ears about what people are thinking and doing.

It is certainly the hardest part of the job in many of our agencies and departments today, and it was for me in the State Department. That's why I relied on the security professionals because by the time I got there in 2009, the Diplomatic Security professionals had been taking care of American diplomats in Iraq, in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, for years, and they had learned a lot of lessons, and they were forced to make tough decisions all the time.

You mentioned Peshawar, one of clearly the high-threat posts that the United States maintains a presence in, but when you think that since 2001, we've had 100 of our facilities attacked. If we were to shut them all down, if we were to pull out from all of them, we would be blinding ourselves. So it's a constant balancing act: what are the risks, and what are the rewards for opening, maintaining, and/or closing a site? I don't know that there's any hard and fast rule that we can adopt. We just have to get better at making that assessment, Congressman.

And your question really goes to the heart of it. When you were a Member of Congress in Peshawar, you were guarded by our Diplomatic Security professionals. They had to assess: Was it safe enough for a member of Congress to come? How do we get him from the airport to the Embassy? It won't surprise you to hear we've had attacks there, as in so many other places around the world. And that is a heavy responsibility. And the Diplomatic Security professionals get it right 999 times out of 1,000. And it's deeply distressing to them when anything goes wrong. We have lost non-Americans with some of these attacks on facilities. We've lost our

locally employed staff. They never want to see any successful attack, so they have to be—they have to be right 100 percent of the time. The terrorists only have to be right once. And, you know, that's why this is really at the core of what I tried to do before even I got the Accountability Review Board, going back to the QDDR to come up with a better way of trying to make those assessments.

Mr. SMITH. Madam Secretary, if I may, just two final points. I mean, so the bottom line is Benghazi on 9/11/2012 was not the only dangerous place in the world where our security personnel were——

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. And where these difficult decisions had to be made.

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. SMITH. And the other point I want to make before my time expires, now, this was in 2012, so we were only a couple years into this, but Secretary of Defense Ash Carter just I think yesterday wrote an editorial in the Wall Street Journal about the impact of five years of budget uncertainty on the DOD's ability to function. I mean, for five years, we have gone through CR's, threatened government shutdowns, one actual government shutdown, and constant budget uncertainty.

Now, my area is the Department of Defense. I know how it's impacted them. They basically from one week to the next barely know what they can spend money on. Now, one of the criticisms is there should have been more security, but if you don't have a budget, if you don't have an appropriations bill, how does that complicate your job as Secretary in trying to figure out what money you can spend?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it makes it very difficult, Congressman. And this is a subject that we talked about all the time. How do you plan? How do you know—you know, you have so many Diplomatic Security officers in so many dangerous places. How do you know what you're going to have to be able to deploy? And where are you going to have to make the choices? That's why the prioritization, which shouldn't have to be, in my view, the responsibility of the officials in the State Department or the Defense Department to try to guess what makes the most sense. We should have a much more orderly process for our budget.

And I will say, again, as Secretary of State, the kind of dysfunction and failure to make decisions that we have been living with in our government hurts us. It hurts us in the obvious ways, like where you're going to deploy forces if you're in DOD, or where we're going to send security if you're in the Department of State, but it hurts us, as the great country that we are, being viewed from abroad as unable to handle our own business, and so it has a lot of consequences. And it's something that I wish that we could get over, and have our arguments about policy, have our arguments about substance, but get back to regular order where we have the greatest nation in the world with a budget that then they can plan against as opposed to the uncertainty that has stalked us now for so long.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Madam Secretary. So the bottom line is, Congress needs to do its job.

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. SMITH. That would be helpful.

Mrs. CLINTON. I agree with that.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman yields back. And I'll be happy to get a copy of my opening statement for the gentleman from Washington so he can refresh his recollection on all of the things our committee found that your previous committee missed.

And with that, I'll go to the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Westmoreland.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you.

Madam Secretary, I talk a little slower than everybody else, so——

Mrs. CLINTON. I lived in Arkansas a long time. I don't need an interpreter, Congressman.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Yeah, I know that. So some of the questions I'm asking, you can just get us a yes-or-no answer——

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND [continuing]. That would be great, but I do want you to give us a full answer.

But Mr. Smith from Washington mentioned that there was no new facts brought out in some of these interviews, and I wanted to say that I think he was at one interview for one hour. I have been at a bunch of those, and there is a lot of new facts that has come out.

One of the things that he said, it doesn't—that you knew about these two incidents that have been mentioned previously. It is not a matter if you knew about them. It's a matter of what you did about them. And to us, the answer to that is nothing.

Now, you say you were briefed by the CIA every morning that you were in Washington. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did they ever mention to you—Assistant Acting Director Morell wrote in his book that there were "scores of intelligence pieces describing in detail how the situation in Libya was becoming more and more dangerous."

Did you ever read any of these pieces?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes. As I previously stated, we were certainly aware that the situation across Libya was becoming more dangerous and that there were particular concerns about eastern Libya.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Did you read the piece that was "Libya: Al Qaeda Establishing Sanctuary"?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm aware that that was certainly among the information provided to me.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. There was another particular piece that was talked about after the IED attack that AFRICOM wrote. "Al Qaeda Expands in Libya." Were you familiar with that?

Mrs. CLINTON. I can't speak to specific pieces, Congressman, but I was well aware of the concerns we all had about the setting up of jihadist training camps and other activities in Libya, particularly in eastern Libya.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. You were briefed, and I think the CIA between January and September of 2012 had over 4,500 pages of intelligence. Were you aware of how many pages of intelligence? And

I know you had a specific division, I guess, of the State Department under you that was called Intelligence and Research.

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Did they keep you up to speed on all of these 400 cables or different things that they were getting? Did they keep you up to speed on that, that you were aware of them?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, I can't speak to specific reports, but I can certainly agree with you that I was briefed and aware of the increasingly dangerous upsurge in militant activity in Libya.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And so what did you do to make sure that our men and women over there were protected, knowing how much the threat had grown, especially in Benghazi, because a lot of people say that really in the summer of 2012, the security in Benghazi was worse than it was during the revolution?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, with respect to not only the specific incidents that you referenced earlier, but the overall concerns about Benghazi, I think I have stated previously there was never any recommendation by anyone, the intelligence community, the Defense Department, the State Department officials responsible for Libya, to leave Benghazi, even after the two incidents that you mentioned, because in part, as I responded to Congressman Smith, we had so many attacks on facilities that, as I said, went back to 2001, that certainly also happened in other parts of the world while I was there. Each was evaluated, and there was not a recommendation.

Furthermore, there was not even on the morning of September 11, while Chris Stevens and Sean Smith were at the compound, Chris had spoken with intelligence experts, there was no credible, actionable threat known to our intelligence community——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Against our compound.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Reclaiming my time. You said that the Ambassador Cretz was pulled out of Tripoli because of threats on his life.

Mrs. CLINTON. There were threats from people associated with Qadhafi after the publication of cables he had written that were made public by WikiLeaks.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And you say you were aware of the two attacks at the mission facility in Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Morell in his book states that there was 20 attacks on that facility. Are you familiar with the other 18?

Mrs. CLINTON. There were two that we thought rose to the level of being serious. And——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Were you familiar with the other 18?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm not aware of 18 others. And I would point out, and I'm sure that former Deputy Director Morell made this point when he was testifying, the CIA stayed in Libya. The CIA had a much bigger presence than the State Department despite the overall decline in stability. Some might argue, actually because of the overall decline in stability, it was thought to be even more important for the CIA to stay there. And they also did not believe that their facility would be the subject of a deadly attack either, because I think sometimes——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Ma'am——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Sometimes the discussion gets pulled together when really we had Chris and Sean dying at the State Department compound, which we are discussing, and we had our other two deaths of Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty at the CIA Annex.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Reclaiming my time for just a minute, and I do appreciate that, but if you talked to the CIA contractors that were at the Annex and you asked them how they were armed and equipped, and then if you would, or could talk to the Diplomatic Security agents that were at the facility, I think you will see that there was a big, big difference in the equipment that they had to protect themselves.

But you knew of the two what you call major incidents, but you don't recollect the other 18 that Mr. Morell says happened. How many instances would it have taken you to say, "Hey, we need to look at the security over there"? Would it have been three major instances; 30 instances; 40 instances; 50 instances? How many instances would you have been made aware of that would have made you say, "Hey, I don't care what anybody else says. We are going to protect our people. Chris Stevens is a good friend of mine. We are going to look after him." How many would it have taken?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, of course, I made it abundantly clear that we had to do everything we could to protect our people. What I did not and do not believe any Secretary should do was to substitute my judgment from thousands of miles away for the judgment of the security professionals who made the decisions about what kind of security would be provided. And——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Ma'am——

Mrs. CLINTON. I know that that sounds somewhat hard to understand, but, you know, we have a process and the experts who I have the greatest confidence in and who had been through so many difficult positions because practically all of them had rotated through Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, other places, they were the ones making the assessment. No one ever came to me and said, "We should shut down our compound in Benghazi."

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Ma'am, I'm not saying shut it down. I'm saying protect it.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I'm not saying shut it down. I'm just saying protect it.

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And when you say security professionals, I'm not trying to be disparaging with anybody, but I don't know who those folks were, but it's just my little——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, they were people who risked their lives to try to save——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. It's my little personal opinion they weren't being professional when it came to protecting people.

But let me say this. You said that the mission that you gave Ambassador Stevens was to go in and to investigate the situation.

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Now, if you are going to investigate a situation, it would seem to me like you would have to get out into the

country to investigate that. And I don't know if you're aware of it or not, but there were not even enough Diplomatic Security for him to leave the compound without asking the CIA operatives to assist them. Were you aware of that?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, we had an agreement with the CIA to help supplement security and to come to the aid. It was a—it was a mutual agreement.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Was that a written agreement?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, it was not a written agreement. But we are posted with the CIA in many places in the country—I mean, in the world—and it's important to have a good working relationship, and we did. And, unfortunately, despite all of the weapons and despite the fortification, two CIA contractors died at the CIA Annex that night.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Just to follow up on one thing about Ambassador Stevens. You got a lot of emails from Sidney Blumenthal, and you say that Mr. Blumenthal was a friend of yours.

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And he had your personal email address?

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. You say Chris Stevens was a friend of yours. He asked numerous times for extra protection. Now, if I had been Mr. Stevens, and I think anybody out there, anybody watching this would agree, if I had been Mr. Stevens and I had a relationship with you and I had requested 20 or more times for additional security to protect not only my life, but the people that were there with me, I would have gotten in touch with you some way. I would have let you know that I was in danger and that the situation had deteriorated to a point I needed you to do something.

Did he have your personal email?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, I do not believe that he had my personal email. He had the email and he had the direct line to everybody that he'd worked with for years. He had been posted——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. But not yours.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. With officials in the State Department. They had gone through difficult, challenging, dangerous assignments together. He was in constant contact with people.

Yes, he and the people working for him asked for more security. Some of those requests were approved, others were not. We are obviously looking to learn what more we could do because it was not only about Benghazi, it was also about the Embassy in Tripoli.

And I think it's fair to say that, you know, Chris asked for what he and his people requested because he thought that it would be helpful, but he never said to anybody in the State Department, "You know what? We just can't keep doing this. We just can't—we can't stay there."

He was in constant contact with, you know, people on my staff, other officials in the State Department. And, you know, I did have an opportunity to talk with him and about the substance of the policy. But with respect to security, he took those requests where they belonged. He took them to the security professionals.

And I have to add, Congressman, the Diplomatic Security professionals are among the best in the world. I would put them up against anybody. And I just cannot allow any comment to be in the

record in any way criticizing or disparaging them. They have kept Americans safe in two wars and in a lot of other really terrible situations over the last many years. I trusted them with my life. You trust them with yours when you are on codels. They deserve better, and they deserve all the support that the Congress can give them because they're doing a really hard job very well.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, ma'am, all I can say is that they missed something here and we lost four Americans.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from Kansas, Mr. Pompeo.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, you referred to the QDDR a couple times as being important to Diplomatic Security. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. It provoked a discussion, Congressman, about balancing of risk.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, I have had a chance to read that. I wanted to only read the executive summary that ran 25 pages, but it didn't have a word about Diplomatic Security in those entire 25 pages of the executive summary, not one word, Madam Secretary. And then I read the remaining pages, amounted to 270-plus. Do you know how many pages of those 270 had to do with Diplomatic Security?

Mrs. CLINTON. It was about the balancing of risk and reward, which was not only——

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Not only about Diplomatic Security specifically, but about the larger question of our mission around the world.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, there was no balance. There was two pages out of 270 pages. You talked about a lot of things in there. You talked about a lot of improvements. It didn't have anything to do with Diplomatic Security in any material way in that report.

You talked about being disappointed too. I've heard you use that several times. You were disappointed. You read the ARB. Why didn't you fire someone? In Kansas, Madam Secretary, I get asked constantly, why has no one been held accountable? How come not a single person lost a single paycheck connected to the fact that we had the first ambassador killed since 1979? How come no one has been held accountable to date?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, the Accountability Review Board pointed out several people working in the State Department who they thought had not carried out their responsibilities adequately, but they said that they could not find a breach of duty.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am——

Mrs. CLINTON. And the personnel rules and the laws that govern those decisions were followed very carefully.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. I'm not asking what the ARB did. I'm asking what you did.

Mrs. CLINTON. I followed the law, Congressman. That was my—that was my responsibility.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, you're telling me that you had no authority to take anyone's paycheck, to cause anyone to be fired.

You're telling me you were legally prohibited from doing that. Is that your position here this morning?

Mrs. CLINTON. It is my position that in the absence of finding dereliction or breach of duty there could not be immediate action taken, but there was a process that was immediately instituted and which led to decisions being made.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. The decision was to put these at full back pay and keep them on as employees. That was the decision that was made as a result of the processes that you put in place. I will tell you, the folks in Kansas don't think that is accountability.

I want to do some math with you. Can I get the first chart, please? Do you know how many security requests there were in the first quarter of 2012?

Mrs. CLINTON. For everyone or for Benghazi?

Mr. POMPEO. I'm sorry. Yes, ma'am. Related to Benghazi and Libya. Do you know how many there were?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I do not know.

Mr. POMPEO. Ma'am, there were just over a hundred plus. In the second quarter, do you know how many there were?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I do not.

Mr. POMPEO. Ma'am, there were 172-ish, might have been 171 or 173.

How many were there in July and August and then in that week and few days before the attacks? Do you know?

Mrs. CLINTON. There were a number of them. I know that.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am, 83 by our count.

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. POMPEO. That's over 600 requests. You've testified here this morning that you had none of those reach your desk. Is that correct also?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, Mr. Blumenthal wrote you 150 emails. It appears from the testimony—or the materials that we have read that all of those reached your desk. Can you tell us why security requests from your professionals, the men that you just testified, and with which I agree are incredibly professional, incredibly capable people, trained in the art of keeping us all safe, none of those made it to you, but a man who was a friend of yours, who had never been to Libya, didn't know much about it, at least that's his testimony, didn't know much about it, every one of those reports that he sent on to you that had to do with situations on the ground in Libya, those made it to your desk, you asked for more of them, you read them, you corresponded with him, and yet the folks that worked for you didn't have the same courtesy?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, as you are aware, he's a friend of mine. He sent me information he thought might be of interest. Some of it was. Some of it wasn't. Some of it I forwarded to be followed up on. The professionals and experts who reviewed it found some of it useful, some of it not.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary——

Mrs. CLINTON. He held no official position in the government and he was not at all my adviser on Libya. He was a friend who sent me information that he thought might be in some way helpful.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, I have lots of friends that send me things. I have never had somebody send me a couple of pieces of intelligence with the level of detail that Mr. Blumenthal sent me every week. That's a special friend.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it was information that had been shared with him that he forwarded on. And as someone who got the vast majority of the information that I acted on from official channels, I read a lot of articles that brought new ideas to my attention. And occasionally people, including him and others, would give me ideas. They all went into the same process to be evaluated.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. I will tell you that the record that we received today does not reflect that. It simply doesn't. We have read the emails. We have read everything that we could get our hands on. It's taken us a long time to get it. But I will tell you, you just described all of this other information that you relied upon, and it doesn't comport with the record that this committee has been able to establish today.

And I want you to take a look at this chart to the left. You will see the increasing number of requests, over 600. I think data matters. The pictures are worth a lot. You see the increase in the requests, and then the bottom line is the increase in security. And you'll note that the slope of those two lines is very different.

Can you account for why that is, why we have increasing requests and yet no increase in security?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I can only tell you that I know a number of requests were fulfilled and some were not. But from my perspective, again, these were handled by the people that were assigned the task of evaluating them. And, you know, I think it's important to, again, reiterate that although there were problems and deficiencies discovered by the Accountability Review Board, the general approach to have security professionals handle security requests, I think still stands.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. I wish you'd have listened to those security professionals. You described Mr. Stevens as having the best knowledge of Libya of anyone, your words this morning, and yet when he asked for increased security he didn't get it.

Second chart, please.

This chart does the same thing. I just talked to you about requests for additional assistance. This chart goes through, I won't go through the numbers in detail, we've talked about them a bit, but it shows the increasing number of security incidents at the facility, your facility, the State Department facility in Benghazi, Libya. And then, again, it shows the increase in security being nonexistent.

I assume your answer is the same with respect to the fact that we have increasing security incidents, but no corresponding increase in the amount of security?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, I just have to respectfully disagree. Many security requests were fulfilled. We'd be happy——

Mr. POMPEO. Well, ma'am——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. To get that information for the record. So I can't really tell what it is you're putting on that poster——

Mr. POMPEO. Yeah.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. But I know that a number of the security requests were fulfilled for Benghazi.

Mr. POMPEO. Ma'am, what it shows is that the number of Diplomatic Security agents at the beginning of 2012 and those that were there the day of the murder of four Americans is no different.

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, the decision, as I recall, was that the post, namely, Embassy Tripoli on behalf of Benghazi, requested five Diplomatic Security personnel and they did have that on the day that Chris Stevens was in Benghazi. Unfortunately, that proved insufficient in the face of the kind of attack that they were facing.

Mr. POMPEO. Put the next poster up, please.

Madam Secretary, you're not likely to know who these two folks are, do you?

Mrs. CLINTON. I do not.

Mr. POMPEO. The one on the left is Muhammad al-Zahawi. He was the head of Ansar al-Sharia, a jihadist group based in Benghazi. The man on your left is Wissam bin Hamid. Were you aware that your folks in Benghazi, Libya, met with that man on the—within 48 hours before the attack?

Mrs. CLINTON. I know nothing about any meeting with him.

Mr. POMPEO. On September 11, on the day that he was killed, Ambassador Stevens sent a cable to the State Department talking about his meeting with Mr. bin Hamid. Are you aware of that cable?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I'm not.

Mr. POMPEO. He said in his cable, he said, "They," referring to Mr. Wissam bin Hamid, "They wanted an introductory meeting. They were here, they asked us what we needed to bring security to Benghazi." So your officials were meeting with this man on the ground in Benghazi, Libya, discussing security two days before that. But in August of that same year, the United States Government had said that this very man was, "a young rebel leader who allegedly fought in Iraq under the flag of Al Qaeda."

Were you aware that our folks were either wittingly or unwittingly meeting with Al Qaeda on the ground in Benghazi, Libya, just hours before the attack?

Mrs. CLINTON. I know nothing about this, Congressman.

Mr. POMPEO. I think that's deeply disturbing. I think the fact that your team was meeting with——

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry, which team is this you are talking about?

Mr. POMPEO. Yeah, it would have been—we don't know exactly who——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it would be helpful——

Mr. POMPEO. It would have been one of the—one of your State Department employees, Madam Secretary. I don't know which one. Perhaps you could enlighten us or we can get the records we need to do so.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mr. POMPEO. To date we have not been able to learn that.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, since we didn't have an ongoing significant presence of State Department personnel in Benghazi, I don't know to whom you are referring.

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Chairman, I'll yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman from Kansas yields.

The chair will now recognize the gentlelady from California, Ms. Sanchez.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary, for coming again to answer our questions.

We know that over the last 17 months there have been a number of allegations that have been made with respect to you, and when the facts and the testimony and the record don't support that, we seem to move on to the next, you know, new allegation.

One of the more recent ones is that Republicans are claiming that because you received emails from Sidney Blumenthal, that he was your primary source for intelligence. Now, Chairman Gowdy claimed that Mr. Blumenthal was, and I'm going to quote him here, "Secretary Clinton's primary adviser on Libya because nearly half of all the emails sent to and from Secretary Clinton regarding Benghazi and Libya prior to the Benghazi terrorist attacks involved Sidney Blumenthal." He also claimed that Mr. Blumenthal was, and I'm quoting again, "one of the folks providing her the largest volume of information about Libya."

Secretary Clinton, was Sidney Blumenthal your primary policy adviser or your primary intelligence officer?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, of course not.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Was he the primary source of information that you were receiving on Libya?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, absolutely not.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Can you tell us then who were you receiving information from and in what form? Because there has been a particular emphasis on email communication——

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. And email communication only.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, as I testified earlier, I did not primarily conduct business on email with officials in our government. And I think the emails that have been produced thus far demonstrate that as well.

As I said, I got intelligence briefings from the intelligence community. I had a very experienced group of senior diplomats who knew quite a bit about Libya. Deputy Secretary Bill Burns had been our nation's top diplomat who actually had negotiated with Qadhafi. Prior to the entering in by the United States to support our European allies and Arab partners, I sent a team to meet with representatives of Qadhafi to see if there were some way that he would back down and back off of his increasingly hysterical threats against his own people. We had people like the Ambassador that I referenced earlier, who had served in Libya and had had the occasion to observe and to meet with Qadhafi.

So we had a very large group of American diplomats, intelligence officers, and some private citizens who were experts in Libya who were available to our government, and we took advantage of every person we could with expertise to guide our decisionmaking.

Ms. SANCHEZ. So would it be fair to say that you received information from Ambassador Stevens?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. The Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. The Director of Policy Planning, Jacob Sullivan?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. The National Security Council?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. The intelligence community?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. The Defense Department?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. This weekend one of our colleagues on this panel, Mr. Pompeo, went on "Meet the Press," and I wonder if we could cue up the video. He had this exchange. Can we please play the video clip?

[Video shown.]

Ms. SANCHEZ. That clip, for me, just defies all logic. And I think Andrea Mitchell correctly called him out on something that was a falsehood.

Secretary Clinton, what did you think when you heard that clip?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that it was factually untrue. And I think your questioning and what I have stated today is a much clearer and more factual description of how we gathered information to make our decisions regarding Libya.

Ms. SANCHEZ. With your answer that you believe it to be factually incorrect, I just want to add that The Washington Post fact checker immediately awarded that claim four Pinocchios, which is the worst rating possible, and I'm going to quote The Post on what they said about that quote.

"Looking at her private emails is just part of the picture and it ignores the vast amount of information, much of it classified, that is available to the Secretary of State."

Secretary Clinton, would you agree with that statement from The Washington Post?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I would.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Okay. So it seems to me, you know, there have been allegations that the work that this committee has done has been political in nature and that much of the facts have already been decided before all of the evidence is in, including your testimony here today. When I see clips like that, it sort of supports the theory that this panel is not really interested in investigating what happened just prior to the evening of and immediately in the aftermath of September 11, 2012, but that, in fact, there is another motive behind that.

We have you here, and so while you are here I want to make the most of your time and allow you to sort of debunk many of the myths that have been generated over the last 17 months, most of which have no factual basis for those being said.

One is that you seemingly were disengaged the evening of September 11, 2012. For example, Mike Huckabee accused you, as Mr. Cummings said, of "ignoring the warning calls from dying Americans in Benghazi." And Senator Rand Paul stated that "Benghazi was a 3 a.m. phone call that you never picked up." And Senator

Lindsey Graham tweeted, "Where the hell were you on the night of the Benghazi attack?"

Those appear to be based on the testimony of witnesses and the documentation that we have obtained in this committee and other previous committees. They seem to run counter to the truth, because the testimony we have received states pretty much that you were deeply engaged the night of the attacks.

So can you describe for us what the initial hours of that night were like for you and how you learned about the attacks and what your initial thoughts and actions were?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congresswoman, I learned about attacks from a State Department official rushing into my office shortly after or around 4 o'clock to tell me that our compound in Benghazi had been attacked. We immediately summoned all of the top officials in the State Department for them to begin reaching out. The most important quick call was to try to reach Chris himself. That was not possible. Then to have the Diplomatic Security people try to reach their agents. That was not possible. They were, obviously, defending themselves along with the Ambassador and Sean Smith.

We reached the second in command in Tripoli. He had heard shortly before we reached him from Chris Stevens telling him that they were under attack. We began to reach out to everyone we could possibly think who could help with this terrible incident. During the course of the, you know, following hours, obviously, I spoke to the White House. I spoke to CIA Director Petraeus. I spoke to the Libyan officials, because I hoped that there were some way that they could gather up and deploy those who had been part of the insurgency to defend our compound. I had conference calls with our team in Tripoli. I was on a, what's called a SVTC, a, you know, video conference with officials who had operational responsibilities in the Defense Department, in the CIA, at the National Security Council.

It was just a swirl and whirl of constant effort to try to figure out what we could do, and it was deeply—it was deeply distressing when we heard that the efforts by our CIA colleagues were not successful, that they had had to evacuate the security officers, our Diplomatic Security officers, that they had recovered Sean Smith's body. And they could not find the Ambassador. We didn't know whether he had escaped and was still alive or not.

Ms. SANCHEZ. If I may, because my time is running short, I just want to point out that you spoke with folks on the ground, you spoke with folks in the White House, the CIA, the Libyan President of the General National Congress.

Now, interestingly enough, former Director of the CIA David Petraeus has not been before this committee and has not spoken with this committee, but he did testify before the House Intelligence Committee in 2012, and he said that you personally called him and asked him for help that night.

And I just want to end on this quote. "When Secretary Clinton called me later that afternoon to indicate that Ambassador Stevens was missing and asked for help, I directed our folks to ensure that we were doing everything possible. And that is, of course, what they were doing that night." Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That is. And also the Defense Department was doing everything it could possibly do. We had a plane bringing additional security from Tripoli to Benghazi. There was an enormous amount of activity. Everyone, it was all hands on deck, everyone jumped in to try to figure out what they could do. The attack on the compound was very fast.

Ms. SANCHEZ. So would it be safe to say that you were fully engaged that evening?

Mrs. CLINTON. That is certainly safe to say, Congresswoman.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you. And I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady from California yields back.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Jordan.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You just gave a long answer, Madam Secretary, to Ms. Sanchez about what you heard that night, what you were doing, but nowhere in there did you mention a video. You didn't mention a video because there was never a video-inspired protest in Benghazi. There was in Cairo, but not in Benghazi. Victoria Nuland, your spokesperson at the State Department, hours after the attack said this: "Benghazi has been attacked by militants in Cairo. Police have removed demonstrators."

Benghazi, you got weapons and explosions. Cairo, you got spray paint and rocks. One hour before the attack in Benghazi, Chris Stevens walks a diplomat to the front gate. The Ambassador didn't report a demonstration. He didn't report it because it never happened. An eyewitness in the Command Center that night on the ground said no protests, no demonstration. Two intelligence reports that day: No protests, no demonstration.

The attack starts at 3:42 eastern time, ends at approximately 11:40 p.m. that night. At 4:06, an ops alert goes out across the State Department. It says this: "Mission under attack. Armed men. Shots fired. Explosions heard." No mention of a video, no mention of a protest, no mention of a demonstration.

But the best evidence is Greg Hicks, the number two guy in Libya, the guy who worked side by side with Ambassador Stevens. He was asked, if there had been a protest, would the Ambassador have reported it? Mr. Hicks' response: "Absolutely. For there to have been a demonstration on Chris Stevens' front door and him not to have reported it is unbelievable," Mr. Hicks said. He said, "Secondly, if it had been reported, he would have been out the back door within minutes, and there was a back gate."

Everything points to a terrorist attack. We just heard from Mr. Pompeo about the long history of terrorist incidents, terrorist violence in the country. And yet, five days later, Susan Rice goes on five TV shows and she says this: "Benghazi was a spontaneous reaction as a consequence of a video," a statement we all know is false.

But don't take my word for it. Here is what others have said. "Rice was off the reservation, off the reservation on five networks. White House worried about the politics."

Republicans didn't make those statements. They were made by the people who worked for you in the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau, the actual experts on Libya in the State Department.

So if there is no evidence for a video-inspired protest, then where did the false narrative start? It started with you, Madam Secretary. At 10:08 on the night of the attack you released this statement: "Some have sought to justify the vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet."

At 10:08, with no evidence, at 10:08, before the attack is over, at 10:08, when Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty are still on the roof of the Annex fighting for their lives, the official statement of the State Department blames a video. Why?

Mrs. CLINTON. During the day on September 11, as you did mention, Congressman, there was a very large protest against our Embassy in Cairo. Protesters breached the walls. They tore down the American flag. And it was of grave concern to us because the inflammatory video had been shown on Egyptian television, which has a broader reach than just inside Egypt.

And if you look at what I said, I referred to the video that night in a very specific way. I said, "Some have sought to justify the attack because of the video." I used those words deliberately, not to ascribe a motive to every attacker, but as a warning to those across the region that there was no justification for further attacks.

And, in fact, during the course of that week we had many attacks that were all about the video. We had people breaching the walls of our Embassies in Tunis and Khartoum. We had people, thankfully not Americans, dying at protests.

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton——

Mrs. CLINTON. But that's what was going on, Congressman.

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton, I appreciate most of the attacks were after the attack on the facility in Benghazi. You mentioned Cairo. It was interesting what else Ms. Nuland said that day. She said, "If pressed by the press, if there is a connection between Cairo and Benghazi," she said this, "There is no connection between the two."

So here is what troubles me. Your experts knew the truth. Your spokesperson knew the truth. Greg Hicks knew the truth. But what troubles me more is I think you knew the truth.

I want to show you a few things here. You're looking at an email you sent to your family. Here is what you said at 11 o'clock that night, approximately one hour after you told the American people of the video, you say to your family, "Two officers were killed today in Benghazi by an Al Qaeda-like group." You tell the American people one thing, you tell your family an entirely different story.

Also, on the night of the attack, you had a call with the President of Libya. Here is what you said to him: "Ansar al-Sharia is claiming responsibility." It's interesting, Mr. Khattala, one of the guys arrested and charged, actually belonged to that group.

And finally, and most significantly, the next day, within 24 hours, you had a conversation with the Egyptian Prime Minister. You told him this: "We know the attack in Libya had nothing to do with the film. It was a planned attack, not a protest."

Let me read that one more time. "We know," not we think, not it might be, "We know the attack in Libya had nothing to do with the film. It was a planned attack, not a protest." State Department experts knew the truth. You knew the truth. But that's not what the American people got.

And, again, the American people want to know why. Why didn't you tell the American people exactly what you told the Egyptian Prime Minister?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think if you look at the statement that I made, I clearly said that it was an attack. And I also said that there were some who tried to justify it on the basis——

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. On the basis of the video, Congressman. And I think——

Mr. JORDAN. But real quick. Calling it an attack is like calling the sky is blue. Of course, it was an attack.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it hardly——

Mr. JORDAN. We want to know the truth. The statement you sent out was a statement on Benghazi, and you say, "vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material on the Internet." If that's not pointing as a motive being a video, I don't know what is. And that's certainly how the American people thought.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, there was a lot of conflicting information that we were trying to make sense of. The situation was very fluid. It was fast moving.

There was also a claim of responsibility by Ansar al-Sharia. And when I talked to the Egyptian Prime Minister, I said that this was a claim of responsibility by Ansar al-Sharia, by a group that was affiliated or at least wanted to be affiliated with Al Qaeda.

Sometime after that, the next day, early the next morning after that, on the 12th or 13th, they retracted their claim of responsibility.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Secretary——

Mrs. CLINTON. And I think if you look at what all of us were trying to do, and we were in a position, Congressman, of trying to make sense of a lot of incoming information and watched the way the intelligence community tried to make sense of it.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Secretary, there was not conflicting——

Mrs. CLINTON. So all I can say is, nobody——

Mr. JORDAN [continuing]. There was not conflicting information the day of the attack, because your press secretary said, "If pressed, there is no connection between Cairo and Benghazi." It was clear. You're the ones who muddied it up, not the information.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, there's no connection——

Mr. JORDAN. Here's what I think—here's what I think's going on. Here's what I think's going on. Let me show you one more slide. Again, this is from Victoria Nuland, your press person. She says to Jake Sullivan and Philippe Reines, subject line reads this: "Romney statement on Libya. Email says this is what Ben was talking about." I assume Ben is the now somewhat famous Ben Rhodes, author of the talking points memo. This email is at 10:35, 27 minutes after your 10:08 statement, 27 minutes after you've told everyone it's a video. While Americans are still fighting because the attack's still going on, your top people are talking politics.

Seems to me that night you had three options, Secretary. You could tell the truth like you did with your family, like you did with the Libyan President, like you did with the Egyptian Prime Minister, tell them it was a terrorist attack. You could say, "You know what? We're not quite sure. Don't really know for sure." I don't

think the evidence is there. I think it's all in the first one. But you could have done that.

But you picked a third option. You picked the video narrative. You picked the one with no evidence. And you did it because Libya was supposed to be, as Mr. Roskam pointed out, this great success story for the Obama White House and the Clinton State Department. And a key campaign theme that year was GM's alive, bin Laden's dead, Al Qaeda's on the run. And now you have a terrorist attack, and it's a terrorist attack in Libya, and it's just 56 days before an election.

You can live with the protest about a video. That won't hurt you. But a terrorist attack will. So you can't be square with the American people. You can tell your family it's a terrorist attack, but not the American people. You can tell the President of Libya it's a terrorist attack, but not the American people. And you can tell the Egyptian Prime Minister it's a terrorist attack, but you can't tell your own people the truth.

Madam Secretary, Americans can live with the fact that good people sometimes give their lives for this country. They don't like it. They mourn for those families. They pray for those families. But they can live with it. But what they can't take, what they can't live with is when their government is not square with them.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. Madam Secretary, you're welcome to answer the question if you would like to.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I wrote a whole chapter about this in my book "Hard Choices." I'd be glad to send it to you, Congressman, because I think the insinuations that you are making do a grave disservice to the hard work that people in the State Department, the intelligence community, the Defense Department, the White House did during the course of some very confusing and difficult days.

There is no doubt in my mind that we did the best we could with the information that we had at the time. And if you'd actually go back and read what I said that night——

Mr. JORDAN. I have.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. I was very careful in saying that some have sought to justify—in fact, the man that has been arrested as one of the ring leaders of what happened in Benghazi, Ahmed Abu Khattala, is reported to have said it was the video that motivated him.

None of us can speak to the individual motivations of those terrorists who overran our compound and who attacked our CIA Annex. There were probably a number of different motivations. I think the intelligence community, which took the lead on trying to sort this out, as they should have, went through a series of interpretations and analysis. And we were all guided by that. We were not making up the intelligence. We were trying to get it, make sense of it, and then to share it.

When I was speaking to the Egyptian Prime Minister, or in the other two examples you showed, we had been told by Ansar al-Sharia that they took credit for it. It wasn't until about 24 more hours later that they retracted taking credit for it.

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton——

Mrs. CLINTON. We also knew, Congressman, because my responsibility was for what was happening throughout the region. I needed to be talking about the video because I needed to be putting other governments and other people on notice that we were not going to let them get away with attacking us as they did in Tunis, as they did in Khartoum. And in Tunis, there were thousands of demonstrators who were there only because of the video, breaching the walls of our Embassy, burning down the American school. I was calling everybody in the Tunisian Government I could get, and finally President Marzouki sent his presidential guard to break it up.

There was example after example. That's what I was trying to do during those very desperate and difficult hours.

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton—if I could, Mr. Chairman—Secretary Clinton, you said my insinuation. I'm not insinuating anything. I'm reading what you said, plain language. "We know the attack in Libya had nothing to do with the film." That's as plain as it can get. That's vastly different than "vicious behavior justified by Internet material." Why didn't you just speak plain to the American people?

Mrs. CLINTON. I did. If you look at my statement as opposed to what I was saying to the Egyptian Prime Minister, I did state clearly and I said it again in more detail the next morning, as did the President.

I'm sorry that it doesn't fit your narrative, Congressman. I can only tell you what the facts were. And the facts, as the Democratic members have pointed out in their most recent collection of them, support this process that was going on where the intelligence community was pulling together information.

And it's very much harder to do it these days than it used to be because you have to monitor social media, for goodness sakes. That's where the Ansar al-Sharia claim was placed.

I think the intelligence community did the best job they could, and we all did our best job to try to figure out what was going on and then to convey that to the American people.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Schiff.

Mr. SCHIFF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, we are almost at the end of the first round of questions. I'll have an opportunity, then I think the chairman will before we have a break just to let you know where we are in the scheme of things.

So I want to take a moment to think about what we've covered in this first round, in particular a comment on where this began with the chairman's statement. The chairman said at the outset of the hearing that the American people were entitled to the truth—the truth about what happened in Benghazi, the truth about the security there, the truth about what happened after the attack.

The implication of this, of course, is that the American people don't know the truth, that this is the first investigation we've ever had. The reality is, we've had eight investigations. We've gone through this endlessly.

And if you just look at the documentary record, we have the ARB report. We have the report of the Armed Services Committee led by Republican Buck McKeon, which debunked the stand-down order allegation. We have the report of the Committee on Government Reform. We have the report of the Senate Homeland Security Committee. We have the report of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. We have the GOP Conference's own report. We have the report of the Intelligence Committee, on which I serve.

Now, bear in mind, these aren't with their accompanying exhibits or the classified stuff, because it would be up through the ceiling if I included them.

This is the report of our committee. This is what $4.7 million dollars of taxpayer money buy you. This is what 17 months of investigation have shown.

Now, the chairman said, and he is a very good lawyer, and a good former prosecutor, we have a lot of former prosecutors here on the panel, he gave you a great recitation of the number of witnesses and the number of documents. There are too many good prosecutors on this panel not to know that when a lawyer describes the metrics of the success of an investigation by the sheer number of people they have talked to, or the volume of documents, but says nothing about the substance of what they have learned, that there is a problem.

And the reality is that after 17 months we have nothing new to tell the families. We have nothing new to tell the American people. We have discovered nothing that alters the core conclusions of the eight investigations that went on before.

Now, my colleagues have been saying quite often this week with amazing regularity that this is a fact-centric investigation, and I agree. So I'd like to talk about some of the facts which are centric to this investigation, because while the American people are entitled to the truth about Benghazi, they are also entitled to the truth about our committee.

Fact: What gave rise to your appearance here today was many months ago a group called the Stop Hillary PAC, which aired an offensive ad during the Democratic debate showing the tombstone of Ambassador Stevens, among other things, delivered 264,000 signatures demanding that you appear before us.

Fact: It was the next day the majority approached us to have you come before this committee.

Fact: After The New York Times issued its story in March, this committee canceled all other hearings except for the hearing with a witness named Clinton.

Fact: We abandoned our plans to bring in the Secretary of Defense and the head of the CIA.

Fact: We haven't had a single hearing from the Department of Defense, with the Department of Defense in 17 months.

Fact: Of the 70,000 pages of documents obtained by the Select Committee, the only documents the chairman has chosen to release publicly are your emails with Sidney Blumenthal.

Fact: Of the 32 press releases that have been issued since March of this year, 27 of them are about you or the State Department and five are about everything else.

Fact: As recently as last week, the chairman issued a 13-page letter which alleges that you risked the lives of people by sending an email that contained the name of a classified CIA source.

Fact: The CIA told us there was nothing in that email that was classified, nor was the name of that person, who is well known to many.

The chairman has said that this will be the final, definitive report. One thing I think we can tell already: There will be nothing final about this report. Whenever we finish, if ever we finish, the problem we have had as a committee is we don't know what we are looking for. But there won't be a final conclusion, there won't be anything definitive about the work of this committee, because unlike the Accountability Review Board that operated in a nonpartisan way, it's unlikely the majority here will even consult with us on what their final report looks like.

Those who want to believe the worst will believe the worst. Those that want to believe that this is a partisan exercise will believe it. As I said from the very beginning of this investigation, the only way this committee will add any value to what's gone on before is if we can find a way to work together and reach a common conclusion.

But it is plain that is not their object. The chairman might say ignore the words of our Republican leadership and ignore the words of our Republican Members, ignore the words of our own GOP investigator, judge us by our actions. But it is the actions of this committee that are the most damning of all because they have been singularly focused on you.

Let me ask you briefly, because I want to expand on just the—what I think is really the core theory here. I want to give you a chance to respond to it.

You know, as a prosecutor, we are taught that every case should have a core theory and all the evidence and the witnesses go back to that core theory. And I have wrestled as I have listened to my colleagues today, as I have over the 17 months, what is the core theory of their case? What are they trying to convey? And I have to say it is confusing.

I think the core theory is this: That you deliberately interfered with security in Benghazi and that resulted in people dying. I think that is the case they want to make. And notwithstanding how many investigations we have had that have found absolutely no merit to that, that is the impression they wish to give.

Well, I have to say, I'm a little confused today because my colleague pointed to an email suggesting that you weren't aware that we had a presence in Benghazi. So if you weren't aware we had a presence, I don't know how you could have interfered with the security there. But, nonetheless, I do think that's what they're aiming at.

I know the Ambassador was someone you helped pick. I know the Ambassador was a friend of yours. And I wonder if you would like to comment on what it is like to be the subject of an allegation that you deliberately interfered with security that cost the life of a friend.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, it's a very personally painful accusation. It has been rejected and disproven by nonpartisan, dis-

passionate investigators. But, nevertheless, having it continued to be bandied around is deeply distressing to me.

You know, I would imagine I've thought more about what happened than all of you put together. I've lost more sleep than all of you put together. I have been racking my brain about what more could have been done or should have been done.

And so when I took responsibility, I took it as a challenge and an obligation to make sure before I left the State Department that what we could learn, as I'm sure my predecessors did after Beirut and after Nairobi and Dar es Salaam and after all of the other attacks on our facilities, I'm sure all of them, Republican and Democrat alike, especially where there was loss of American life, said, Okay, what must we do better? How do we protect the men and women that we send without weapons, without support from the military into some of the most dangerous places in the world?

And so I will continue to speak out and do everything I can from whatever position I'm in to honor the memory of those we lost and to work as hard as I know to try to create more understanding and cooperation between the State Department, our diplomats, our development professionals from USAID, and the Congress so that the Congress is a partner with us, as was the case in previous times. I would like us to get back to those times, Congressman, whereas I think one of you said, Beirut, we lost far more Americans not once but twice within a year. There was no partisan effort. People rose above politics. A Democratic Congress worked with a Republican administration to say, What do we need to learn? Out of that came the legislation for the Accountability Review Board.

Similarly, after we lost more Americans in the bombings in East Africa, again, Republicans and Democrats worked together, said, What do we need to do better?

So I'm—I'm an optimist, Congressman, I'm hoping that that will be the outcome of this and every other effort so that we really do honor not only those we lost, but all of those who right as we speak are serving in dangerous places representing the values and the interests of the American people.

Mr. SCHIFF. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman from California yields back.

I'm going to address a couple of things that he said and then recognize myself. Because he invoked the family members of the four, Madam Secretary, and partially this will be for your benefit also, but I want to specifically address the family members that are here.

There is no theory of the prosecution, Mr. Schiff, because there is no prosecution. There is a very big difference between a prosecution where you already have reached a conclusion and you're just trying to prove it to people.

This is an investigation, which is why it's so sad that nowhere in that stack that you just put up there were the emails of Secretary Clinton, the emails of the Ambassador, 50,000—50,000 pages worth of documents, eyewitnesses. That's the real tragedy.

To the family and the friends, when you're told that there have been seven previous investigations and an ARB, you should immediately ask, Why did you miss so many witnesses? Why did you miss so many documents?

This is not a prosecution, Mr. Schiff. You and I are both familiar with them. I've reached no conclusions, and I would advise you to not reach any conclusions either until we reach the end. There are 20 more witnesses. So I'll agree not to reach any conclusions if you'll do the same.

With that, Madam Secretary, regardless of where he ranked in the order of advisers, it is undisputed that a significant number of your emails were to or from a Sidney Blumenthal. Now, he did not work for the State Department. He didn't work for the U.S. Government at all. He wanted to work for the State Department, but the White House said no to him.

Do you recall who specifically at the White House rejected Sidney Blumenthal?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I do not.

Chairman GOWDY. After he was turned down for a job at the State Department by the White House, he went to work where?

Mrs. CLINTON. I think he had a number of consulting contracts with different entities.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, if he had a number of them, do you recall any of them?

Mrs. CLINTON. I know that he did some work for my husband.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, he worked for the Clinton Foundation.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Chairman GOWDY. He worked for Media Matters.

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sure he did.

Chairman GOWDY. He worked for Correct the Record.

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sure he did.

Chairman GOWDY. When you were asked about Sidney Blumenthal, you said he was an old friend——

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Chairman GOWDY [continuing]. Who sent you unsolicited emails, which you passed on in some instances because you wanted to hear from people outside what you called "the bubble."

We will ignore for a second whether or not Sidney Blumenthal is outside the bubble, but I do want to ask you about a couple of those other comments. Because what you left out was that he was an old friend who knew absolutely nothing about Libya, was critical of President Obama and others that you worked with, loved to send you political and image advice, had business interests in Libya, which he not only alerted you to but solicited your help for. And you often forwarded his emails but usually only after you redacted out any identifiers so nobody knew where the information was coming from.

What does the word "unsolicited" mean to you?

Mrs. CLINTON. It means that I did not ask him to send me the information that he sent me. And as I have previously stated, some of it I found interesting, some of it I did not. Some of it I forwarded, some of it I did not.

I did not know anything about any business interests. I thought that, just as I said previously, newspaper articles, journalists, of which he is one, a former journalist, had some interesting insights. And so, you know, we took them on board and evaluated them, and some were helpful and others were not.

Chairman GOWDY. We are going to get to all the points you just made, but I want to start with your public comment that these emails were unsolicited.

You wrote to him, "Another keeper. Thanks. And please keep them coming."

"Greetings from Kabul, and thanks for keeping this stuff coming."

"Any other info about it?"

"What are you hearing now?"

"Got it. We'll follow up tomorrow."

"Anything else to convey?" Now, that one is interesting, because that was the very email where Mr. Blumenthal was asking you to intervene on behalf of a business deal that he was pursuing in Libya.

What did you mean by "What are you hearing now?"

Mrs. CLINTON. I have no idea, Congressman. They started out unsolicited. And, as I said, some were of interest; I passed them on. And some were not.

Chairman GOWDY. Well——

Mrs. CLINTON. And so he continued to provide me information that was made available to him.

Chairman GOWDY. I don't want to parse words, and I don't want to be hyper-technical, because it is not a huge point, but it is an important point. You didn't say they started off unsolicited.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, they did——

Chairman GOWDY. You said they were—you said they were unsolicited.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, they were unsolicited. But, obviously, I did respond to some of them.

Chairman GOWDY. Well——

Mrs. CLINTON. And I'm sure that encouraged him.

Chairman GOWDY. "Anything else to convey?"

"What are you hearing now?"

"I'm going to Paris tomorrow night and will meet with TNC leaders, so this and additional info useful."

"Still don't have electricity or BlackBerry coverage post-Irene, so I've had to resort to my new iPad. Let me know if you receive this." We'll talk about the new iPad in a little bit.

Here's another one: "This report is, in part, a response to your questions." That's an email from him to you. "This report is, in part, a response to your questions. There will be further information in the next day."

If you are the one asking him for information, how does that square with the definition of "unsolicited"?

Mrs. CLINTON. I said it began that way, Mr. Chairman.

And I will add that both Chris Stevens and Gene Cretz found some of the information interesting, far more than I could because they knew some of the characters who were being mentioned. And they were the ones, the kind of persons with the expertise that I asked to evaluate to see whether there was any useful information.

Chairman GOWDY. We are going to get to that in a second.

Now, before you give Mr. Blumenthal too much credit, you agree, he didn't write a single one of those cables or memos he sent you?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry, what?

Chairman GOWDY. He didn't write a single one of those cables or memos.

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't know who wrote them. He's the one who sent them to me.

Chairman GOWDY. Would you be surprised to know not a single one of those was from him?

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't know where he got the information that he was sending——

Chairman GOWDY. Did you ask?

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. To me. What?

Chairman GOWDY. Did you ask? "You're sending me very specific, detailed intelligence. What is your source?" That seems to me like a pretty good question.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I did learn later that he was talking to or sharing information from former American intelligence officials.

Chairman GOWDY. By the name of?

Who wrote those cables?

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't recall. I don't know, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. You had his information passed on to others, but at least on one occasion you ask Ms. Abedin, "Can you print without any identifiers?" Why would you want his name removed?

Mrs. CLINTON. Because I thought it would be more important to just look at the substance and to make a determination as to whether or not there was anything to it.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, don't people have a right to know the source of the information so they can determine credibility?

Mrs. CLINTON. But he wasn't, as you just said, the source of the information. That was——

Chairman GOWDY. But you didn't know that, Madam Secretary, and that's what you just said.

Mrs. CLINTON. No. No, Mr. Chairman. I said that I knew that he didn't have the sources to provide that information. I knew he was getting it from somewhere else, whether they—he knew a lot of journalists. He knew others in Washington. It could've been a variety of people.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, if you are going to determine credibility, don't you want to know the source?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it wasn't credibility so much as trying to follow the threads that were mentioned about individuals. And as I've already stated, some of it was useful, and some of it was not.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, did the President know that Mr. Blumenthal was advising you?

Mrs. CLINTON. He wasn't advising me. And, you know, Mr. Chairman——

Chairman GOWDY. Did he know that he was your most prolific emailer that we have found on the subjects of Libya and Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's because I didn't do most of my work about Libya——

Chairman GOWDY. That's fair.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. On email.

Chairman GOWDY. I am not challenging that, Madam Secretary. I am not challenging that. All I am telling you is the documents show he was your most prolific emailer on Libya and Benghazi.

And my question to you is, did the President, the same White House that said you can't handle him—can't hire him, did he know that he was advising you?

Mrs. CLINTON. He was not advising me. And I have no reason to have ever mentioned that or know that the President knew that.

Chairman GOWDY. All right.

I want to draw your attention to an email about Libya from Mr. Blumenthal to you, dated April 2011, and it will be exhibit 67. And this is informative. "Should we pass on"—and then in parentheticals—"(unidentified) to the White House?"

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STATE-SCB0077528-MOU

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2011 9:39 PM
To: H
Subject: Re: H: latest: Younus/Haftar conflict; Saif's play. Sid

Yes, I will do so. Very interesting.

From: H [mailto:HDR22@clintonemail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 07:11 PM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: Fw: H: latest: Younus/Haftar conflict; Saif's play. Sid

This is informative. Should we pass on (unidentified) to WH +/or other agencies?

From: sbwhoeop
Sent: Tuesday, April 05, 2011 06:42 PM
To: H
Subject: H: latest: Younus/Haftar conflict; Saif's play. Sid

CONFIDENTIAL

April 5, 2011

For: Hillary
From: Sid
Re: Backstory to Younus/Haftar conflict; Saif's play for power

Later report:

During the evening of April 4, 2011, sources with access to the Military Committee of the National Libyan Council (NLC) stated in confidence that rebel military officers continue to divide into factions aligned with various senior military officers and leaders in the NLC. There is also a degree of mistrust between the civilians, who have borne the majority of the fighting and regular army units that have turned against Muammar Qaddafi. Two officers in particular are vying for command of the rebel forces.

Former Minister of the Interior and long-time Qaddafi loyalist, General Abdel-Fattah Younus, joined the rebels early in the struggle, and after a tense vetting process was accepted by the NLC leadership group. Younus considers himself the commander of the rebel forces; however, his position has been challenged by the arrival from the United States of Colonel Khalifa Belgesia Haftar, who commanded the Anti-Qaddafi force known as the Libyan National Army (LNA) until he was driven from Ndjamena, Chad in 1990. He took refuge in the United States, where he has lived for over twenty years.

Haftar and Younus were colleagues in the Qadaffi's military forces until Haftar was captured by the Chadian Army during the Libyan invasion of Chad in 1986-87. While in custody Haftar agreed to form the anti-Qaddafi force known as the LNA,

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which became a particular irritant for Qaddafi. For his part, Younus worked with dissident Chadian general (and current President) Idryss Debi to overthrow Haftar's patron in N'djamena, Hussein Habre. France played an important part in the struggle for Chad, and Younus played a valuable role in organizing French Military and Intelligence support for Debi. During this period Younus established a close relationship with officers of the French external intelligence service, the Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure (DGSE); a relationship that continues to this day. Younus and Debi believe that Haftar is associated with the United States Central Intelligence Agency.

The resulting personal conflict between Haftar and Younus continues today, as does, in the opinion of knowledgeable sources, Younus' relationship with the DGSE. According to one source, Haftar continues to point out to the NLC that a number of the mercenaries fighting for Qaddafi are from the Chadian Gorang tribe, who, in 1989, Younus helped persuade to support Debi, then an ally of the Libyan leader. These tribal forces have continued to work for Qaddafi over the years. Younus, in turn, points out that Haftar has been living in the suburbs of Washington DC, while others struggled against Qaddafi. According to one source, the younger rebels find these arguments confusing and frustrating.

(Source Comment : A knowledgeable source adds that Younus and Haftar agree on the fact that NATO forces will not have the same effect on the battlefield as the United States aircraft which launched the initial attacks against Qaddafi's forces on March 19 and 20. In particular, they are concerned that only the American A-10 « warthog » ground support aircraft are suited to deal with the remaining elements of Qaddafi's army. These officers believe that the Tornados and other sophisticated NATO aircraft are simply too fast to deal with the Libyan Army on the ground, now that much of their heavy equipment has been destroyed. One sources noted that NATO is equipped to fight the Russians, not the Libyans. The NLC plans to press United States officials for further commitment of these specialized resources.)

At the same time, rumors are circulating that Saif al-Islam, with the acceptance of his father, has forwarded a proposal to assume the reigns of power. Saif's plan suggests governing Libya under a constitutional democracy, in which he would serve as a transitional leader until formal elections could be held.

This proposal is not new. Saif first launched his ideas for reform in 2004, when he enlisted the help of outside consultants to develop a plan for Libyan economic prosperity. Entitled " LibyaTomorrow" this plan soon developed from an economic and social agenda into a political plan. Several times between 2004 - 2010, Saif was asked to leave the country by his father because he proposed reform measures that were not acceptable to most of the "old guard."

In his role as the President of the Qadaffi Development Foundation, Saif raised the idea of a constitutional democracy, while working to develop a constitution for Libya. Shortly before violence broke out in Libya, Saif, his colleagues, and consultants completed the final version of a proposed constitution. It never gained widespread support due to strong resistance from the "old guard."

Now that one of the major figures in the "old guard movement", Musa Kusa, has defected, Saif may feel empowered to put forth this document. Another reform initiative by Saif was the development of a free press. Saif was involved in launching the first Libyan media empire, Al-Ghad, which was not technically controlled by his father. This media empire, which included print, radio and television, was run by a youthful group of Libyans who were very tech and media savvy. Al-Ghad was shut down in 2010 during a very high profile disagreement between Saif and his father over its open criticism of Libyan issues. Muammar Qaddafi threw many of these young employees in jail while advising his son to leave the country for a "cooling off" period.

It is also likely that Saif's most recent plan for a constitutional democracy includes an element of freedom of the press as well as freedom of internet access. Saif and his brother Mohammed were in a very difficult battle with their younger brother, Mutassim, over the shutting down of You Tube – due to some videos of Mutassim celebrating on New Year's Eve and his father violently quashing rebellions in the West. Saif insisted on allowing You Tube to continue – but Mutassim wanted to block its access. Saif also proposed holding elections for a Libyan People's Congress.

Saif's proposal almost certainly contains his ideas regarding a strong role for Libyan NGOs. Saif helped arrange for the first trip by Amnesty International to Libya to visit the prisons, and then later followed up by announcing the release of several hundred prisoners. It is likely that Saif's vision for a constitutional democracy includes an active role for non-governmental organizations.

(Source Comment: According to knowledgeable individuals, the NLC is not prepared to accept a transitional government in which a member of the Qaddafi family plays a lead role. Too much blood or too little blood has been spilled for such a compromise at this time. The NLC is incapable of consolidating military gains and is on the verge of returning to the strategic military position it had before NATO forces intervened to stop Qaddafi's siege of Benghazi. In short, their negotiating position is weak. Moreover, the NLC has few leaders of sufficient stature to head a transition government that represents a workable compromise between pro and anti Qaddafi forces. On the other hand, and in spite of the military

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assistance and air coverage being provided by NATO to the rebel forces, Qaddafi remains in control of his destiny. He is negotiating from a relative position of strength and the Saif proposal reflects that.)

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If you were going to pass something on to the White House, why would you take off the identifiers?

Mrs. CLINTON. Because it was important to evaluate the information. And from a lot of the intelligence that I have certainly reviewed over the years, you often don't have the source of the intelligence. You look at the intelligence, and you try to determine whether or not it is credible, whether it can be followed up on.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, I am going to accept the fact that you and I come from different backgrounds, because I can tell you that an unsourced comment could never be uttered in any courtroom. You have to ask——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, we're not talking about courtrooms, Mr. Chairman. We're talking about intelligence, and——

Chairman GOWDY. No, we're talking about credibility——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Chairman GOWDY [continuing]. And the ability to assess who a source is and whether or not that source has ever been to Libya, knows anything about Libya, or has business interests in Libya, all of which would be important if you were going to determine the credibility, which I think is why you probably took his information off of what you sent to the White House.

But here is another possible explanation that may give us a sense of why, maybe, the White House didn't want you to hire him in the first place.

In one email, he wrote this about the President's Secretary of Defense: "I infer Gates' problem is losing an internal debate. Tyler"—and, by the way, "Tyler" is Tyler Drumheller, that is who actually authored the cables that you got from Mr. Blumenthal. "Tyler knows him well and says he's a mean, vicious, little"—I am not going to say the word, but he did. This is an email from Blumenthal to you about the President's Secretary of Defense.

And here is another one about the President's National Security Advisor: "Frankly, Tom Donilon's babbling rhetoric about narratives on the phone briefing of reporters on March the 10th has inspired derision among serious foreign policy analysts both here and abroad."

And here is another one from what you say is your old friend Sidney Blumenthal. This is a quote from him: "I would say Obama"—and, by the way, he left the "President" part out. "I would say Obama appears to be intent on seizing defeat from the jaws of victory. He and his political cronies in the White House and Chicago are, to say the least, unenthusiastic about regime change in Libya. Obama's lukewarm and self-contradicting statements have produced what is, at least for the moment, operational paralysis."

I think that may give us a better understanding of why the White House may have told you you cannot hire him.

Blumenthal could not get hired by our government, didn't pass any background check at all, had no role with our government, had never been to Libya, had no expertise in Libya, was critical of the President and others that you worked with, shared polling data with you on the intervention in Libya, gave you political advice on how to take credit for Libya, all the while working for the Clinton Foundation and some pseudo news entities.

And, Madam Secretary, he had unfettered access to you. And he used that access, at least on one occasion, to ask you to intervene on behalf of a business venture. Do you recall that?

Mrs. CLINTON. You know, Mr. Chairman, if you don't have any friends who say unkind things privately, I congratulate you. But, from my perspective, I don't——

Chairman GOWDY. I would like to think I would correct them.

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't know what this line of questioning does to help us get to the bottom of the deaths of four Americans——

Chairman GOWDY. I will be happy to——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. And help us do better. But——

Chairman GOWDY. I will be happy to help you understand that, Madam Secretary.

Mrs. CLINTON. But I want to reiterate what I said to Congresswoman Sanchez. These were originally unsolicited. You have just said that perhaps the main, if not the exclusive, author was a former intelligence agent for our country who rose to the highest levels of the CIA and who was given credit for being one of the very few who pointed out that the intelligence used by the Bush administration to go to war in Iraq was wrong.

So I think that, you know, the sharing of information from an old friend that I did not take at face value, that I sent on to those who were experts is something that, you know, makes sense. But it was certainly not in any way the primary source of or the predominant understanding that we had of what was going on in Libya and what we needed to be doing.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, Madam Secretary, I am out of time, and we will pick this back up the next round. But I will go ahead and let you know ahead of time why it is relevant. It is relevant because our Ambassador was asked to read and respond to Sidney Blumenthal's drivel. It was sent to him to read and react to, in some instances on the very same day he was asking for security.

So I think it is eminently fair to ask why Sidney Blumenthal had unfettered access to you, Madam Secretary, with whatever he wanted to talk about, and there is not a single, solitary email to or from you, to or from Ambassador Stevens. I think that is fair, and we will take that up after the break.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Would the gentleman yield? Would the gentleman yield?

Chairman GOWDY. Sure.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, you have made several inaccurate statements over the past month as you have tried to defend against multiple Republican admissions that the select committee has been wasting millions of tax dollars to damage Secretary Clinton's bid for President.

On Sunday, you made another inaccurate statement during your appearance on "Face the Nation," and it is being taken up here, and this is the relevance. Here is what you said, "There are other folks who may have equities in her emails, and there may be other entities who are evaluating her emails. But my interest in them is solely making sure that I get everything I'm entitled to so that I can do my job. The rest of it—classification, Clinton Foundation, you name it—I have zero interest in, which is why you haven't

seen me send a subpoena related to it or interview a single person other than Bryan Pagliano, because I need to know that the record is complete."

And I am going back to the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

Chairman GOWDY. I am waiting——

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, let me finish.

Chairman GOWDY. I am waiting on you. I have been very patient.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I am coming. Just wait.

Chairman GOWDY. I am waiting on the inaccurate statement.

Mr. CUMMINGS. All right. I am getting there. I am getting there. Mr. Chairman——

Chairman GOWDY. Well, we have to take a break.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Well, it is not going to take long. You took up four minutes over, so let me have three.

Chairman GOWDY. I have let everybody go over, including you, Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

You issued a subpoena to Sidney Blumenthal on May 19, 2015, compelling him to appear for a deposition on June 16, 2015. You issued this subpoena unilaterally without giving the select committee members the opportunity to debate or vote on it. You sent two armed marshals to serve the subpoena on Mr. Blumenthal's wife and their home without having ever sent him a request to participate voluntarily, which he would have done.

Then, Mr. Chairman, you personally attended Mr. Blumenthal's deposition, you personally asked him about the Clinton Foundation, and you personally directed your staff to ask questions about Clinton, the Clinton Foundation, which they did more than 50 times.

Now, these facts directly contradict the statements you made on national television——

Chairman GOWDY. No, sir. With all due respect, they do not.

We just heard email after email after email about Libya and Benghazi that Sidney Blumenthal sent to the Secretary of State. I don't care if he sent it by Morse code, carrier pigeon, smoke signals. The fact that he happened to send it by email is irrelevant. What is relevant is that he was sending information to the Secretary of State. That is what is relevant.

Now, with respect to the subpoena, if he had bothered to answer the telephone calls of our committee, he wouldn't have needed a subpoena.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Well, would the gentleman yield?

Chairman GOWDY. I will be happy to, but you need to make sure the entire record is correct, Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes, and that is exactly what I want to do.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, then go ahead.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I move that we put into the record the entire transcript of Sidney Blumenthal. If we are going to release the emails, let's do the transcript. That way, the world can see it.

Mr. SCHIFF. I second that motion.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, we didn't——

Mr. CUMMINGS. The motion has been seconded.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, we are not going to take that up at a hearing. We will take that up——

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, I have consulted with the parliamentarians, and they have informed us that we have a right to a recorded vote on that motion.

You know, you asked for——

Chairman GOWDY. Well, I will tell you what. Let's do this.

Mr. CUMMINGS [continuing]. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth? Well, that is what we want to have. Let the world see it.

Chairman GOWDY. Why is it that you only want Mr. Blumenthal's transcript released? Why don't you want the survivors'——

Mr. CUMMINGS. I would like to have all of them released.

Chairman GOWDY. The survivors? Even their names? Do you want that?

Mr. CUMMINGS. Let me tell you something.

Chairman GOWDY. Do you want that released?

Mr. CUMMINGS. No, but let me tell you something. Right now——

Chairman GOWDY. The only one you have asked for is Sidney Blumenthal. That is the only one you have asked for. That and Ms. Mills.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Cheryl Mills.

Mr. CUMMINGS. That is not true.

Chairman GOWDY. That is two out of 54.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman, I ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman GOWDY. Now, if you want to ask for some fact witnesses——

Mr. CUMMINGS. I ask for a recorded vote on the Blumenthal—you said from the beginning, "We want the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Why don't we just put that entire transcript out there and let the world see it? What do you have to hide?

Mr. SCHIFF. These are the only emails that you have released. In fairness to Mr. Blumenthal and to the American people, in the interest of a complete record, if you are going to release his emails, release his transcript where he has a chance to give the context of those emails.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, you keep referring to the Blumenthal emails. I would hasten to remind both of you the only reason we have Blumenthal emails is because he emailed the Secretary of State. Those are her emails. That is why they were released. They are not Blumenthal's emails.

And she wanted all of her emails released. She has been saying since March, "I want the entire world to see my emails." Well, Sidney Blumenthal's emails are a part of that.

So here is what I will do. I will be happy to talk to the parliamentarian, because the parliamentarian told me that your motion actually would not be in order for a hearing.

But at the latest—we will take a vote. And the first week we are back, after this week, we will have a business meeting. We can take up Mr. Blumenthal's transcript, we can take up whatever other transcripts you want. And while we are there, we can also take up the 20-some-odd outstanding discovery requests that we

have to different executive branch entities. Why don't we just take all of it up then?

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, the allegations that have been made against him are refuted by his own testimony. In the interest of not having——

Chairman GOWDY. That is your opinion, Adam.

Mr. SCHIFF. Well, if you disagree, then release the transcripts. Why——

Chairman GOWDY. What allegation, Adam?

Mr. SCHIFF. Why conceal the transcripts? Even if the motion were not in order, you have the power to release them. You have the power to——

Chairman GOWDY. I will tell you why. Because I am not going to release one transcript of someone who knows nothing about Libya, by his own admission, while people who risk their lives—you have no interest in their story getting out. You don't want the 18 DS agents. You don't want the CIA agents. The only transcripts you want released are Ms. Mills and Sidney Blumenthal.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Chairman, the only——

Chairman GOWDY. So we will take all of this up in November.

Mr. SCHIFF. The only person you were interested in asking about during your entire questioning was Sidney Blumenthal. If you are so interested in him, release the transcript. You selectively released his emails. They are the only witness you have done that for.

So you are asking why are we only asking for his transcript? It is because——

Chairman GOWDY. I am going to ask the gentleman from California——

Mr. SCHIFF [continuing]. You released his emails.

Chairman GOWDY [continuing]. To please do a better job of characterizing. These are not Sidney Blumenthal's emails. These are Secretary Clinton's emails.

And I will tell you what. If you think you have heard about Sidney Blumenthal so far, wait till the next round.

With that, we are adjourned.

[Recess.]

Chairman GOWDY. The committee will come back to order.

Madam Secretary, with your indulgence, we will take up one little housekeeping matter.

The question is on the motion of the gentleman to include the document in the record. The chair opposes the motion.

Those in favor of the motion may signify so by saying aye.

Those opposed, by no.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Roll call, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman, I ask for a recorded vote.

Chairman GOWDY. A recorded vote has been requested. The chairman's vote—what?

Yeah, I am sorry. The secretary will call the roll.

The CLERK. Mr. Westmoreland?

Mr. WESTMORELAND. No.

The CLERK. Mr. Westmoreland votes no.

Mr. Jordan?

Mr. JORDAN. No.

The CLERK. Mr. Jordan votes no.

Mr. Roskam?
Mr. ROSKAM. No.
The CLERK. Mr. Roskam votes no.
Mr. Pompeo?
Mr. POMPEO. No.
The CLERK. Mr. Pompeo votes no.
Mrs. Roby?
Mrs. ROBY. No.
The CLERK. Mrs. Roby votes no.
Mrs. Brooks?
Mrs. BROOKS. No.
The CLERK. Mrs. Brooks votes no.
Mr. Cummings?
Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes.
The CLERK. Mr. Cummings votes yes.
Mr. Smith?
Mr. SMITH. Aye.
The CLERK. Mr. Smith votes aye.
Mr. Schiff?
Mr. SCHIFF. Aye.
The CLERK. Mr. Schiff votes aye.
Ms. Sanchez?
Ms. SANCHEZ. Aye.
The CLERK. Ms. Sanchez votes aye.
Ms. Duckworth?
Ms. DUCKWORTH. Aye.
The CLERK. Ms. Duckworth votes aye.
Chairman GOWDY. The clerk will report.
The CLERK. And Mr. Gowdy?
Chairman GOWDY. No.
The CLERK. Mr. Gowdy votes no.
Yeas, five; noes, eight.
Chairman GOWDY. And the motion is not agreed to.
Madam Secretary——
The CLERK. My apologies, sir. It was seven.

Chairman GOWDY. The motion is still not agreed to. Even South Carolina math can figure that out.

Madam Secretary, before we broke, there was a question asked that I thought was a fair question, which is why was I talking about Mr. Blumenthal's emails. I do think that is a fair question. And I think it is an equally fair question to ask why you were reading Mr. Blumenthal's emails. I think both are fair.

So I want to go to June of 2012, which is an interesting time period to look at. Charlene Lamb was an employee of the State Department, and she sent an email which you may be familiar with—it is at tab 56; I am not going to read it, but it is at tab 56—where she described Benghazi as a "soft target," "attacks on Americans," "not staffed adequately." It is a very haunting email to read. It was actually 3 months to the day when our four fellow citizens were killed. And that is on June the 7th, 2012.

Also on June the 7th of 2012, your deputy chief of staff, Mr. Jake Sullivan, is emailing Ambassador Stevens, asking the Ambassador to look at a memo Sidney Blumenthal sent you. And, in fact, Mr.

Sullivan writes to the Ambassador, "Chris, checking in with you on this report. Any reactions?"

All right. That is on exactly the same day that, I believe, our Ambassador's papers were accepted in Libya. It is a day after an IED attack on our compound. And Chris Stevens is being asked to read and react to an email by Sidney Blumenthal from your deputy chief of staff.

Now, this is what he is writing on the 7th. This is after he has been turned down on a request for more security. This is our Ambassador. "Appreciate you giving this proposal consideration even if the conclusion was not favorable for us. We'd be interested in pursuing the other avenue you suggest, high-threat trained agents. Best, Chris."

So I have this contrast in my mind. An ambassador is newly in place. It is a day after an attack on our facility. Your deputy chief of staff is sending him an email from Sidney Blumenthal asking him to take time to read and react to it. And then, to the best of my recollection, that is forwarded to you.

So help us understand how Sidney Blumenthal had that kind of access to you, Madam Secretary, but the Ambassador did not.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, because I think that your question does help to clarify matters.

Chris Stevens emailed regularly with Jake Sullivan, one of my closest aides, in the State Department. He could have emailed to Mr. Sullivan, knowing that it would've been immediately responded to, on any issue that was of concern to him, and he did not raise issues about security on that day or other days.

And I think it's important to recognize that when an ambassador is at post overseas, especially one as experienced a diplomat as Chris Stevens, he knows where to pull the levers, where to go for information, where to register concerns. And I think he did exactly as one might have expected. He dealt with security issues through dealing with the security professionals, who were the ones making the assessments. And I think that Ambassador Stevens understood completely that that's where the experts were and that's where anything he requested or anything he was questioning should be directed.

Chairman GOWDY. Speaking of experts, who was Victoria Nuland?

Mrs. CLINTON. A very experienced diplomat. She served as our Ambassador to NATO, appointed by President George W. Bush. She served as one of the advisers, as a Foreign Service officer delegated to the White House for Vice President Cheney. She served as the spokesperson for the State Department during my tenure. And she is currently the Assistant Secretary for Europe under Secretary Kerry.

Chairman GOWDY. She wrote this to the Ambassador on June the 13th, 2012. That is a week after the facility was attacked. It is only a handful of days after he was turned down on a request, specific request, for more security.

"Chris, I know you have your hands full, but we'd like your advice about public messaging on the spate of violence in Libya over the past 10 days."

So she is asking him for help with public messaging. Jake Sullivan—which is the other half of the question that I don't think we got to. I understand that Chris Stevens was a rule-follower. I understand that. I've got no qualms.

My question was actually not why Chris Stevens didn't contact you, but why did Jake Sullivan send Chris Stevens a Sidney Blumenthal email to read and react to on the day after the facility was attacked, the same day he was denied a request for more security, and instead of email traffic back and forth about security, it is read and react to a Blumenthal email?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think any ambassador, if one were sitting before the committee, would say that they handled a lot of incoming information and requests. Some of it was about what was happening in country; some of it was about what was happening back in the United States.

And Chris felt strongly that the United States needed to remain in and committed to Libya. So he was concerned that there might be a feeling on the part of some, either in the State Department or elsewhere in the government, that we shouldn't be in Libya. And he was adamantly in favor of us staying in Libya.

So part of what the discussion with him and Jake Sullivan and others was, you know, how do we best convey what the stakes the United States has in staying involved in Libya would be. And I thought that was, you know, very much in keeping with both his assessment and his experience.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, I appreciate your perspective, Madam Secretary. Let me share with you my perspective.

And if you need to take time to read a note, I am happy to pause.

Mrs. CLINTON. No. I'm just being reminded, which I think is important, that—you know, remember, Chris spent the vast majority of his time in Tripoli, not in Benghazi. So a lot of what he was looking at is how you deal with not only those in authority positions in Libya who were based in Tripoli at that time but also representatives of other governments and the like.

And I think it is fair to say that anytime you're trying to figure out what's the best argument to make, especially if you're someone like Chris Stevens trying to put together and make the best argument about why the United States should remain committed to Libya and others as well, he's going to engage in conversations about that.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, with respect, Madam Secretary, no matter what city he was in in Libya, having to stop and provide public messaging advice to your press shop and having to read and respond to an email sent by Sidney Blumenthal—it doesn't matter what town you are in. He needed security help. He didn't need help messaging the violence. He needed help actually with the violence.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Chairman GOWDY. You have said several times this morning that you had people and processes in place. And I want to ask you about an email that was sent to you by another one of your aides, Ms. Huma Abedin. That would be exhibit No. 70 in your folder.

She emailed you that the Libyan people needed medicine, gasoline, diesel, and milk. Do you know how long it took you to respond to that email?

STATE DEPT. - PRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMM.
SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT ON SENSITIVE INFORMATION & REDACTIONS. NO FOIA WAIVER.

From: Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2011 7:17 AM
To: H; Abedin, Huma
Subject: Re: Benghazi update (1200 local)

Already working on it with Eric S., Jeremy B., and NSS.

From: H [mailto:HDR22@clintonemail.com]
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2011 07:10 AM
To: Abedin, Huma; Sullivan, Jacob J
Subject: Re: Benghazi update (1200 local)

Can we arrange shipments of what's requested?

From: Abedin, Huma [mailto:AbedinH@state.gov]
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2011 07:06 AM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Benghazi update (1200 local)

From: Abbaszadeh, Nima
Sent: Monday, August 22, 2011 06:54 AM
To: Sullivan, Jacob J; Wells, Alice G; Abedin, Huma; Hanley, Monica R; Mills, Cheryl D
Cc: S_SpecialAssistants
Subject: FW: Benghazi update (1200 local)

Update from Rep. Stevens in Benghazi, based on largely on info from acting PM Ali Tarhouni and acting FM Salah Bishari:

- TNC caretaker cabinet/members were up until 4am following events in Tripoli and discussing plans for the coming days. Tarhouni said the TNC has been in constant communication with its people in Tripoli, including both fighters and those entrusted with implementing the stabilization plans. Rebels in Tripoli, in coordination with the TNC, have begun to set up checkpoints inside the city and guard public buildings.
- TNC chairman Abd al Jalil and PM Jibril made statements to the media last night, urging people to refrain from revenge attacks and destruction of public buildings.
- There has so far been "no bloodbath" or serious looting.
- The capture of Saif al-Islam al-Qadhafi and Mohamed al-Qadhafi is significant. The TNC, including Abd al-Jalil himself, intervened with rebels surrounding Mohamed's house to ensure that they did not harm him. They understood that it would be harmful to the revolution and the TNC if he were killed. These events were captured live by Al Jazeera in interviews with Mohamed. Both brothers are in rebel custody (at this time, it is unclear to us exactly who is holding them, however).
- Per Tarhouni, the next steps are: 1) find Muammar Qadhafi; 2) issue a statement announcing the end of the Qadhafi regime and the start of the interim period under the TNC (TNC staff have begun drafting

STATE DEPT. - PRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMM.
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this statement already); 3) insure the delivery of essential services and commodities (esp. addressing the acute shortages of fuel, children's milk, and medication for blood pressure and diabetes); and 4) move the TNC to Tripoli.

- Regarding the move to Tripoli, Tarhouni said security arrangements would need to be made before they could send the TNC leadership to the capital. We have heard from another contact that some TNC members are already making plans to fly to Misurata and the Western Mountains, possibly as early as today, and from there drive to Tripoli.
- Request for assistance: Tarhouni, who also holds US citizenship, said the items listed above (gas, diesel, baby milk, and medicine) are urgently needed in Tripoli and recommended that the USG ship those items directly to Zawiya's Port and publicize such assistance as soon as feasible (in coordination with the TNC). He said this would bring the US even more goodwill than it has already earned here.

STATE DEPT. - PRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMM.
SUBJECT TO AGREEMENT ON SENSITIVE INFORMATION & REDACTIONS. NO FOIA WAIVER.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I responded to it very quickly.

Chairman GOWDY. Yeah, four minutes.

My question, and I think it is a fair one, is: The Libyan people had their needs responded to directly by you in four minutes, and there is no record of our security folks ever even making it to your inbox. So if you had people and processes in place for security, did you not also have people and processes in place for medicine, gasoline, diesel, milk?

Mrs. CLINTON. You know, Mr. Chairman, I've said it before, and I will say it again. I'll say it as many times as is necessary to respond.

Chris Stevens communicated regularly with the members of my staff. He did not raise security with the members of my staff. I communicated with him about certain issues. He did not raise security with me. He raised security with the security professionals.

Now, I know that's not the answer you want to hear, because it's being asked in many different ways by committee members, but those are the facts, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. No, I——

Mrs. CLINTON. Ambassadors in the field are engaged in many different tasks. They are basically our chief representative of the President of the United States, so they deal with everything from, you know, foreign aid to security to dealing with the personal requests for visas that come from people in the country they are assigned to.

And Chris Stevens had regular contact with members of my staff, and he did not raise security issues.

Now, some of it may have been because, despite what was implied earlier, there was a good back-and-forth about security. And many of the requests that came from Embassy Tripoli, both for Tripoli and for Benghazi, were acted on affirmatively. Others were not.

That is what an ambassador, especially a diplomat as experienced as Chris Stevens, would expect, that it would be unlikely to be able to get every one of your requests immediately answered positively.

So, yes, he had regular contact with my aides; he did not raise security with me. And the security questions and requests were handled by the security professionals.

Chairman GOWDY. Madam Secretary, with all due respect, those are two separate issues. Who Chris Stevens had access to is one issue. Who had access to you and for what is another issue.

Because you have said you had people and processes in place. You also have people and processes in place for people who want to send you meaningless political advice. You also have people and processes in place for people who want to inquire about milk and diesel fuel and gasoline. You also have people and processes in place for people who want to provide insults towards folks you work with in the administration.

All of that made it directly into your inbox, Madam Secretary. That is my question. My question is, how did you decide when to invoke people and process and who just got to come straight to you? Because it looked like certain things got straight to your inbox, and the requests for more security did not.

And while you are answering that, I want to inform and instruct why I am asking it. You have mentioned the ARB on a number of occasions again today. This was not the first ARB. We had one after Kenya and Tanzania. And that ARB could not have been more specific: The Secretary of State should personally review the security situation of our embassy facilities. That ARB put the responsibility squarely on you.

So, with respect to that previous ARB recommendation and, in contrast, what did make your inbox versus what did not, did you personally review our security situation, as the previous ARB required?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, let me see if I can answer the many parts of your question, Mr. Chairman.

Yes, personal email came to my personal account. Work-related email did, as well. And I also relied on a number of my aides and staff members, as well as experienced Foreign Service officers and civil servants, who were similarly engaged in gathering information and sharing it.

And, as I said and I will repeat, Chris Stevens communicated with a number of people that I worked with on a daily basis in the State Department. So far as I know, he did not raise any issue of security with any of those people. He raised it where he knew it would be properly addressed. If he had raised it with me, I would be here telling you he had. He did not.

And so I think it's important to try to separate out the various elements of your question, Mr. Chairman, and I will do my best to continue to try to answer your questions.

But I have said before and I will repeat again: Sid Blumenthal was not my adviser, official or unofficial, about Libya. He was not involved in any of the meetings, conversations, other efforts to obtain information in order to act on it.

On occasion, I did forward what he sent me to make sure that it was in the mix so, if it was useful, it could be put to use. And I believe in response to the email you pointed out originally from Ambassador Stevens, he actually said it rang true and it was worth looking into.

So I think it's important that we separate out the fact that Mr. Blumenthal was not my adviser. He was not an official of the United States Government. He was not passing on official information. He, like a number of my friends, would hand me a newspaper article, would buttonhole me at a reception and say, what about this, or what about that, were trying to be helpful. Some of it was. A lot of it wasn't.

Chairman GOWDY. The chair will now recognize the gentlelady from California, Ms. Sanchez.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you.

Secretary Clinton, I listened very carefully when Chairman Gowdy was questioning you in the first round of questioning. I have to say I was kind of surprised.

We waited more than a year to finally get you up here to testify. We spent almost $5 million, and we interviewed about 54 witnesses. And when the chairman finally got his chance to question you, he asked you over—he quibbled, actually, over the definition of the word "unsolicited."

As if that wasn't bad enough, then he doubled down on this idea that Sidney Blumenthal was your primary adviser on Libya, a claim that we heard The Washington Post awarded four Pinocchios.

He said on Sunday on national television that he had zero interest in the Clinton Foundation and other topics, but then he just spent his full time, the full questioning time in the first round, asking you about the Clinton Foundation, Media Matters, and other topics that don't really have anything to do with the attacks that occurred in Benghazi.

And my own sense of incredulity was, really? Really? Is this why we have asked you to come? To testify about that?

The overwhelming sense that I get from the Republican side of the aisle is they seem to be arguing somehow that Sidney Blumenthal had access to you while Ambassador Stevens did not. Do you think that that is an accurate statement?

Mrs. CLINTON. Of course not, Congresswoman. You know, you didn't need my email address to get my attention.

In fact, most of the work I did, as I said this morning, had nothing to do with my emails. It had to do with the kind of meetings and materials that were provided to me through those who were responsible for making decisions on a whole range of issues.

And, as I just told the chairman, if Ambassador Stevens had grave concerns that he wanted raised with me, he certainly knew how to do that.

Ms. SANCHEZ. He could speak to your office or your staff—

Mrs. CLINTON. Absolutely.

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. Or you directly on the telephone?

Mrs. CLINTON. Absolutely.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Did he ever ask you for your personal email address and you turned him down, you shot him down——

Mrs. CLINTON. No. He did not.

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. Said, "You can't email me"?

Mrs. CLINTON. Huh-uh. Huh-uh.

Ms. SANCHEZ. The other thing that I am hearing from the other side of the aisle is they are arguing that, you know, security was, you know, sort of decomposing in eastern Libya and that no security improvements were ever made to the Benghazi outpost.

That is not a true statement, is it?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, it is not.

Ms. SANCHEZ. In fact, there were many security enhancements that were asked for that were actually made, although there were other requests that were made that were not fulfilled. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Okay.

The other line of questioning that sort of surprises me is that, over the course of this investigation, Republicans have repeatedly asked why the U.S. was still in Benghazi on the night of the attacks.

During the select committee's first hearing, which was more than a year ago, the chairman posed the following question: "We know the risk of being in Benghazi. Can you tell us what our policy was in Libya that overcame those risks? In other words, why were we there?"

And the Accountability Review Board had already answered that question. It explained that Benghazi was the largest city and historical power center in eastern Libya. It further went on to say, "Although the rebel-led Transitional National Council declared that Tripoli would continue to be the capital of post-Qadhafi Libya, many of the influential players in the TNC remained based in Benghazi."

And the ARB went on to explain that Ambassador Stevens advocated for a U.S. presence in Benghazi, and his status as the leading U.S. Government advocate on Libya policy and his expertise on Benghazi, in particular, caused Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments.

Secretary Clinton, do you agree? Was Ambassador Stevens a leading expert on Libya policy? And did you also give his opinions a lot of weight and respect?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I did, Congresswoman.

Ms. SANCHEZ. And do you recall Ambassador Stevens advocating from the ground up for continued U.S. presence specifically in Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, he did.

Ms. SANCHEZ. In fact, Ambassador Stevens' emails, many of which this committee has had for more than a year, confirm what you just stated.

Mr. CHAIRMAN, I would ask unanimous consent to enter this document into the record. And it is being passed out to the members of the committee.

Chairman GOWDY. Without objection.

[The information follows:]

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C05409976 Date: 10/20/2015

C05409976-MOU

Kozlowsky, Matthew J

From: Stevens, John C
Sent: Tuesday, November 01, 2011 9:05 AM
To: Polaschik, Joan A
Cc: Roebuck, William V
Subject: RE: Mission Benghazi future

Interesting about DS staffing. I really hope the numbers can safely be reduced so that you can all have your own rooms – or at least your own beds! Someone told me that Nate curled up on the floor with a blanket during his TDY. Llike an IDP.

Will be interested to know what your EAC decides. Our new RSO will be in touch with yours .

Bill do you want to share the Benghazi proposals with Liz? We consulted a property lawyer here today and he said we're on solid legal ground to hold onto Villa B (cafeteria/offices) through the end of the 1 year lease term, ie, August 3. So that's an additional option. (Of course, the landlord might try to evict us in court, but that's speculation).

C

From: Polaschik, Joan A
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2011 1:13 PM
To: Stevens, John C; Roebuck, William V; Cretz, Gene A
Subject: RE: Mission Benghazi future

Option A looks right to me. Just one note re DS staffing... we're holding an EAC tomorrow in which we plan to discuss our movement policies & continued DS staffing. If/if current positive trends continue, RSO & MSD plan to recommend that we move o/a December 1 to an eased travel policy that will allow USDH staff to travel solo without an MSD agent (e.g., with just a GSO driver) but still in an armored vehicle. MSD would maintain QRF teams throughout the city in order to respond to any incidents. In theory, the same policy should apply to Benghazi but I'm not sure that you have the numbers to go to a QRF model.

From: Stevens, John C
Sent: Monday, October 31, 2011 3:08 PM
To: Roebuck, William V; Cretz, Gene A; Polaschik, Joan A
Subject: Mission Benghazi future

Here are a couple of possible models for Mission Benghazi. I have discussed with Benghazi RSO, PM/MANPADS rep and USAID/OTI rep here. We are currently staffed at 9 (myself, Nate, OTI, IRM/MGT, plus 5 DS, with Nate and OTI planning to transfer to Tripoli later in November). Also note that the landlord of Villa B (office/cafeteria compound) has served us notice that he would like to terminate our lease on Feb 3. We have paid rent through Feb 3 for all 3 compounds; we're required to provide 60 days notice to end the leases. So if we're going to get rid of any of these properties, we should be ready to give notice by then.

A) Slimmed down compound: Principal Officer (FS-02 level) MGT/IRM, and possibly one USAID/OTI officer (if they get requested funding). 4 DS. 1 admin LES plus guardforce.
   - Consolidate to Villa A (combine lodging/offices; beds for 7 plus 2 TDY in living room; also possible to rent a small 1 bedroom house attached to Villa A belonging to same owner)
   - Duration: through Sept 30, 2012 (3 months beyond projected TNC elections)
   - Purpose: provide platform for POL/ECON reporting; PD and OTI programming; PM/Conventional Weapons collection effort in east; commercial outreach.

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- Other Benghazi missions: UNSMIL, EU and UK intend to maintain small branch offices for the next 6 months-one year. Italians and Turks have consulates.

B) Virtual presence: End all 3 compound leases. Zero full-time State Dept staff. Use hotels (as Spanish, Greek and foreign NGOs have been doing). Possibly leave FAV in Benghazi [redacted] to support TDY travel in eastern Libya.

My personal recommendation would be Option A. There will be a lot of political activity in Benghazi in the coming year, not least of which will be elections and campaigning. A good number of TNC members, including the chairman himself, will be traveling frequently between Tripoli and Benghazi. MANPADS collection and USAID programming will also continue in the east. It would help us a lot to maintain a small platform in Benghazi during through next fall.

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Ms. SANCHEZ. Secretary Clinton, I understand this email is not one that you have seen before, as it was not addressed or sent to you. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Ms. SANCHEZ. In the email before you, then-Special Envoy Stevens wrote this proposal for continued presence in Benghazi at Embassy Tripoli, as Embassy Tripoli was reopened following the fall of Qadhafi. He suggested two potential models. Option A was a slimmed-down compound, and option B was a virtual presence with zero full-time State Department staff in Benghazi.

Special Envoy Stevens sent this email to Gene Cretz, then the Ambassador to Libya; his deputy chief of mission; and the Director of the Office of Maghreb Affairs. At the time, these career diplomats had a combined 83 years of Foreign Service experience.

Would the recommendation of this team be given a fair amount of weight within the Department?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, it would.

Ms. SANCHEZ. And is that the way that it should work, that the views of experienced diplomats should count in decisionmaking?

Mrs. CLINTON. They certainly did to me, and I think that should be the practice.

Ms. SANCHEZ. In the same email, Special Envoy Stevens states, "But my personal recommendation would be option A," which was the option for a slimmed-down compound. He then notes a few of his key rationales for wanting to stay.

In an earlier September 6, 2011, email advocating for a continued Benghazi presence, Special Envoy Stevens provided more reasons, including the opportunity to, "monitor political trends and public sentiment regarding the new Libya. The revolution began in eastern Libya, and the view of these 2 million inhabitants will certainly influence events going forward."

Secretary Clinton, do you agree with Ambassador Stevens' view that there were important reasons to have a presence in Benghazi despite the risks?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I do.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Other documents show that Ambassador Stevens continued to advocate for a continued U.S. presence once he became Ambassador to Libya. In fact, at the end of August, just two weeks before the attacks, he was working on a proposal for a permanent presence.

As that proposal explained, "A permanent branch office in Benghazi to provide a permanent platform to protect U.S. national security interests in the region and to promote a stronger, healthier, and more vibrant bilateral relationship with the new free and democratic Libya."

While Ambassador Stevens took seriously the significant security incidents in Benghazi that occurred in June, he never decided that the risk outweighed the benefit, and he never recommended closing the post in Benghazi. He worked with his counterparts to try to manage that risk as best they could.

In its report, the Benghazi Accountability Review Board found, "The total elimination of risk is a nonstarter for U.S. diplomacy given the need for the U.S. Government to be present in places

where stability and security are often most profoundly lacking and host-government support is sometimes minimal to nonexistent."

Secretary Clinton, this is such a difficult issue, the balancing of interests. From your perspective as a former Senator and Secretary of State, how do you best ensure that we are striking the right balance going forward?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congresswoman, thank you for that question, because I do think that's what we should be talking about. And several of you have posed similar questions.

I think you do start with the best expert and experienced advice that you can get from across our government. And, as you rightly point out, Chris Stevens never recommended that we close Benghazi. He advocated for keeping Benghazi open and, as you rightly refer to this email, for a particular configuration that would fulfill the needs of our country being represented there.

Obviously, you have to constantly do this balancing act that I referred to earlier today. And most times we get it right. In fact, the vast majority of times we get it right.

With Benghazi, the CIA did not have any plans to close their facility. The opinion of those with the greatest understanding of our mission, our diplomatic mission, in Benghazi was exactly the same, that we should not close down, we should not leave Benghazi.

And it's, you know, obviously something that you have to be constantly evaluating in all of these difficult, unstable spots around the world.

But I appreciate your bringing to the committee's attention, you know, the strong opinion of the man who knew the most and was on the ground and who understood what we were trying to achieve in Benghazi, Ambassador Stevens.

Ms. SANCHEZ. And was it your understanding that he certainly understood the risk of being there?

Mrs. CLINTON. He definitely understood the risks. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you.

I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady yields back.

The chair will now recognize the gentlelady from Indiana, Mrs. Brooks.

Mrs. BROOKS. Secretary Clinton, I would like to ask you a bit about your decisionmaking and the discussions you had as it related to how long the Benghazi mission itself was going to last.

I am putting up a map just because most of us really don't know much about Libya, don't know much about the geography of Libya. And as we have talked about these various communities, I don't think most people really realized.

So I want to share with you that we know from my last round that Chris Stevens went into Benghazi in April of 2011, and I want to talk to you about what happened the rest of that year. And just because there was a lot going on, I thought it would be helpful to have this map.

So, by mid-July, our government formally recognized the TNC as the official Government of Libya, replacing the Qadhafi regime. And TNC was based in Benghazi at that time. And then, in August, after the Qadhafi government fell, Qadhafi went over into—

he left Tripoli, where Qadhafi had been headquartered, and he went into hiding in Sirte.

Now, once that happened, the TNC moved their Benghazi headquarters over to Tripoli. And then, in September, we reopened our embassy in Tripoli, and Ambassador Cretz returned—he had been evacuated previously—and Chris Stevens stayed in Benghazi.

Does that sound like an accurate summary of the summer of 2011?

Mrs. CLINTON. It does sound accurate, except I'm not sure exactly the duration of Ambassador Stevens' presence in Benghazi during those months.

Mrs. BROOKS. Well, that leads to my next question. What was your plan for the mission in the fall of 2011 and going forward? What were the discussions you had, and who did you have those discussions with, about the mission of Benghazi going forward in 2011?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, as you may have heard, Congresswoman, the email that Congresswoman Sanchez introduced into the record was from the fall of 2011, and there was quite a discussion going on between officials in the State Department, in the intelligence community, in both Washington and Libya, about the path forward.

The Transitional National Council had been based in Benghazi, and there was a dispute even within the Libyans themselves as to whether they would split the government, whether the government would be located predominantly but not exclusively in Tripoli, or, as some were hoping, predominantly but not exclusively in Benghazi. So this was all a very live subject that was being debated, both in Libya and with respect to what our response would be in Washington.

So we, at Chris Stevens' strong urging and that of other of our experienced diplomats, wanted to maintain a presence in Benghazi in some form. We reopened our embassy in Tripoli, which had been the historical, certainly, under Qadhafi.

But this was a constant discussion about what we should do, when and where. And I think that's why this email from Chris Stevens about his recommendations is so informative.

Mrs. BROOKS. Well, and thank you, and I will get to that in just a moment. But I have to ask you, I assume that your chief of staff, Cheryl Mills, was intimately involved in these discussions with you and with your top staff. She is one of your staff, as you were referring to them. Is that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, she covered a broad range of issues. I'm sure she was involved in some of the discussions, but she had many other responsibilities, so I can't say all of them.

Mrs. BROOKS. I would like to refer you to an update on Tripoli operations provided to Cheryl Mills on September 14. And at the top of that two-page memo, "Assumptions for Benghazi in September were gradual winding down of operations over the next six months. Transition to Tripoli only by January 2012. No consulate." "No consulate" meant no consulate in Benghazi. This was in September. Would that be fair and accurate?

And were you in that briefing with Ms. Mills, or did she brief you about the fact that in September the game plan was to shut down Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think you have to look at that in context, Congresswoman. There was not an active plan for a consulate in Benghazi at any point during this period. That is not what the compound in Benghazi was. It was a temporary facility placed there to help us make a determination as to what we would need going forward in Benghazi. There was——

Mrs. BROOKS. And excuse me, Madam Secretary——

Mrs. CLINTON. There was a strong argument that Chris Stevens and others made that they hoped eventually there might be a consulate. But there was never an agreement to have a consulate.

Mrs. BROOKS. And, in fact, if it had been deemed a consulate, it would have had a different level of security, is that correct, than a temporary mission compound? Isn't that——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, we have——

Mrs. BROOKS. Isn't that correct, that consulates have certain levels of security? There are standards, there are protocols. When it is a consulate, it gets a certain level of security.

Mrs. CLINTON. That is the hoped-for outcome. That is not what happens in the very beginning in many places, especially the hotspots and the conflict areas where a consulate is stood up.

Mrs. BROOKS. Can you talk with me about the decision, then—there is a briefing with respect to—after the closing, rather, of the consulate in Benghazi by January of 2012. We know it didn't close. It did not close.

You went to Tripoli in October of 2011. Ambassador Cretz was still there. How about Chris Stevens? Did Chris Stevens come over from Benghazi to see you when you went for that big trip in October 2011?

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't recall. I don't recall if he did or not. This was about Ambassador Cretz, and Ambassador Cretz was the person that we were meeting with at that time.

Mrs. BROOKS. What was your purpose for meeting with Ambassador Cretz if Chris Stevens was your expert in Libya?

Mrs. CLINTON. Ambassador Cretz was an expert, as well. Ambassador Cretz was our ambassador. You remember, as I mentioned to you before, he had been our ambassador, and then because he reported very accurately about what he observed regarding Qadhafi and Qadhafi's henchmen, when WikiLeaks disclosed internal U.S. Government cables and Gene Cretz's cables were publicized, talking very critically about Qadhafi, he was then subjected to threats, and then we took him out. We did not close the embassy at that time.

So he had returned to finish out his time, and we were in the process of moving him to another assignment and nominating Chris Stevens to replace him.

Mrs. BROOKS. But during that one trip to Libya, you didn't talk to Chris Stevens, best of your recollection, during that time.

Mrs. CLINTON. While I was in Libya, I don't recall that. Of course, we consulted with him with respect to planning the trip, as to who we would meet with, what we would ask for.

We were trying very hard to get the people in positions of authority at that time in Libya to let us work with them on everything from border security to collecting weapons and trying to dis-

arm the militias. We had a lot of business we were doing with them.

Mrs. BROOKS. So, going back to Ms. Sanchez's email with respect from John Stevens to Ms. Polaschik, it talks about option A, as you pointed out, slimming down the compound. And so he weighed in—in October, he was weighing in on whether or not the compound should stay open.

But I would like to direct your attention to an email that is at tab 4, dated December 15 from Chris Stevens.

And I might add for the record, we do not, still to this day, have all of Chris Stevens' emails. We received 1,300 more this week. We received most of them last week. We don't have the universe yet of Ambassador Stevens' emails.

But he emailed to a reporting officer, who we know was in Benghazi still. He wrote, "Interesting. Has security improved in Benghazi in recent weeks? Also curious what you guys decided to do regarding future of the compound."

He was in Washington, D.C., or back in the States during that time. And, in December, Ambassador Stevens, your soon-to-be Ambassador, didn't know what was going to happen with the compound in Benghazi? How is that possible?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congresswoman, one of the great attributes that Chris Stevens had was a really good sense of humor. And I just see him smiling as he's typing this, because it is clearly in response to the email down below talking about picking up a few, "fire-sale items from the Brits."

Mrs. BROOKS. Sure. Those fire-sale items, by the way, are barricades.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mrs. BROOKS. They are additional——

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mrs. BROOKS [continuing]. Requests for security——

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mrs. BROOKS [continuing]. For the compound. That is what that fire sale was, because we weren't providing enough physical security for the compound. Isn't that right? So they are picking up a fire sale because other consulates are pulling out, other countries are pulling out.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I thought it showed——

Mrs. BROOKS. I don't think that is very funny.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Their entrepreneurial spirit, Congresswoman.

Mrs. BROOKS. Absolutely.

Mrs. CLINTON. And I applaud them for doing so.

We did respond to a number of the security requests, the physical security requests. The posters that were up earlier this morning were only about the number of Diplomatic Security personnel. You're talking about physical barriers, physical additions to the compound. There were quite a few of those that were undertaken.

Mrs. BROOKS. But how is it that Mr. Stevens did not know in December whether or not the compound was going to remain open?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mrs. BROOKS. Or do you think that was a joke he was making?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think that, if it were not an example of his sense of humor, it was also as part of the ongoing discussion about Mission Benghazi's future, which he went to great lengths to describe what he thought should be done. You know, a lot of it was trying to decide, could we afford it, could we maintain it, what did we need to have there.

So, yes, there was an ongoing discussion. And I think he knew he was going to be in line to go to Tripoli, and he wanted to know exactly what the decision was going to be about the compound. He had weighed in not only in that email but in numerous discussions with his colleagues back at the State Department.

Mrs. BROOKS. And finally, Secretary Clinton, we know that the compound, the Benghazi Mission, was extended for yet another year. Because, that same month, your Benghazi point person here in Washington, Jeff Feltman, sent a memo wanting to extend Benghazi through 2012, and he sent it to Under Secretary Patrick Kennedy, who approved it—another high-level official who, by the way, for the record, State Department has given us none of Under Secretary Patrick Kennedy's emails yet. Same with Jeffrey Feltman. Very high-level officials within the State Department.

Are you familiar with that memo, sent on December 27, entitled "Future of Operations in Benghazi, Libya"? Are you familiar with that memo?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mrs. BROOKS. And if so, did Assistant Secretary Feltman discuss that memo with you at the time and discuss extending the mission in Benghazi in December of 2011?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm familiar that there was an ongoing discussion about the future of the mission in Benghazi——

Mrs. BROOKS. A discussion between whom, ma'am? Who were the——

Mrs. CLINTON. Between all of the relevant officials in the State Department.

Mrs. BROOKS. Help me with understanding——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Jeff Feltman was one of them.

Mrs. BROOKS. Okay. Who else?

Mrs. CLINTON. Obviously, Chris Stevens was one of them. But there were many others who had information and expertise to add to it.

And there was a recommendation that Benghazi be continued through 2012 as part of the continuing evaluation of whether or what we wanted to have on a more permanent basis in Benghazi.

Mrs. BROOKS. And do you recall, were you in those discussions? Were you specifically in those meetings? You have shared that you didn't do a lot by email, that you had more meetings and briefings. Were you in those meetings about extending Benghazi through the end of the year?

Mrs. CLINTON. There were certainly meetings in which I was advised about the process being undertaken as to determine whether Benghazi should be extended. So, yes, I was aware of the process that was ongoing, and I was kept up to date about it.

Mrs. BROOKS. And were there any minutes or any briefings——

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady's time has expired.

The chair would now recognize the gentleman from Washington, Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Yeah, I just want to clarify a couple of points.

First of all, Ambassador Stevens had access to you, without question.

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, he did.

Mr. SMITH. In fact, a former—I don't have the name in front of me, but an ambassador in Russia said that, you know, he always had access to you, always had constant communication with you, never had your email address.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mr. SMITH. I would hope that ambassadors would have more direct and immediate lines of communication, and Ambassador Stevens certainly did, correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. And, also, did Ambassador Stevens ever advocate either leaving Libya or abandoning Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. To the contrary, Congressman. He was a very strong advocate for staying in Libya, including in Benghazi.

Mr. SMITH. And I think, you know, what we have learned here is, well, nothing, frankly, that we didn't know already. The security situation in Libya was dangerous——

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. SMITH [continuing]. Without question. Would you say that Ambassador Stevens was unaware of any aspect of that?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I would not. I think he was very aware.

Mr. SMITH. So he knew the security situation in Libya quite well?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mr. SMITH. And yet—and, again, I want to be clear on this. In his communications with you—and he had many, even if he didn't have your email address—did he ever say—you know, did he raise the security issue directly with you?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, he did not.

Mr. SMITH. And, you know, and then the question—you know, obviously, he chose to go to Benghazi. He, as you have described earlier, as, gosh, all across the world today, diplomats are weighing the risks and the benefits of a lot of dangerous places, and he had to do that.

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Mr. SMITH. And he chose to go to Benghazi.

Mrs. CLINTON. He did. And, Congressman, ambassadors in the countries they are representing the United States in do not, as a practice, ask permission from the State Department to travel in the country where they are stationed.

Mr. SMITH. And as well they should not. They need to be in charge of their country.

I'd also point out, on the question of emails and which ones you've received and haven't received. Unfortunately, the State Department, which has been spending an enormous amount of time producing documents for this committee, cannot produce thousands of emails at the drop of a hat. And the committee chose to prioritize all your emails, but also Ms. Abedin's emails, Cheryl

Mills' emails, basically Sidney Blumenthal's emails to you; they chose to prioritize those emails over the others.

So the State Department is trying to get this information. But it is a question of the priorities of the committee, which brings me to the last point I'll make, and I won't take the full 10 minutes here, you know. There are a lot of—a lot of accusations have been made back and forth about things that have been said that were or were not true. I think the one thing that was said in this hearing that is clearly the furthest thing from the truth is that this is not a prosecution. If you listen to the other side, this is unquestionably exactly that, a prosecution. I mean, I'd ask viewers to just go back and listen to Chairman Gowdy's questioning of you before the first break and tell me that that's not a prosecution.

And I think, again, I don't know if shame, embarrassment, whatever word you wish to choose, it shouldn't be a prosecution. You know, we have the former Secretary of State here. We should be genuinely trying to inquire about how we can gather more information.

Now, the only interesting facts that seem to be brought up are always referenced back to the ARB, which just points up the fact that the information that we need—and, again, I really want to emphasize, this was a serious, serious matter for the United States. A loss of four Americans is something we need to take incredibly seriously and investigate, and we did. And the information that we found out, as you pointed out, was not always flattering. And there was no question that mistakes were made. And we hopefully learned from them, but that was investigated, so what is the purpose of this committee?

And, when you look at the emails they request, when you look at the questioning, the purpose of this committee is to prosecute you, and there'll be time enough for that in the next year, you know, and people will do it. We don't need to spend $4.7 million and 17 months to simply prosecute you. Look, the security situation was well-known in Libya. The security situation in Pakistan is well-known. I visited the Embassy in Yemen in 2009 about a month after someone had shot a rocket-propelled grenade through the front door. The security situation there is incredibly serious, as well as it is in a whole lot of other places, and those are difficult decisions, but the effort here today seems to be that somehow you personally decided not to do your job in Libya. Okay? You were apparently the advocate of the policy in Libya. Apparently passionate about it. But not passionate enough to care about the security situation in Libya.

And Chris Stevens, incredibly passionate about Libya, wanted to make that country work. Now, it has proven very, very difficult. Do we want to go back to Muammar Qadhafi in charge? I don't think so. And just—sorry, to make a policy point as long as I have a few minutes—you know, it's interesting to juxtapose Libya with Syria. Because just as many of my Republican colleagues are ripping apart the Obama administration and all of those involved for choosing to remove Qadhafi, they are ripping apart the Obama administration and all the current officials for choosing not to get involved in Syria.

What that points up, frankly, is the difficulty of the job that you had. And I thank you for taking it. I'm not sure I would be so bold. It is a very, very dangerous world. Bad things are going to happen. And what we are witnessing today is if bad things happen, you will be dragged out over months and months and months in this partisan atmosphere. And that is very, very unfortunate. This needed to be investigated.

I mean, you know, 9/11, we didn't investigate 9/11—you know, 9/11/2001, just to specify—with the length and depth that we have chose to investigate this.

So, again, I come back to the central point of the central problem with this committee: it is a prosecution. It is a partisan exercise. It is not trying to investigate and find out the truth. And, again, we are now, do a little quick math here, five hours into it; count the break, maybe four hours into it. We have learned nothing substantively new about what happened in Benghazi. Very serious things happened. They were investigated. They were reported. Mistakes were made. They were reported. But this committee in all that time and effort has unearthed nothing. Instead, they want to prosecute you and, you know, rip apart your every word, your every email. Two staffers five levels down from you who said something bad about you? I mean, my goodness, I hope I don't ever have to undergo that kind of scrutiny. I would not survive it, and I don't think many would.

So, you know, I hope in the hours that we have left to do this, that we will try to circle back to learning something new, to figuring out how we can best strike that balance that you described of being present in the world but also trying to keep our people safe. Throughout the history of the country—my aunt was actually a Foreign Service officer way back when—and we have lost many diplomats, and she tells me about it all the time. And, you know, it's a difficult balance. We need to get back to that. If we can learn something new about what happened in Benghazi, I think that might be helpful. But right now this committee is not doing a service to the four people who died or their families or to preventing any of these future incidents from happening.

So I thank you for testifying. I thank you for your leadership and your willingness to do a very, very difficult job.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SMITH. And, with that, I yield the remainder of my time to the ranking member, Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Secretary, a few—maybe an hour so ago, we were talking about the Diplomatic Security folks on the night of the incident, and you looked like you—it appeared that you wanted to say a little bit more about that and what they—speaking of that, the incident. Would you like to elaborate?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, thank you, Congressman.

You know, I don't want anything that is said to me or about me to take away from the heroic efforts that the Diplomatic Security officers exhibited. The five men who were with Chris and Sean Smith risked their lives repeatedly and were themselves under grave threat. I wanted to point out that even when we try to get it right, which we do try, sometimes there are unintended consequences, and there is an example out of this tragedy.

Coming out of previous assessments of attacks on facilities, we now have safe havens, safe rooms in facilities, particularly residences. The Diplomatic Security officers were able to get both Chris and Sean into that safe room. Of course, the idea behind the safe room, why security experts advocated for them, was to protect our civilians, our diplomats from attacks like the one that was occurring. The attackers used diesel fuel to set the compound on fire, and the safe room was anything but safe.

I'm sure the committee members know that neither Chris Stevens nor Sean Smith died from injuries directly inflicted by the attackers. They both died of smoke inhalation. And one of the recommendations in this ARB report is that when we have safe havens, we need to have equipment that will enable people that are safe within them to withstand what happened in Benghazi.

The lead Diplomatic Security officer who was with both the Ambassador and Sean Smith endeavored to lead them to safety through a wall of black smoke. He wanted to get them out of the compound interior up to the roof, where they could be out of the fire and also out of the attackers' assault. He himself nearly died of smoke inhalation. When he looked around to make sure that both Sean and Chris were with him, he couldn't find them. Rather than proceeding and saving himself, which would be a natural human instinct, he turned back into that black diesel smoke desperately trying to find Chris and Sean. He did find Sean, and Sean had succumbed to smoke inhalation, and the Diplomatic Security officer managed to take Sean out of the building. He could not find Chris Stevens.

One of the horrors of the hours after the attack was our failure to be able to find where the Ambassador was. We hoped against hope that he had somehow gotten himself out of the compound and that he was alive somewhere, maybe in the back. And additional efforts by the Diplomatic Security officers and then eventually by the CIA reinforcements that arrived to find his body or to find him, hopefully, were unsuccessful, and they had to withdraw because of the continuing attack back to the CIA Annex before we knew what had happened to the Ambassador. We were desperate, and we were trying to call everybody we knew in Benghazi, in Libya, get additional help.

What appears to have happened at some point later is that Libyans found Ambassador Stevens, and they carried him to the hospital in Benghazi, and Libyan doctors labored nearly two hours to try to resuscitate him.

And I mention all of this because I want not just the committee members but any viewers in the public to understand that this was the fog of war, that the Diplomatic Security officers and then later the CIA officers responded with heroism, professionalism, as they had been trained to do.

We thought things would be safe once they took refuge in the CIA Annex. And as we know, even though that was a highly fortified, much more secure facility than our diplomatic compound, and one that we had nothing to do with in the State Department, it turned out also to be a target for the militants, which is where the two CIA contractors, Mr. Woods and Mr. Doherty, died. But in looking at all of the information, the Accountability Review Board

and particularly Admiral Mullen, who was focused on what happened, what the security personnel did that night, came out agreeing that they were heroic, and they did all they could do to try to save their colleagues' lives.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman yields back.

Madam Secretary, I appreciate you going through their heroism. I really do. It is moving to hear from. And, frankly, it infuriates me to hear folks to my left, who don't raise a single whisper about spending $50 million to train five ISIS fighters, but God forbid we spend one-tenth of that to give some answers to the family members sitting on the first row. So I appreciate you discussing their heroism while some of my colleagues discuss money.

With that, Mr. Pompeo.

Mr. POMPEO. I'd actually like to add to that. I think—you know, Mr. Smith gave a soliloquy. I think it was elegant, but more importantly, I think it was representative of the behavior of the Democrats on this panel. Since May of 2014, not one finger, not one question for a witness. They say they want to get to the truth, but the truth of the matter is they've spent most of their time today—anybody can rewind the tape and find—they've spent most of their time today attacking members of this committee and this process, and I regret that. I think that's a violation of their duty to the country and, most importantly, their duty to the families.

I want to go back to a couple things that I talked to you about a bit before, Madam Secretary. So Ambassador Stevens didn't have your email? Is that correct? Your personal email.

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry. What did you ask me?

Mr. POMPEO. Ambassador Stevens did not have your personal email address. We've established that.

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes. That's right.

Mr. POMPEO. Did he have your cell phone number?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, but he had the 24-hour number of the State operations——

Mr. POMPEO. Did that——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. In the State Department that can reach me 24/7.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. Did he have your fax number?

Mrs. CLINTON. He had the fax number of the State Department.

Mr. POMPEO. Did he have your home address?

Mrs. CLINTON. No. I don't think any ambassador has ever asked me for that.

Mr. POMPEO. Did he ever stop by your house?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, he did not, Congressman.

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Blumenthal had each of those and did each of those things. This man upon whom provided you so much information on Libya had access to you in ways that were very different than the access that a very senior diplomat had to you and your person.

I'd ask—I had a picture up here a bit ago of a man named Wissam bin Hamid. You said you didn't recognize who he was. Were you ever briefed that he was present at the compound the night that Ambassador Stevens was killed?

Mrs. CLINTON. We're trying to track down the basis of your question, Congressman. We have no information at this time.

Mr. POMPEO. My question is a yes-or-no question. It's pretty simple.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I don't——

Mr. POMPEO. Do you——

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't have any information that I can provide to you yes or no——

Mr. POMPEO. So——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Because I know nothing about this——

Mr. POMPEO. So the answer—the question——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Question.

Mr. POMPEO [continuing]. Is were you briefed. And the answer is?

Mrs. CLINTON. We don't know anything about it, so how could I have been briefed about something we know nothing about.

Mr. POMPEO. Great. Thank you.

Are all ARBs created equal?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, there have been 19, including the one that we impaneled after Benghazi. They've all been led by distinguished Americans. They've all been set up in accordance with the laws and rules that the Congress established when they created the legislation to establish ARBs, so I assume, in those respects, they are created equal.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. You know, I'm asking—I asked a pretty simple—pretty simple yes-or-no question, I guess, and I'm happy to let you expand. I'm happy to bring breakfast in, but when we ask a yes-or-no question, it would sure be helpful if we could get to the answer. That's pretty—it wasn't a trick question at all.

Are the recommendations of each ARB worthy of equal treatment?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, they certainly are worthy of follow up by the Department, and I believe that they have been.

Mr. POMPEO. There was an ARB—please, if you put up the poster, please. There was an ARB in 1998—you said this before in your testimony—200 folks were killed. Here's what its recommendation said. It said, "special mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and"—excuse me. This is from the most recent one. I wanted to know if you agree with this: special mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place. Do you agree with that statement from the current ARB?

Mrs. CLINTON. I accepted the recommendations of the——

Mr. POMPEO. Well, my question——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Current ARB.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, my question is if you agree with it.

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't think that's a relevant question——

Mr. POMPEO. The question——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Congressman. I think the question is I accepted their recommendations, and obviously, their recommendations were based on their very thorough investigation and analysis, so clearly I endorsed the entire Board's work.

Mr. POMPEO. In January 2014, Senator Feinstein—a noted conservative—said, in her report, "the incidents at the TMF and CIA were likely preventable," end of quote.

Do you agree with that statement from Senator Feinstein's report?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I would like to think that anything of that magnitude and the loss of life could have in some way been preventable. I think that what the ARB recommended were steps to try to enhance our ability to prevent future attacks.

Mr. POMPEO. Let's go back. I want to go back now. I have the right poster up. I apologize for that. In 1998, here's what the ARB said. It said, quote: "The Secretary of State should personally review the security situation of embassy chanceries and other official premises, closing those which are highly vulnerable and threatened," end of quote.

You've told us all day today that you don't think you should have been involved, and quoting again from the ARB, personally reviewing security. How do you square that?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, there are a couple of important points to make about this, Congressman. First, I made a number of decisions to close embassy chanceries and other official premises based on security. I closed the Embassy in Tripoli. I had to evacuate all of the Americans out of Libya. We had to, you know, lease ferries that came from Malta. We closed embassies and other facilities when we had a strong consensus recommendation that it was necessary to do. So that is a statement of secretarial responsibility.

Now, with respect to looking at every security request, how high should the wall be, whether there should be barricades placed on the east or the west side, that is handled by the security professionals.

So, clearly, I closed embassies. I recommended that embassies and other facilities be closed. So I understand what that point is.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, this is a yes-or-no question. Do you think you complied with what the ARB in 1998 said and personally reviewed the security at Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that's—that is not what my understanding of the 1998 ARB——

Mr. POMPEO. Well, it's just words, Madam Secretary. They're right there.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, and I just answered. I personally reviewed security situations of chanceries and other official facilities that were recommended, because they were highly vulnerable and threatened, to be closed, and we closed some. Some we were able to reopen, which is kind of part of the process.

With respect to the 1998 ARB recommendations, by the time I became Secretary, having succeeded two Secretaries who served during very dangerous and threatening times, there was an assessment made that I certainly was briefed into that we had to look at how best to professionalize the security and the expert advice that we were receiving. That was exactly what I did, and I went further than that. I created a new position, a Deputy Secretary for Resources and Management. I also had recommended, after our ARB, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for High Threats.

So this was a constant discussion about how to make us secure, but not whether or not the Secretary of State should decide on the height of the barricades. I think that's where we may not be fully understanding one another, Congressman.

Mr. POMPEO. I think we——

Mrs. CLINTON. Of course——

Mr. POMPEO. I think we understand each other perfectly.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Specific questions about closing embassy chanceries and other official premises that were vulnerable and threatened, of course, they came to me. I had to make the decision. Deciding whether the wall would be 10 feet, 12 feet, whether there would be three security agents or five, that was the province, as it should have been, of the professionals.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, here's another one from the 1998 ARB. Quote, "First and foremost, the Secretary should take a personal and active role in carrying out the responsibility of ensuring the security for U.S. diplomatic personnel abroad."

Do you believe you complied with that requirement from the 1998 ARB?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I do. I believe that I had established a process and I—you know, I said earlier today, State Department and our security professionals have to be 100 percent right. And I think that, you know, what happened in Benghazi was a tragedy and something that, you know, we all want to prevent from ever happening again, but there were many, many situations, many security issues that we had to deal with during the four years that I was Secretary of State. And I did leave what I hope will be a very important additional position, namely the Deputy for High-Threat Posts, that now will focus solely on what are considered the highest threat places in the world for our personnel.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, I hope you can understand the difference between creating a Deputy Under Assistant Secretary and America's senior diplomat getting involved in personnel security. The amount of resources that can be moved, the speed with which they will move rested only in your hands.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I just——

Mr. POMPEO. I'll let——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Respectfully disagree with that, Congressman. It's been my experience that you want to find people who are dedicated 100 percent to security. You don't want a Secretary or anyone dipping in and out, maybe making decisions based on factors other than what the professionals decide, at least that is my very strong opinion.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. Leaders lead.

I want to—I've just got a few seconds. In all of the materials that have been produced to us today, I have not yet found the document that was prepared at your request for post-Qadhafi planning. Did you have such a document prepared prior to the time that Mr. Qadhafi was removed?

Mrs. CLINTON. We had a number of documents. We had a long list of areas that we were working on and the process for following up on those areas. I don't know if it was one document or a dozen documents, but we had a lot of work that was ongoing, both at the State Department and at USAID.

Mr. POMPEO. And did you ask for those documents to be prepared? Do you know if you had a team working on that or if it was just something that was happening of its own accord?

Mrs. CLINTON. We had a number of people who were working on that. There were—as I said, I sent both of my deputies out to Libya to meet with the Libyans. You know, we can do all the planning we want in Washington, but it's very important to ask the Libyans both what they want and what they expect from us, and so we had an ongoing dialogue that lasted over many months.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. I agree with that. We'll get a chance to talk about that in a bit.

I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman yields back.

The chair will now recognize the gentlelady from Illinois, Ms. Duckworth.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Clinton, I apologize. My line of questioning will probably be a little bit boring because I'm going to get into some details that actually have to deal with security and how we can better safeguard America's diplomats now and onwards. You know, I have to say that the ARB conducted by Admiral Mullen, a man of great military pedigree and long service to this Nation, quite honorable, brave service, as well as Ambassador Pickering, I thought, was well conducted and well thought out. And, in fact, don't just take my word for it, I'm a pretty low ranking member of the House, but Buck McKeon, the former Republican chairman, long-time Republican chairman of the House Armed Services Committee also, you know—never once in our committee hearing did I hear him malign the work that was done in that ARB as we in our committee also looked into what happened.

So I want to look at some of the findings from that ARB and I want specifically to examine the failures of the Blue Mountain Libya security guards and the February 13th militia on that exact day, September 11, 2012. My understanding is, in Benghazi, neither the host country's militia forces nor the State Department's private local guards were capable of defending our personnel. These poorly trained forces either did not show up; they retreated in the face of danger; or simply lacked the necessary tools to fight back effectively.

I want to learn the lessons from Benghazi and hold everyone accountable, not just the State Department but every agency involved as well as Congress ourselves and this committee itself, for implementing significant comprehensive reforms that will prevent future tragedies.

So, you know, looking at the work that I've done on the Armed Services Committee and on Oversight and Government Reform, I've been consistently concerned with the cost and consequences of federal contract mismanagement, which costs the American taxpayers a lot of dollars. So I want to look at the State Department's policy for awarding local guard contracts, using a very inflexible contract vehicle known as the Lowest Price Technically Acceptable, or LPTA, vehicle. I think that should have raised red flags here in Congress. When life and limb are at risk, such as when buying body armor for our troops overseas or barriers for our embassies,

I don't know that Lowest Price Technically Acceptable is the right vehicle.

So can you discuss a little bit why it is that the State Department appears to have awarded local guard contracts in Libya using this contracting method?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congresswoman, I think that's another very important question. I think the State Department, like much of the rest of the government, often feels under pressure to go to the lowest price, whether or not that lowest price is the best contract.

And we had a lot of challenges, not just in Libya but in many places around the world, trying to work to find the right contractors to provide static security for a lot of our posts and facilities, to find more kinetic contractors who could be the frontline of defense since we, as we discussed earlier, were stationed in so many places where there were not American military that could be called and quickly respond. So I would like very much, and perhaps there could be a working group with Armed Services and Foreign Affairs and others to look to see whether we couldn't get a little more flexibility into this decisionmaking because the February 17th militia was viewed by the CIA, which had vetted it, as well as by our diplomats as a reliable source for kinetic support. Sometimes it worked, and sometimes it didn't. And the static support proved to be not very useful at all on that night.

So I think you're really raising an important issue about how to get more flexibility into the contracting because we're not going to be able to bring American military forces to every place where we are in a high-threat post, either because the military can't afford to do that for us or because the host country won't invite us in.

And the other problem, as you pointed out, is that if the host country doesn't have any real resources, it's hard to know how much they can produce. That night, I was calling the president of Libya and demanding that he find any friendly militia, any friendly anybody, to show up and to support us. When our reinforcements, the security reinforcements from Tripoli landed, a militia showed up and in fact kept them there until they had a big enough group to accompany them to the CIA Annex.

So it's a very unpredictable and even erratic process, and it starts with, in many instances, the lowest price, and I don't think that's always the best way to get a contract for security.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I happen to agree with you. And I think actually the LPTA requirement that I'm talking about that actually sets very inflexible standards for specifically the Department of State is actually a law passed by Congress in 1990. So when you talk about maybe some sort of a working group, Congress needs to do our part and maybe amend a 35-year-old law that actually forced the State Department to go with the lowest price.

Secretary Clinton, can you address what actions Congress can take to fix problems that have to do with host country instituted stringent policies given the use of private security guards? My understanding is that the country of Libya, the host nation in this case, did not allow your security contractors to carry firearms, the Blue Mountain guards. I think the Blue Mountain guards were not allowed to carry firearms.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Is that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yeah, the Blue Mountain was not. Certainly our Diplomatic Security officers were. The militia members, who were supposed to be providing kinetic help for us, were. So it was only the static guards that were not.

Now, I will say that, you know, some of those guards did stand their ground. They were basically run over. Several of them were injured the night of the attack. So I don't want to cast aspersions on all of them and the service they provided, but it was not adequate for what we needed then or really at any time.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Are we facing that same type of restriction in other nations as well, in other hot spots? We talked earlier about the 19 missions that are out there. Would these types of issues with the LPTA and contracting and as well as host nation requirements exist there?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, we do. You know, the host nation gets to call a lot of the shots. Under the Vienna Convention, the host nation is responsible for providing security for diplomatic posts, but when a host nation is either unwilling to do so, as we do have in some places where we are present, or unable to do so, because I do think with the Libyans, there was a desire to be helpful but not a capacity to produce what we needed, we have to really work hard to get the kind of support that is required. And, you know, in some cases, we've been able to work out arrangements with the host countries, some we have just defied them and tried to be very quiet about what we were doing, and others, you know, we are prohibited. So it's a constant—again, it goes back to that balancing of risk and reward that we're always doing.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Going back to the ARB conducted by Admiral Mullen and Ambassador Pickering, how many of their recommendations did you as Secretary of State accept?

Mrs. CLINTON. I accepted all of them. They made 29 recommendations, Congresswoman. I accepted all 29 of them and began to implement them before I left the State Department, and I know that Secretary Kerry has continued that work.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Do you recommend for future Secretaries and for this committee and other members of Congress some sort of a formal review process as we go forward? I don't want there to be a review process that is triggered by death of Americans.

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. This goes back to my earlier question about institutionalization of this process so that we make sure that our men and women in embassies right now are safe and that they're safe tomorrow and a year from now and 10 years from now. What needs to be done so that we can make sure that our four heroic dead did not lay down their lives in vain?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congresswoman, before the attacks in Benghazi, the Congress never fully funded the security requests that the administration sent to Congress. Following Benghazi, that has improved, but there are still areas where I think greater funding and responsiveness would be helpful. It was unfortunate that we didn't get all the resources that might have enabled us to do more in all the high-threat posts before Benghazi, but I appreciate what the Congress has done since.

The one specific recommendation that I would like to see the Congress act on expeditiously is the training facility that would be set up in order to train Diplomatic Security officers specifically for these high-threat situations. And I think this is overdue. I know that on a bipartisan basis, representatives from Virginia, which is the state where the site that has been identified is found, have urged in a recent op-ed that the Congress act on this. I would certainly echo that as well.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you.

I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. I thank the gentlelady.

Madam Secretary, they've called votes, but we're going to try to get in Mr. Roskam.

And I'm going to recognize Mrs. Brooks for 10 seconds before Mr. Roskam.

Mrs. BROOKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And just to clarify for the record, I made a statement previously that we had received none of Undersecretary Patrick Kennedy's emails. We've received some through production of other individuals' emails. We have not received a full production of Undersecretary Patrick Kennedy's emails. So I just wanted to clarify, we do have some, but it is through other email production.

Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. Yes, ma'am.

The gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. ROSKAM. Thanks.

Secretary Clinton, can I just direct your attention to the screen?

[Video shown.]

Mr. ROSKAM. You're familiar with that clip, "We came, we saw, he died"? Is that the Clinton doctrine?

Mrs. CLINTON. No. That was an expression of relief that the military mission undertaken by NATO and our other partners had achieved its end, and therefore, no more American, European, or Arab lives would be at stake in trying to prevent Qadhafi from wreaking havoc on Libyans or causing more problems to the region and beyond.

Mr. ROSKAM. I want to direct your attention and maybe direct the group's attention right now to something that hasn't really been discussed. There has been this explicit criticism of Republicans being partisans today, but I want to direct your attention to what is actually going on with you and your team, many of whom are here today with you.

So Jake Sullivan, one of your close advisors that you just told us about, put together the tick tock on Libya memo, and that was a memo that was all about you. It put together 22 different accomplishments, and you were the central figure in all 22 of those accomplishments.

And I've got to tell you, it's really well-put-together. He uses language of "action" and "initiative" and "leadership." Let me just give you a couple of these. HRC, that's you obviously, announces, directs, appoints special envoy, travels to G8, secures Russian abstention, secures transition of command and control, travels to Berlin, Rome, Abu Dhabi, Istanbul. He's basically laying the founda-

tion that the Libya policy is your policy. Essentially, he's making the argument that it's your baby.

And you are clearly familiar with this timeline because in email exchanges with your senior staff, you were not happy about it. And the part that you weren't happy about wasn't that you were the focal point, it's that it didn't include enough. So you said, this is your email: What bothers me is that the Policy Office prepared the timeline, but it doesn't include much of what I did.

Another time, you said: The timeline is totally inadequate, which bothers me about our record-keeping—and I'll come back to that in a minute, Madam Secretary—for example, I was in Paris on 3/19 when the attack started. It's not on the timeline. What else is missing? Go over as soon as possible.

Now, this timeline was put together, according to your senior staff, explicitly for an article that came out in the Washington Post entitled "Clinton's Key Role in Libya Conflict." And, in fact, according to your staff, "The comprehensive tick tock memo Jake had put together was done in large part for the Warrick piece." It was a piece written by Joby Warrick at the Washington Post. And, again, according to your staff, the great detail Joby had came entirely from Jake. That's Jake Sullivan. Joby didn't do any independent research. That's according to your staff.

Now, this article is one of these articles that you read a couple of times if it's about you. Here are some excerpts. Washington Post: A foreign policy success for the Obama administration and its most famous Cabinet minister, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Or this: She went to Paris. There were no instructions from the White House on whether to support strong action in Libya, said a senior State Department official, yet within 3 days, the official said, Clinton began to see a way forward.

And I think my personal favorite is this: Clinton, ignoring the advice of State Department lawyers, convinced Obama to grant full diplomatic recognition to the rebels.

Now, you and your team were pleased with the work that you did and the risks that you took, the leadership that you took. A couple—you know, a couple of hours ago, you told me: Hey, I'm the diplomat here; I'm driving the policy. And isn't it true that you'd been thinking about getting political credit, actually, for months on this?

Mrs. CLINTON. No.

Mr. ROSKAM. Well——

Mrs. CLINTON. We were——

Mr. ROSKAM [continuing]. If that's your answer——

Mrs. CLINTON. We were trying——

Mr. ROSKAM [continuing]. Let me draw your attention, Madam Secretary——

Mrs. CLINTON. But, Congressman, you—you—let me, please——

Mr. ROSKAM. All right. Sure enough.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. If I could.

Mr. ROSKAM. Go ahead.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. We were trying to make sure that what was written, because it's not always accurate, in case you all haven't noticed in your own careers, what was written about a very

important foreign policy effort by this administration was accurate. This was all in response, as I understand it, to a reporter trying to ask questions and us providing the best possible information we could; in fact, trying to make sure that we ourselves had a good timeline and that our record-keeping was accurate.

I think that is not an uncommon experience here in Washington: somebody calls you up, says, "I'm writing a story; what can you tell us?" And you tell them.

Mr. ROSKAM. Well, Secretary Clinton, that's not all that was going on, though. Isn't that right? Because you knew that this was good for you because this is what you were writing in August, August of 2011. This is right after Tripoli fell. You wrote: What about the idea of my flying to Martha's Vineyard to see the President for 30 minutes and then making a statement with him alone?

Or you asked your staff how to convince the White House that this would be good for the President.

And these are your words, Madam Secretary: It's a great opportunity to describe all that we've been doing before the French try to take all the credit.

In fact, your staff told you that they thought it would be a political boost for the President showing that he was huddling with you instead of being on vacation. And so you asked your chief of staff, Cheryl—or Jake Sullivan asked your chief of staff, Cheryl Mills, to call Denis McDonough, now the President's chief of staff, to put together a full-court press—I'll wait while you read Jake's note.

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you, because I don't understand——

Mr. ROSKAM. Here's my question.

Mrs. CLINTON. Yeah. I don't—yeah. I'm waiting for a question.

Mr. ROSKAM. Well, go ahead. You finish reading, and I'll start talking.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, one thing I wanted, which is——

Mr. ROSKAM. Well, I'll——

Mrs. CLINTON. Since I don't have——

Mr. ROSKAM. Are you waiting for the question?

Mrs. CLINTON. Since I don't have what you're reading——

Mr. ROSKAM. Oh. Here, I'll—it's page——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. In front of me, Congressman——

Mr. ROSKAM. It's tab 12.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that has now been handed to me. And it's clear that I wanted to make sure Chris Stevens, Jeff Feltman, DOD, got credit. I wrote that. You did not quote that.

Mr. ROSKAM. Yeah. But you're——

Mrs. CLINTON. Yeah. Well——

Mr. ROSKAM. This is all about your state of mind at that particular point. You were not—you were thinking about credit for you. Isn't that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, that's not. I wanted those who were part of this policy to be given recognition, and I also wanted to be sure that we had the President and the White House coordinating with us. It was a very gutsy decision for the President to make, Congressman. It was not by any means an easy call. As I alluded earlier this morning, I was in that Situation Room many, many times watching the President have to balance competing interests, competing opinions, trying to make a decision. When he made the deci-

sion that the United States would support NATO and support the Arabs, there was no guarantee about how it would turn out. And I personally believe he deserved a lot of credit, as did Chris Stevens, Jeff Feltman, the Department of Defense, and others.

We had a daily phone call, a daily secure phone call that often included the President, included, you know, the generals responsible—generals and the admirals responsible for our mission, included our top diplomats. This was a very important and challenging effort that we undertook in large measure to support our NATO allies. So I wanted everybody who had any role in it to be acknowledged.

Mr. ROSKAM. Well, and then, on August 2011, you received an email from Sidney Blumenthal, that's tab 11, in which he wrote this to you: "This is a historic moment, and you will be credited for realizing it. When Qadhafi himself is finally removed, you should, of course, make a public statement before the cameras wherever you are, even in the driveway of your vacation home. You must go on camera."

That was Blumenthal's admonishment to you.

Mrs. CLINTON. And I don't recall doing that, just——

Mr. ROSKAM. Well——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. In case you're going to ask me.

Mr. ROSKAM. Yeah. But, I mean, look at the timing. You forwarded Blumenthal's suggestion to Jake Sullivan, and you were focused on how dramatic it would be. You were working to make this the story of the day. Isn't that right? This is your email to Jake. This is tab 11. This is your words, Madam Secretary: "Sid makes a good case for what I should say, but it's premised on being said after Qadhafi goes, which will make it more dramatic. That's my hesitancy, since I'm not sure how many chances I'll get."

So 2 months before the end of the Qadhafi regime, and you're already planning on how to make your statement dramatic to maximize political gains. Isn't that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, I think that what we were trying to do was to keep the American people informed about this policy. It was, as you recall, somewhat controversial. Now, there were Republicans as well as Democrats who advocated for it, and there were Republicans as well as Democrats who were concerned about it. So I think as Secretary of State, I did have an obligation at some point to be part of the public discussion about what had occurred, and I see nothing at all unusual about trying to figure out when would be the best time to do that.

Mr. ROSKAM. Isn't it true that your staff heard from the White House after the Warrick piece in the Washington Post that they were concerned, that is, the White House, of the amount of credit that you were getting as opposed to the amount of credit the President's getting? That's true, isn't it, Madam Secretary?

Mrs. CLINTON. Look, the President deserves the lion's share of the credit. He was the——

Mr. ROSKAM. Then why is the White House uptight that you're taking the credit?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I was often being asked that. The President had a lot of other stuff going on. He was still trying to, you know, rescue the economy, a lot of other things happening. So, from my

perspective, the President deserves the credit. He's the one who made the decision. I was honored to be part of the team that advised him, and insofar as I was able to explain what we did and what the import of it was, I was ready to do so.

Mr. ROSKAM. So when Jake Sullivan, tab 11, emails you and said that you wanted—you should publicize this in all of your television appearances, that he wanted to, "have you lay down something definitive, almost like the Clinton Doctrine." That wasn't the Obama doctrine. Is that right, Madam Secretary?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think what——

Mr. ROSKAM. This was the Clinton Doctrine.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, look, I think that the effort we made, the way we put together the coalition, the way I put together the coalition that imposed sanctions on Iran, I think that there is a lot to talk about. I talked about smart power. If you're talking about what I believe, I believe we have to use every tool at our disposal, lead with diplomacy, support with development, and when necessary, as a last resort, not a first choice, defense. So, yes. Is that what I believe? It is what I believe. And I think that, you know, Libya was, to some extent, an example of that.

Mr. ROSKAM. And you were the author of the Libya policy. You were the one that drove it. It was your baby. It was an attempt to use smart power, and that's what you tried to do. Isn't that right?

Mrs. CLINTON. It certainly was something that I came to believe was in the interests of the United States to join with our NATO allies and our Arab partners in doing. The decision, as all decisions in any administration, was made by the President. So the President deserves the historic credit. What role I played, I'm very grateful to have had that chance, and I'm, you know, very convinced that it was the right thing to do.

Mr. ROSKAM. Well, you just recited the Clinton Doctrine to us, and let me tell you what I think the Clinton Doctrine is. I think it's where an opportunity is seized to turn progress in Libya into a political win for Hillary Rodham Clinton, and at the precise moment when things look good, take a victory lap like on all the Sunday shows three times that year before Qadhafi was killed, and then turn your attention to other things.

I yield back.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, that is only a political statement, which you well understand. And I don't understand why that has anything to do with what we are supposed to be talking about today.

Chairman GOWDY. Madam Secretary, votes have been called, so we will go vote and be in recess. And we will be back as quickly as we can.

[Recess.]

Chairman GOWDY. The committee will come to order.

Thank you, Madam Secretary. Again, we apologize for that vote series.

And, with that, we will go to the gentlelady from Alabama, Mrs. Roby.

Mrs. ROBY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Clinton, I want to talk to you about August 17, 2012. On that day, you received two memos about Libya and its security. The first one described a deteriorating security situation and what it meant for your people on the ground. The second one also described Libya's security as, in simple terms, "a mess."

So this memo wanted you to approve $20 million to be given to the Libyan Government to bolster its——

Mrs. CLINTON. Could you tell me what tab that is on the materials that you have——

Mrs. ROBY. Oh, sure, yes ma'am. The first one is, I believe, 33 and 34.

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you.

Mrs. ROBY. I apologize.

So you received those two memos. The second one also described Libya's security in simple terms as "a mess." And it was, again, that you were approached about approving this $20 million that we have referred to as the contingency fund, $20 million that would have gone to the Libyan Government to bolster their own security there in country. And then, in fact, a few days later, you approved that $20 million.

And I am going to get back to that in a minute, but I want to circle back, based on those two memos, to some questions that my colleague Mr. Pompeo asked about the 1998 ARB. You had talked about, in that line of questioning, that you, in fact, had made the decision to close some embassies based on the premise that—the 1998 ARB recommended the Secretary of State should personally review the security situation. You made a distinction between whether the walls should be 10 foot high versus whether or not it was a highly vulnerable situation.

And so I wanted to ask you, when I was listening to that, knowing that I was going to address these August 17 memos, I wanted to ask you, when you were looking at these two memos on August 17—one said their security was in disarray, and the other said they paint a picture of a country in chaos. And I wanted to just ask you, in your opinion, as a Secretary of State that had closed embassies, whether those references to the security situation in Libya would amount to one as "highly vulnerable," per your own words.

Mrs. CLINTON. Congresswoman, I want to answer your question, but I think we need the right tabs.

Mrs. ROBY. Excuse me, 8 and 32. I apologize.

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you very much. Let me take a look at those, 8 and 32.

On August 17, there was a memo from Beth Jones, the Acting Secretary of State, describing a spike in violence and characterizing it as perhaps a new normal.

It is, very clearly, something that we were following, as I have said throughout the hearing today. It said that the International Committee of the Red Cross had withdrawn personnel from Benghazi and Misrata but continued to work in the rest of Libya. It also pointed out that there is a lack of effective security and that the transition, the kind of transition we wanted to see for the people of Libya and particularly in Benghazi, was not as forthcoming from the Libyans themselves.

I think that the description here is certainly something that we were aware of, and a list of recent violence in Libya is something we were aware of. And the ongoing monitoring of the situation in Libya is something we took very seriously.

I can tell you that these kinds of assessments were not uncommon for other places, high-threat, dangerous, unstable places, even war zones, where we were also operating.

Mrs. ROBY. Would you categorize those type of descriptions as "highly vulnerable"?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think that, again, there was no recommendation based on any of the assessments, not from our State Department experts, not from the intelligence community, that we should abandon either Benghazi or Tripoli.

Mrs. ROBY. Right, and I understand that.

And, Secretary Clinton, you know, I guess one of the questions that we need answered is: You were a huge advocate for our presence there to begin with. What prevented you from making the decision, based on the knowledge that you had from these memos about the deteriorating security situation, what prevented you, as Secretary of State, from making that decision on your own?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congresswoman, I took into consideration a wide variety of factors. There were a number of places where violence would spike and we would have to make a decision.

At this point, what we were trying to do was work with the Libyan authorities. That's what the August 17 memo from Deputy Secretary Nides refers to. We were trying to provide additional security assistance so that the Libyans could do more to assist themselves.

And, you know, it is the case that in the world we are in today there are a lot of places that are dangerous. Violence goes up and goes down. Part of what Acting Assistant Secretary Beth Jones was referencing in this memo is this is a new—is this a new normal?

And the Secretary does personally oversee the decision to order departure or shut down posts. And it is important to take that ultimate responsibility very much to heart, which I did. But I think that there was no recommendation to do that.

And, again——

Mrs. ROBY. All right.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. I was following it. I was watching it. I was trying to, you know, make a very well-reasoned analysis. But I was also listening to the people who were both on the ground and with a lot of experience, who had served in Iraq——

Mrs. ROBY. Right.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, other places like that, and there was no recommendation.

Mrs. ROBY. Secretary Clinton, what I am trying to make a distinction between is the decisions you made with respect to Benghazi and decisions that your staff made with respect to Benghazi. But I am already running out of time, so I do want to get back to that $20 million that we talked about.

On numerous occasions, the finger has been pointed at Congress for not properly funding the security—or the funding not being available for the security requests. Yet I find it curious that you were able to find $20 million to support increased security forces

in Libya, yet we weren't able to find money to support your own people on the ground. And, you know, particularly in light of the fact that Mrs. Lamb said that funding wasn't an issue.

So I think that it has been a little bit misleading to say it is Congress' fault, but then, also, it is worth pointing out that there was $20 million found for Libyan security and no dollars found to support the increased security of our own people.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, as I know you are aware, Congresswoman, the Congress sets spending levels in categories of spending. And, as I said earlier, the requests for diplomatic security to do exactly what you are referencing were underfunded. They were underfunded continuously. I am pleased that, following the tragedy at Benghazi, we began to get more support from the Congress.

But one of the funds that is very important when you're actually talking about an American presence in the country goes back to questions that I was being asked by Congresswoman Duckworth. If we can help build up the Libyan security forces, they are the host country; it is their responsibility to protect diplomatic posts.

So I don't see these as unconnected. But it is true that we spent money for diplomatic security out of what the Congress appropriated for diplomatic security.

Mrs. ROBY. Right, but, Secretary Clinton, Charlene Lamb said herself it wasn't a budget issue. Would you take issue with that statement?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I can only tell you that our analysis of the underfunding of security for our diplomatic posts was very much in line with what I have just said, that we asked for money in this administration in the earlier years, and we were underfunded.

And so I can tell you that it would have been very helpful to have more money for diplomatic security. And I want to thank the Congress for upping the amount of money that went to diplomatic security, working with the Defense Department to get more Marines deployed to more posts and the other actions that have been taken post-Benghazi.

Mrs. ROBY. And we appreciate that. Although, again, I really think there is a conflict between Charlene Lamb's statement and some that you have made about that.

But, real quickly, Mr. Chairman, I want to run through one quick timeline and make an observation.

On August 17, you received a memo on the deteriorating security in Libya. The same day, you were asked to give $20 million to the Libyan Government to beef up its own security. Your department issued a warning telling American citizens to get out of Libya and not to travel there. And then Libya itself issued a, "maximum alert" for Benghazi.

You several times made the statement—and we believe you—that Ambassador Stevens was your friend. And I am wondering why, with all of this in front of you, the Secretary of State, why did it not occur to you to pick up the phone and call your friend?

I know you have mentioned experts. I know you have said that Ambassador Stevens and other diplomats go into these high-threat situations with their eyes wide open. But I just want to hear from you why, with all of this information in front of you, particularly on the date of August 17, did it not occur to you to pick up the

phone and call your friend Ambassador Stevens and ask him what he needed?

Mrs. CLINTON. We knew what he was asking for. Those requests went to the security professionals.

And I would only add, with respect to the travel warning, we issued travel warnings for many, many places in the world. They are really aimed at informing American travelers, business travelers, tourists about conditions that they might face if they go to countries. They are not a criterion for determining whether we keep or end a diplomatic presence.

And I just want to go back to the point you were making and read from the Accountability Review Board.

"For many years, the State Department has been engaged in a struggle to obtain the resources necessary to carry out its work, with varying degrees of success. This has brought about a deep sense of the importance of husbanding resources to meet the highest priorities—laudable in the extreme. But it has also had the effect of conditioning a few State Department managers to favor restricting the use of resources as a general orientation.

"It is imperative for the State Department to be mission-driven rather than resource-constrained. And one overall conclusion in this report is that Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives."

Mrs. ROBY. My time is out, and I am afraid my chairman is going to tell me to be quiet, but the last——

Chairman GOWDY. Well, I am not going to tell you to be quiet. I am just going to ask you if you might hold it. I am going to try to be a little quicker on the gavel than I have been, just in the interest of time.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. I will circle back then. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. I would recognize the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Let me say that, Madam Secretary and committee, the August 17, 2012, information memo just referenced is not something new.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mr. CUMMINGS. It's not something that this committee uncovered.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mr. CUMMINGS. In fact, Congress has had the information memo for years. It was attached as an exhibit to the Benghazi ARB report that Secretary Clinton sent to Congress before her testimony to Congress in January of 2013. The ARB had it and considered it important enough to append it to its report. And Congress already questioned the Secretary about her awareness of security conditions in Libya in the run-up to the attacks.

Mrs. ROBY. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CUMMINGS. We just gave you an extra 3 minutes. I have got to use my time. I'm sorry. If I have extra time, I will give it to you.

Within months of the attacks, the Republican investigations of Benghazi have begun, and the chief investigator, Madam Secretary, who was chairman of the House Oversight Committee, Darrell Issa, made it clear that his efforts were directed at you as he spoke at

a political event in New Hampshire. Chairman Issa had said he came to that political event in New Hampshire to, "shape the debate for 2016." How right he was. In that event, Chairman Issa explained—can we roll the tape, please?

[Video shown.]

Mr. CUMMINGS. The idea that you would intentionally take steps to prevent assistance to Americans under attack in Benghazi is simply beyond the pale. The claim has also been disproven multiple times over. First, it was disproved by the ARB, which issued its report at the end of 2012. Admiral Mullen, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had led the ARB's military review and concluded that the military had, "Done everything possible that we could."

Then the Republican-led—the Republican-led—House Armed Services Committee issued its report in February of 2014, Madam Secretary, which detailed all of the steps taken by the military to mobilize upon hearing of the attacks, including immediately redirecting a surveillance drone to Benghazi; ordering two Marine FAST platoons to Rota, Spain, to deploy, one bound for Benghazi and the other for Tripoli; ordering the commanders in in-extremis force training in Croatia to move to a U.S. naval air station in Sigonella, Italy; and dispatching a Special Operations Unit to the region from the United States.

About his review, the chairman, Howard "Buck" McKeon, a Republican, stated: "I think I've been pretty well satisfied that given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did."

Chairman Issa's Oversight Committee, which I am the ranking member of, even spent years actively pursuing evidence for this claim and found nothing. And as it says in the Democratic report we put out on Monday, none of the 54 individuals interviewed by our select committee has identified any evidence to support this Republican claim against you. In fact, not one of the nine congressional and independent investigations has identified any evidence to support this assertion in the last 3 years.

My question: I sincerely hope this puts this offensive claim to rest once and for all. I'm asking you, Madam Secretary, did you order Defense Secretary Leon Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

Mrs. CLINTON. Of course not, Congressman, and I appreciate your going through the highlights of the very comprehensive report that the House Armed Services Committee did on this. I think it's fair to say everybody, everybody, certainly Defense Secretary Panetta, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Dempsey, everybody in the military scrambled to see what they could do, and I was very grateful for that. And as you rightly point out, logistics and distance made it unlikely that they could be anywhere near Benghazi within any kind of reasonable time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Now, Madam Secretary, the Benghazi attacks occurred during a period of significant upheaval and intense volatility in the Middle East and North Africa. There was tremendous unrest throughout the region. I would like to play a clip that shows what was happening at dozens of posts throughout the world, and

then I would like to get your reaction if you can. Please, play the tape.

[Video shown.]

Mr. CUMMINGS. Secretary Clinton, what was your sense of how things were unfolding?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, they were very dangerous and very volatile. Starting on Monday with the attack on our Embassy in Cairo, going all the way through that week into the next week, there were numerous protests, some of which you have shown us clips of. And they were dangerous. You know, the one that I was particularly concerned about happened in Tunis, and it was the Friday after the attack in Benghazi. We knew from monitoring the media, from reports coming in from our embassies throughout the region, that this was a very hot issue. It was not going away. It was being kept alive. We were particularly worried about what might happen on Friday because Friday is the day of prayers for Muslims, so we were on very high alert going into Friday.

I got a call through our operations department from our Ambassador in Tunis, who was in the safe room in the Embassy in Tunisia. There were thousands of demonstrators on the outside. They were battering down the barriers and the walls around our Embassy. They had already set on fire the American school, which is very close to the Embassy. And the Ambassador and his team were desperate for help. Their calls to the government of Tunisia, the host government had gone under answered. I immediately got on the phone, calling the Foreign Minister, calling the Prime Minister, who were the heads of government. I could not find either one of them. I called the President, President Marzouki. I got him on the phone. I told him he had to rescue our people. He had to disperse the crowds that were there because of the video.

He said: I don't control the Army. I have nothing I can do.

I said: Mr. President, you must be able to do something. I've got all of my people inside the Embassy. They are being attacked. If the protesters get through into the Embassy, I don't know what will happen.

He said: Well, you know, I do have a presidential guard.

I said: Mr. President, please deploy your presidential guard. At least show that Tunisia will stand with the United States against these protesters over this inflammatory video.

To his great credit and to my great relief, that is exactly what he did. He sent the presidential guard. Those of you who have traveled know that sometimes they are, you know, men in fancy uniforms, sometimes they are on horses, but he sent them. He sent whatever he could muster to our rescue. And the crowd was dispersed. The damage was extensive. But we, thankfully, did not have anything other than property damage to the Embassy and to the American school. And the government of Tunisia later helped us to repair that. But it was the kind of incredibly tense moment, we had protesters going over the walls of our Embassy in Khartoum. We had protests, as you rightly point out, all the way to Indonesia. Thankfully, no Americans were killed, partly because I had been consistent in speaking out about that video. From the very first day when we knew it had sparked the attack on our Embassy in Cairo, I spoke about it because I wanted it to be clear to

every government around the world that we were going to look to them to protect our facilities. And it was a very tense week, Congressman, one that I think demonstrated how volatile the world is, and how important it is for the United States to be on top of what people themselves are reacting to. And that's what I tried to do during that time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you, thank you very much.

Chairman GOWDY. I thank the gentleman from Maryland.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Westmoreland.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Secretary, I want to thank you for giving us a play-by-play of what happened in Tunisia.

Could you do the same thing for what happened in Benghazi? Could you tell us the same kind of play-by-play about who came to the rescue there? Because I don't know of anybody that did. So I don't know who you called, and their lack of ability to get anybody there. It is just hard for me to comprehend why you would give us that blow-by-blow of something that we are not even investigating here, but we appreciate it. But I do want to ask you.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman if I could——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Sure.

Mrs. CLINTON. Several of you have raised the video and have dismissed the importance of the video. And I think that is unfortunate because there's no doubt, and as I said earlier, even the person we have now arrested as being one of the ring leaders of the attack on our compound in Benghazi is reputed to have used the video as a way to gather up the attackers that attacked our compound.

So I think it's important. These are complex issues, Mr. Congressman, and I think it's important that we look at the totality of what was going on. It's like that terrible incident that happened in Paris.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I got you.

Mrs. CLINTON. Cartoons sparked two Al Qaeda-trained attackers who killed, you know, nearly a dozen people.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Reclaiming my time.

Mrs. CLINTON. I think it is important that you, as Members of Congress, looking into these issues, that you look at the totality so we can learn the best lessons to try to——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Yes, ma'am, reclaiming my time. Let me ask you about a little thing. You said that you spent a lot of sleepless nights. And I can't imagine. And you said you often wondered what you could have done different. What did you come up with?

Mrs. CLINTON. Oh, a long list, a long list, Congressman.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Give me the top two.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, to go back to the point that Congresswoman Duckworth was raising about contractors, if we'd had a more reliable security force in large enough numbers, well armed and well focused on protecting our compound——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, what could you have done different than what you did do?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I'm trying to tell you. I think if the militia that had been engaged by both the CIA and the State Department had been more reliable——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. But you didn't have anything to do with that, you said.

Mrs. CLINTON. But I made a long list, Congressman, about anything that anybody could have done. And that's how I looked at it. I looked at it from the perspective of, what are the many pieces? Contracting is a part of that. There are many other issues that we need to address. That's really the main reason I'm here to continue to try to do what I can to honor those who were lost and to make sure that, you know, we are well-prepared to try to prevent. Now, we know we can't prevent everything—that's the way the world is—but to do the very best we can, and there are many elements that go into that.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, the contractors would be number one. What would be number two?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, if there had—I don't think that's an unimportant point. We had a militia. We had an unarmed static force that probably couldn't have done much more. It should, I think, inspire us to look for ways to get host countries to permit there to be more dedicated security forces, well-enough armed and trained, to be really a force to protect our compounds and our other facilities. That would have perhaps made a difference.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Okay.

Mrs. CLINTON. It certainly, you know, might have made a difference if we had more help from the CIA there on the compound, if maybe we had a rotating presence, but I have to—I have to say in reviewing a lot of the analyses that have been made by security experts, very well-trained, experienced security people, they are not sure that anything would have stopped the attackers. And I know that Admiral Mullen when he went into his work for the ARB, was concerned that none of the Diplomatic Security officers had fired a shot. They had their weapons.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Ma'am, I'm not trying to cut you off. I have tried to be nice, and you are doing well. We both talk slow, so let's give each other a little breathing room here.

You talked about Ms. Victoria Nuland. You know her, right?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I do.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Okay. This was her briefing on September the 13th. Some reporter named Elise had asked her a question about the security, and her response was: "I'm going to reject that, Elise. Let me tell you what I can about the security on our mission in Benghazi. It did include a local Libyan guard force around the outer perimeter." That guard force never showed up that night, and it did not normally patrol the outer perimeter. The only people that patrolled the outer perimeter, was the unarmed Blue Mountain. But, she said: "This is the way we work in all of our missions all around the world, that the outer perimeter is the responsibility of the host government," which there wasn't really a host government at the time. "There was obviously a physical perimeter barrier, a wall, and then there was a robust American security presence inside the compound."

I don't think five DS agents, not fully equipped or armed for what they were facing, you could call a robust American security presence.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Would you have used the word "robust"?

Mrs. CLINTON. I would certainly have said that the security on that night was reliant on a militia that did not perform as had been expected.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I am not talking about the militia on the outside. I am talking about the robust——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mr. WESTMORELAND [continuing]. American presence on the inside.

Mrs. CLINTON. It was considered robust in the sense that the request had been for five Diplomatic Security officers to accompany the Ambassador. There were five there. And they did, as I have testified to, the very best they could. They were armed.

And in the course of the thorough investigation conducted by the Accountability Review Board, as I was saying, Admiral Mullen zeroed in on this, having, you know, more than 40 years' experience in the military. And he wanted to know why the DS agents had not fired their weapons. And they explained, as many since have heard who have interviewed them, their assessment was that it would have resulted in the loss of even——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Greater life, and they chose not to. And Admiral Mullen reached the conclusion that they acted appropriately.

So, even though we had the five DS agents that had been requested, they were overrun and unable to do more than they did.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. They were overrun because they didn't have any defensive positions to fight from because they refused to give them additional sandbags because they did not want it to look like a military compound. I have heard that testimony.

I want to ask you about the FEST. Are you familiar with the FEST?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. What is the FEST, Madam Secretary?

Mrs. CLINTON. It is an emergency support team to help stand up embassies that have or consulates or other facilities that have been impacted by either natural disasters or some kind of——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Attacks.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Attacks. Exactly.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Kidnapping. And where are they located?

Mrs. CLINTON. They are located in the United States.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. At Langley Air Force Base?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm not sure of where they're located now.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. They are there. And it is an interagency task force.

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. It includes the FBI, I guess the DOD, and the State Department?

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And if you look at the State Department Web site, FEST comes up under that, so I am assuming that you are the lead in those agencies.

Mrs. CLINTON. It's an interagency effort.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Okay. But it was deployed in 1998 in Kenya, correct——

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND [continuing]. After the embassy bombing there, of the towers?

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And to Tanzania, correctly?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. They were there, ready to go on short notice. They said they could have been ready in 4 hours to leave.

This is the group of people that would go into a situation as you describe, when an embassy had been overrun, attacked, kidnapping, or whatever, to basically give guidance to any of the other forces or help that was coming in, correct?

And I know that your staff—and we have a number of emails from your staff that originally recommended that you send the FEST team. And I think they may have talked to Mr. Sullivan, or it was somebody that got an email, and they said they would pass it up the chain.

And somebody made the decision not to send the FEST team, which would have been, as Secretary of State, I would think, since it was a State Department-led mission, that that would have been the first thing that you would have wanted to get out. But, instead, if I understand correctly from the email chain, your first request was to see how soon the FBI could get over there. Is that a true statement?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, the FEST went to East Africa to help rebuild our embassy capacity. They have expertise in, you know, once our two embassies were bombed, how do we regain communications, for example. We were not going to rebuild in Benghazi, so there was no reason to send a FEST team.

There was a reason to try to get the FBI investigators into Benghazi as soon as it was safe for them to go, so they could start to try to build a case so we could bring the perpetrators of the attack to justice. That was absolutely the primary goal that we had in working with the FBI.

And I think, you know, when we make a decision on a deployment of the FEST, it is not just the Secretary of State. In this case, there was the NSC involved, there was the CIA involved, there was a SVTC about it. And the considered conclusion was we're not going to rebuild in Benghazi. So, yes, we didn't send the FEST.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, that was a quick decision to make that night, that you were not going to rebuild in Benghazi. That was pretty——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, the FEST would not—there was nothing to rebuild. There was——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I understand, but you just mentioned all the agencies that would have been important to get on the ground as quick as possible and summarize what the situation was to give you that direction.

But I know I am out of time, Mr. Chairman, but I do want to say: What Ms. Roby was trying to get you to say is what decisions did you make in regard to Benghazi and what were you responsible to make. And I think that is what all of us want to know. What

did you do, and what decisions did you make? And you said everybody else is responsible for everything else. What were you responsible for?

Mrs. CLINTON. I was responsible for sending Chris Stevens to Benghazi as an envoy. I was responsible for supporting a temporary mission that we were constantly evaluating to determine whether it should become permanent in Benghazi. I was responsible for recommending Chris Stevens to be the Ambassador. I was responsible for working on the policy both before and after the end of the Qadhafi regime.

I was responsible for quite a bit, Congressman. I was not responsible for specific security requests and decisions. That is not something I was responsible for.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Schiff.

Mr. SCHIFF. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, we are now almost at the end of the second round of questions, and I find it necessary to amend something that I said after the first round, and that is: I don't understand the core theory of this case. I thought I did, but, after this round, I honestly don't understand where my colleagues are coming from.

I am probably not as good a lawyer, undoubtedly not as good a prosecutor as our chairman. Most of what we have gone over in this round, frankly, were questions that were asked to you when you testified before the House the last time, before you testified before the Senate; they were the subject of the ARB report. But there were a few unique lines of questioning that I want to comment and ask you about.

One of my colleagues spent his time asking about some of your interactions with your press people, I guess critiquing your overall Libya strategy and something he called the "Clinton doctrine."

We have been assured this committee, contrary to what Representative McCarthy said, is not about attacking you, but, frankly, I don't see the relevance of any of those questions in terms of what actually happened in Benghazi, except as a means of trying to attack you or make a political statement regarding the presidential campaign.

And then there was the continuing preoccupation with Sidney Blumenthal. The chairman spent both panels asking you about Sidney Blumenthal. And I have to say, I just don't understand the preoccupation with Sidney Blumenthal. You would think, for the time we have spent on him, that he was in Benghazi on the night manning the barricades.

There is not a member on this dais that doesn't have friends they have known for a long time that send them unsolicited emails, and we are too polite to write back saying, you know, "This really isn't all that helpful." There is not a member here that hasn't had that experience. So I don't know why that is so remarkable.

So I honestly don't understand this fixation, but I do know one thing about Sidney Blumenthal. It has been abundantly clear here today: My seven colleagues do not want the American people to read what he said in his deposition.

And I will tell you, it is not because of anything he said. What they really don't want the American people to see is what they asked. And it was what Ranking Member Cummings intimated, which is they have gone on national TV to say, "We are not interested in the foundation, we are not interested in all these other things. We are only interested in whether we have gotten everything." But when you read that deposition, you see, that is exactly what they were interested in.

Now, I can't release it myself, but I can tell you Sidney Blumenthal by the numbers. So here is Sidney Blumenthal by the numbers.

Republicans asked more than 160 questions about Mr. Blumenthal's relationship and communications with the Clintons, but less than 20 questions about the Benghazi attacks.

Republicans asked more than 50 questions about the Clinton Foundation, but only four questions about security in Benghazi.

Republicans asked more than 270 questions about Mr. Blumenthal's alleged business activities in Libya, but no questions about the U.S. presence in Benghazi.

And Republicans asked more than 45 questions about David Brock, Media Matters—I have no idea what that is even—and affiliated entities but no questions—no questions—about Ambassador Stevens and other U.S. personnel in Benghazi.

That's Sidney Blumenthal by the numbers.

Now, there were a couple lines of questioning that I did understand. One of them was about the Accountability Review Board report. Now, not the one, actually, that is relevant to today about Benghazi, but the one that was written 17 years ago about a different attack in Tanzania.

And Mr. Pompeo put up a very nice chart—they've got great exhibits—selectively quoting from that report. And the implication was that the Secretary should be the one deciding the security at every facility around the world.

What he didn't read to you was part of the same section of that report, which says, "In the process, the Secretary should reexamine the present organizational structure with the objective of assuring that a single high-ranking officer is accountable for all protective security matters and has the authority necessary to coordinate on the Secretary's behalf."

Quite a different impression you get from reading the whole thing.

We had a debate about whether we should participate in this committee, given where it was going and where it has been. Mr. Cummings said we should so we could be in the room to point out when a witness wasn't treated fairly. I have to say, I think he was right, as much as I held the opposite opinion.

But it is important to be able to point out, if they are not going to give you the actual report or give you the time to read it, where they want to be selective to make a point. Now, I don't think that selectively quoting that 17-year-old ARB sheds much light on what happened in Benghazi, but it is a nice way to attack you.

I also want to talk a bit about something that I spent a lot of time on as the ranking on Intel and as a member of the investigation that the Intelligence Committee did. That was a Republican-

led investigation. Two of my colleagues here are on the same committee, went through the same investigation.

And my colleagues have intimated that there was an effort to spin what happened. And they have neglected to point out—as you might imagine and as you well know—that the intelligence we got after an attack like this in the fog of war—initially, you believe one thing, and then you get more information and you understand something better, and then you get more and you understand still something better. And we were briefed by the Director of the CIA at the time. I wish he were here today. And our understanding kept evolving.

And, in the beginning, we got it wrong. And I have looked through that. And, in that initial intelligence, within a few hours, there were some reports indicating it was a direct attack, as you told the Egyptian Prime Minister at the time. That was what was understood in the immediate hours.

Mr. SCHIFF. Within 24 hours, though, we had intelligence, both open source and signals intelligence, that there was a protest, that the protest was hijacked, and that it became an attack. And your statements were indicative and reflective of what we knew then. It wasn't until about a week or 10 days later when we actually got the videos from the compound that we learned definitively there was no protest.

Well, that simple chronology sheds a lot of light on why you and Ambassador Rice said what you did at the time. Not a member here has shown anything you have said or the Ambassador said that was at all inconsistent with what our intelligence agencies told us exactly at the time.

It may come of interest to some of my colleagues who are not on Intelligence to know that there are still a great many people in the intelligence community that believe the video was part of the motivation of some who attacked us on that night.

I wish, frankly, we spent more time giving you an accurate representation of the documents and the reports and the facts instead of making an effort to demagogue on this. I find it fascinating, frankly, that my colleagues put so much reliance in the 17-year-old Accountability Review Board report, but they place no weight in the one actually about Benghazi.

Thomas Pickering has 40 years of experience. There is probably no one in the diplomatic corps more respected. Admiral Mullen, the other co-chair, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, someone the Republicans and Democrats both respected tremendously. Are we now to believe that they are a bunch of rubes? That they had the wool pulled over their eyes? Or that they were corrupt or incompetent? Why is their report of so little value?

It's hard for me to escape the conclusion that the one centric fact of them all is that you are running for President and with high poll numbers. And that's why we are here. And I say all this because I never want to see this happen again. I don't want four years from now or eight years from now or 12 years from now, another presidential election, for us to be in here, or for one side or the other, I don't want the Republicans to say, "Let's do Benghazi again, that really worked," or the Democrats to say, "They did it to us, let's do

it to them." And I think, frankly, by only pointing these things out, that's the only way we are going to avoid having this happen again.

Well, let me just ask you, on that 17-year-old ARB, and in light of Mr. Morell, who came in and talked to us—not about the security at the diplomatic facility, but at the CIA Annex—his testimony was, "All of the improvements to the security of Benghazi base, the idea to conduct an assessment, the assessment itself, the implementation of its recommendations, were all done without the knowledge and direction of the Director and I. It happened exactly where it should have happened which is in that security office."

The same view on the CIA's part, which they are not here, but would you like to comment on what the full recommendation of the Tanzania ARB was and the very similar process used in our intelligence agencies?

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you very much, Congressman Schiff, and I think you make an excellent point. I'm aware of Deputy Director Morell's testimony. It's very similar to what I have said here. It is very similar to what I believe General Petraeus would have said had he come before you, that the issues about security, whether we are talking State Department or we are talking CIA or any other agency, are not made at the level of Secretary, Director; it is made at the appropriate level of the security professionals. And I think what Mike Morell told you in the Intelligence Committee investigation, you would hear from anyone in the government at a high level who has to deploy Americans around the world.

We see that with the Defense Department. You know, we see breaches of security on our military bases. And we know that everybody is struggling to get it right. And as I have said, in the vast majority of cases, our security professionals do. And then, unfortunately, there are instances where they do not. And that's why we have after-action reports or why we have the Accountability Review Board to look at what happened and try to learn from it. And going all the way back to Tehran and Beirut and East Africa and the 100 attacks on facilities around the world since 2001, we have tried to learn and apply those lessons, and we will, I hope, continue doing so.

Mr. SCHIFF. Thank you, Madam Secretary. I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman yields back.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman form Ohio, Mr. Jordan.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Clinton, just a couple of minutes ago, you said some of you have raised the video. Raised the video? You raised the video. At 10:08, on September 11, 2012, you raised the video. At 10:08, with Americans still fighting for their lives an hour and a half before the attack ends, you raised the video.

I'm going to go back to that 10:08 statement. In our first round, you said that the statement was not meant to explain the type of attack or the cause of the attack.

Let's look at your statement. "Official press statement from the Department of State, statement on the attack in Benghazi, press statement, Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State, Washington, D.C., September 11, 2012. Twelve sentences in this statement. I'm going to focus on the one: "Some have sought to justify

this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the Internet." There's a cause. There's the motive presented there. And there's only one motive. You say this, you say: "Inflammatory material caused vicious behavior." Vicious behavior, vicious behavior that led and resulted in the deaths of four Americans. There sure seems to be cause there.

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, may I read what I said? What I said is that: "I condemn in the strongest terms the attack on our mission in Benghazi today. As we work to secure our personnel and facilities we have confirmed that one of our State Department officers was killed. We are heartbroken by this terrible loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and those who have suffered in this attack. This evening, I called Libyan President Magariaf to coordinate additional support to protect Americans in Libya. President Magariaf expressed his condemnation and condolences and pledged his government's full cooperation. Some have sought to justify this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material posted on the internet. The United States deplores any intentional effort to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. Our commitment to religious tolerance goes back to the very beginning of our nation, but let me be clear: There is never any justification for violent acts of this kind. In light of the events of today, the United States government is working with partner countries around the world to protect our personnel, our missions, and American citizens worldwide."

Mr. JORDAN. Right. And I'm asking. You said the first round there was no motive, no cause. You weren't trying to explain the cause of the attack. It sure seems to me like you did.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, what I——

Mr. JORDAN. You said, you presented "inflammatory material was the reason for the vicious behavior." Is that not a cause and effect?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's not what it says. What I said was, "some have sought"——

Mr. JORDAN. I know what you said. You read the whole thing.

Mrs. CLINTON. I did.

Mr. JORDAN. I'm asking about that one sentence because earlier you said it wasn't, there was no cause, no motive presented. I think there was. And that's what I think most of the American people thought.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I know there was a great deal of news coverage that looked at the events in Cairo, looked at what happened in Benghazi, and drew some comparisons and maybe even connections. I know, as we have just heard from Congressman Schiff, there was a lot of fast-moving analysis by the intelligence community to try to make sense of all of this, and I can only tell you from the perspective of having been in the——

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton, hang on one second. If—the intelligence may have changed some, but your story didn't. That's the point. Privately, and privately your story was much different than it was publicly.

Again, you said to the Egyptian Prime Minister: We know the attack in Libya had nothing to do with the film. It was a planned attack, not a protest. You said to your family: Terrorists killed two

of our good people. So your story privately is much different than what you are telling the American people. The intelligence may have changed, the video may have had an impact in other places, but in Benghazi, it didn't. And you tried to put them all together. That's what bothers us. Let me show you a slide here.

This is from September 14. The first statement is by Jay Carney: "Let's be clear these protests were a reaction to a video that had spread to the region. We have no information to suggest that Benghazi was a preplanned attack."

The statement below is from your press person in Libya, sends to Greg Hicks and to the experts in the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau, the same people who said Susan Rice was off the reservation—off the reservation on five networks. Here's what they get, here is what she says to them: "Benghazi, more a terrorist attack than a protest. We want to distinguish"—distinguish—"not conflate the events. This was a well-planned attack." So again, privately, the experts in the Near Eastern Affairs Bureau, the experts in Libya, know that this was a well-planned attack, but publicly Jay Carney is saying the same thing you are saying publicly: We have no information that this was preplanned. This was caused by a video.

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, the next morning, at 9:59, I gave another statement and I listened carefully to what you said, and you kept talking about cause. Well, the word "cause" is not in my statement of the night before.

Mr. JORDAN. I'm referring to what you said to me in our first exchange 2 hours ago.

Mrs. CLINTON. No, well, I'm sorry, Congressman, if I haven't been clear, I will try to be clearer. I was talking about people throughout the region trying to justify attacks on our facilities, as we saw later in the week, and justifying their behavior and repeating it and using the fact of the video, not only to arouse crowds, as we saw in the video clips that the ranking member played, but also that would deter governments from coming to our rescue because they would be, perhaps, ambivalent about doing so. So you're right, I mentioned the video because I feared what would happen, and in fact, it did happen. And in the next morning, the night before was a brief statement that we put out because we knew we had lost Sean Smith, and I felt an obligation to tell that to the American people.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Secretary.

Mrs. CLINTON. The next morning, I gave a much longer statement, and it was very clear: Heavily armed militants assaulted the compound and set fire to our buildings. That's what it says.

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton, that's all good, but you said you were trying to communicate to folks all over, all the folks you have around the Middle East, right?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes. I was trying to send a message, yes.

Mr. JORDAN. Okay, I got it. But that's not what the experts said. They said: Don't conflate the events. Tell the truth about Benghazi. Talk about what happened there. Other places where the video may have had impact, fine, say that.

Why did you put them all together when you didn't do that privately? When you told your family about Benghazi, it was: Terror-

ists killed two of our people. When you talked to the Libyan President: Ansar al-Sharia did it. Al Qaeda did it. When you talked to the Egyptian Prime Minister, we know it's not a film. We know it's not a protest. We know it's not a video. It's a terrorist attack.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I was working off the information that we had which was that Ansar al-Sharia claimed responsibility. And, at that point, I did say that it was an Al Qaeda-related group.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Secretary, look at the difference in these two statements. One says it wasn't a preplanned attack. That's Jay Carney talking publicly. The other says from your experts in Libya, says it was a well-planned attack. Now, they could not be further apart. They could not be. That's what I'm having a hard time figuring out.

And you know what's interesting, the date of this, 9–14–12, 9–14–12. Do you know what else happened on the 14th, September 14? There's another document that is kind of important. That's the same day that Ben Rhodes drafted his talking points memo. Bullet point No. 2: To underscore that these protests are rooted in an Internet video, not a broader failure of policy because we couldn't have Libya, your baby, as Mr. Roskam pointed out earlier, we couldn't have that fail. Can't have that. So the same day you have got Jay Carney saying, this was no way a preplanned attack and the experts in Libya, talking Greg Hicks and the Near Eastern Affairs people, are saying it was a well-planned attack, that same day, the talking points that gets Susan Rice ready for the Sunday shows: Make sure you focus on the video.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman——

Mr. JORDAN. Make sure you focus on the video, not about a broader policy failure. After all, we got an election coming in 50 some days.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I believe to this day the video played a role. I believe that the person we have——

Mr. JORDAN. But your experts didn't.

Mrs. CLINTON. There were many experts. If you look—you probably haven't had an opportunity to read the excellent report issued by the Democrats, but on September 13, the intelligence community issued its first thorough, fully coordinated assessment of what happened in Benghazi. It said, "We assess the attacks on Tuesday against the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi began spontaneously . . . The attacks began spontaneously following the protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo . . . Extremists with ties to Al Qaeda were involved in the attacks." There is no contradiction.

The protests because of the video——

Mr. JORDAN. Is there a contradiction——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. And those who were affiliated with Al Qaeda——

Mr. JORDAN. Is there a contradiction right here, Secretary Clinton?

Mrs. CLINTON. There is no contradiction, Congressman.

Mr. JORDAN. How about this contradiction: Well-planned attack. No preplanned attack. How about that?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mr. JORDAN. One of them is well planned; one of them isn't. Jay Carney says there was no preplanned attack, and the experts in Libya said it was a preplanned attack.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, the experts in Libya were among the experts looking at this and analyzing it. We went on the basis of the intelligence community, and they were scrambling to get all the information that they could. And, yes, the intelligence community assessment served as the basis for what Ambassador Rice said when she appeared on the Sunday show.

And on September 18, when the video footage arrived from the security cameras, the Deputy CIA Director has testified it was not until September 18 when the CIA received the Libyan Government's assessment of video footage that showed the front of the facility with no sign of protesters, that it became clear we needed to revisit our analysis. And then, after they looked at the video footage and FBI reporting from interviews of personnel on the ground in Benghazi during the attacks, the CIA changed its assessment. And that was explained thoroughly in the bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, which did a very thorough job, Congressman.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman yields back.

Madam Secretary, I think we're going to take a quick 10-minute break. Two of my colleagues throughout the day have asked for 10 seconds. I've had a third colleague ask for 10 seconds. If she holds it to 10 seconds, I will give the gentlelady from Alabama 10 seconds.

Mrs. ROBY. I just wanted to point out that the ranking member is actually incorrect. The August 17 memo that I was referring to in my last question we have not had the opportunity to discuss with Secretary Clinton and how it affected her decisions, and it was just declassified last week.

Chairman GOWDY. All right. With that, we will take a 10-minute break and come back.

[Recess.]

Chairman GOWDY. Welcome back, Madam Secretary.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Roskam.

Mr. ROSKAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, the other side of the aisle has admonished the Republicans for not having a theory. And let me tell you a little bit of a theory that I've developed from my reading and research and listening today, and it's this: That you initiated a policy to put the United States into Libya as the Secretary of State and you overcame a number of obstacles within the administration to advocate for military action, and you were successful in doing that.

Ultimately, the decision was the President's, as you acknowledge. But you were the prime mover. You were the one that was driving. You were even contemplating something called the Clinton doctrine. And you were concerned about image, you were concerned about credit, which is not something that is unfamiliar to people in public life.

But then I think something happened. And my theory is that after Qadhafi's death, and essentially a victory lap, then I think your interest waned, and I think your attention waned. And I think

that the emails that Mrs. Brooks put forth, you had an answer, and that was, Look, I got a lot of information from a lot of different places. But I think you basically gave a victory lap, sort of a mission accomplished quote in October 30, 2011, in The Washington Post.

This is what you said, and this is very declarative: "We set into motion a policy that was on the right side of history, on the right side of our values, on the right side of our strategic interests in the region." It has all of the feel of a victory lap. But there was a problem. And the problem, Madam Secretary, was that there were storm clouds that were gathering, and the storm clouds that were gathering was a deteriorating security situation in Benghazi.

And you had a lot to lose if Benghazi unraveled. If Libya unraveled you had a lot to lose, based on the victory lap, based on the Sunday shows, based on the favorable accolades that were coming. If it went the wrong direction, it would be on you, and if it was stable and it was the right direction, you were the beneficiary of that.

So the question is, how is it possible that these urgent requests that came in, how did they not break through to the very upper levels of your inner circle, people who are here today, people who served you? How did those requests from two ambassadors, Ambassador Cretz and Ambassador Stevens, that came in on these dates, June 7, June 9, July 19, August 2, and March 28, all of 2012, how is it possible that those didn't break through?

You've told us that that wasn't your job, basically. You said, I'm not responsible. But here's my theory. I think that this is what was going on: That to admit a need for more security was to admit that there was deteriorating situation, and to admit a deteriorating situation didn't fit your narrative of a successful foreign policy.

Where did I get that wrong?

Mrs. CLINTON. From the very beginning you got it wrong, Congressman. Look, we knew that Libya's transition from the brutal dictatorship of Qadhafi, which basically destroyed or undermined every institution in the country, would be challenging, and we planned accordingly. We worked closely with the Libyan people, with our allies in Europe, with partners in the region to make sure that we tried to get in position to help the Libyan people.

And, yes, the volatile security environment in Libya complicated our efforts, but we absolutely—and I will speak for myself—I absolutely did not forget about Libya after Qadhafi fell. We worked closely with the interim government, and we offered a wide range of technical assistance. We were very much involved in helping them provide their first parliamentary elections. That was quite an accomplishment.

A lot of other countries that were post-conflict did not have anything like the positive elections Libya did. In July of 2012, the transitional government handed over power to a new General National Congress in August. We were doing everything we could think of to help Libya succeed. We tried to bolster the effectiveness of the interim government.

We worked very hard to get rid of the chemical weapons, coordinating with the transition Libyan authorities, with the U.N., and

others. And by February of 2014, we had assisted in destroying the last of Qadhafi's chemical weapons.

We were combating the spread of shoulder-shoulder—anti-aircraft shoulder-fired missiles because of the danger that they posed to commercial aircraft. And we were providing assistance, some of which I discussed earlier with Congresswoman Roby. We had humanitarian assistance. We brought people for health to Europe and for—and to the United States.

But much of what we offered, despite our best efforts—we had the Prime Minister come to Washington in the spring of 2012—much of what we offered was difficult for the Libyans to understand how to accept.

I traveled, as you know, to Libya and met there, I stayed in close touch with Libya's leaders throughout the rest of my time as Secretary. Both of my deputies went there. We talked with the Libyan leadership frequently by phone from Washington and communicated regularly, as I have said, with our team based in Tripoli. And all of this was focused on trying to help stand up a new interim government. And we were making progress on demilitarization, demobilization, trying to reintegrate militia fighters into something resembling a security force and on securing loose weapons.

I think it's important to recognize—and, of course, I was ultimately responsible for security. I took responsibility for what happened in Benghazi. What my point——

Mr. ROSKAM. What does that mean when you say, "I took responsibility"? When Mr. Westmoreland asked you that question, you said, what, contracting and so forth? So when you say you were responsible for something, Madam Secretary, what does that mean? If you're responsible, what action would you have done differently? What do you own as a result of this?

So far I've heard since we've been together today, I've heard one dismissive thing after another. It was this group. It was that group. I wasn't served by this. I wasn't served by that. What did you do? What do you own?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I was just telling you some of the many related issues I was working on to try to help the Libyan people make——

Mr. ROSKAM. What's your responsibility to Benghazi? That's my question.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, my responsibility was to be briefed and to discuss with the security experts and the policy experts whether we would have a post in Benghazi, whether we would continue it, whether we would make it permanent. And as I've said repeatedly throughout the day, no one ever recommended closing the post in Benghazi.

Mr. ROSKAM. No one recommended closing, but you had two ambassadors that made several requests. And here's basically what happened to their requests: They were torn up. They were dismissed.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that's just not true, Congressman.

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Secretary, they didn't get through. It didn't help them. Were those responded to? Is that your testimony today?

Mrs. CLINTON. Many were responded to. There were affirmative responses to a number of requests for additional security.

Mr. ROSKAM. And you laid this on Chris Stevens, didn't you? You said earlier, he knows where to pull the levers. So aren't you implying that it's his responsibility to figure out how he's supposed to be secure, because Chris Stevens knows how to pull the levers? Is that your testimony?

Mrs. CLINTON. Ambassadors are the ones who pass on security recommendations and requests. That's true throughout the world.

Mr. ROSKAM. And when he does and they're not responded to, what's his——

Mrs. CLINTON. They too—they too rely on their security professionals.

Mr. ROSKAM. What's his remedy if they're not responded to? What's his remedy if it's no?

Mrs. CLINTON. As I testified earlier, he was in regular email contact with some of my closest advisers.

Mr. ROSKAM. So hit resend, is that it?

Mrs. CLINTON. He was in regular email contact and cable contact with a number of other——

Mr. ROSKAM. The cables didn't get through. You created an environment, Madam Secretary, where the cables couldn't get through. Now——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that is—that is inaccurate. Cables, as we have testified, and as I responded——

Mr. ROSKAM. They didn't get through to you. They didn't break into your inner circle. That was your testimony earlier. You can't have it both ways. You can't say all this information came in to me and I was able to process it, and yet it all stops at the security professionals.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that's not what I——

Mr. ROSKAM. Let me turn your attention——

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, that's not what I was saying. I think we've tried to clarify that, you know, millions of cables come in. They're processed and sent to the appropriate offices and personnel. With respect to specific——

Mr. ROSKAM. They didn't get through. They didn't make any difference. They couldn't break into the inner circle of decisionmaking.

Now, let me draw your attention, in closing, to testimony that you gave before the House Foreign Affairs Committee in January 2013. And you said some wonderful things about Ambassador Stevens, similar to what you've said in your opening statement today. And they were words that were warm and inspirational and reflecting on his bravery.

But I think in light of the facts that have come out since your testimony, and I think in light of things that the committee has learned, he's even braver than you acknowledged. In January 2013, this is what you said to Congress: "Nobody knew the dangers or the opportunities better than Chris. During the first revolution, then during the transition, a weak Libyan government, marauding militias, even terrorist groups, a bomb exploded in the parking lot of his hotel. He never wavered. He never asked to come home. He never said let's shut it down, quit, or go somewhere else. Because

he understood that it was pivotal for America to be represented in that place at that time."

Secretary Clinton, I think you should have added this: Chris Stevens kept faith with the State Department that I headed even when we broke faith with him. He accepted my invitation to serve in Benghazi even though he was denied the security he implored us to give him. I and my colleagues were distracted by other matters and opportunities and ambitions, and we breached our fundamental duty to mitigate his danger and secure his safety and that of Glen Doherty, Sean Smith, and Tyrone Woods.

That would be more accurate, wouldn't you say, Secretary Clinton?

Mrs. CLINTON. Of course I would not say that, and I think that it's a disservice for you to make that statement, Congressman. And it's a——

Mr. ROSKAM. Who does it disserve?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it is a disservice of how hard the people who are given the responsibility of making these tough security decisions attempted to——

Mr. ROSKAM. The people that were disciplined? Did they keep faith with Chris Stevens? No.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Chris Stevens was someone who had a commitment to our presence in Libya.

Mr. ROSKAM. There is no question.

Mrs. CLINTON. And we want to honor that by continuing——

Mr. ROSKAM. There is no question.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. To do what we can to support the Libyan people's transition. It is very much, in my view, in America's interest to continue to try to do so.

Mr. ROSKAM. I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. Gentleman's time has expired.

The chair will now recognize the gentlelady from Illinois, Ms. Duckworth.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, I just want to talk a little bit more about what has been done for embassy personnel security, diplomatic personnel security since then. My understanding is in Benghazi there were some security improvements that were made. Could you talk about some of those, both prior to the attacks as well as some of the things, that perhaps you sort of alluded to, with more ventilation in the safe rooms and some of those things?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yeah. There were a number of security improvements that were made to the facility. Again, there was an emphasis on trying to buttress the outer walls, to try to, you know, create a more effective guard entrance. There was an effort to try to make sure that the facility itself was hardened so that it could withstand attacks if that came to pass.

It was in a series of decisions made by the security professionals. In November of 2011, our people in Benghazi said they needed to hire additional local guards. Money was approved that day. In December of that year, they asked for money to buy jersey barriers. The funds were sent by the end of the week.

In January of 2012, the RSO, meaning a regional security officer, requested that all personnel deploying to Tripoli and Benghazi for

more than 30 days complete the specialized Foreign Affairs Counter Threat training course, which was soon implemented.

Also in January 2012, they asked for money for sandbags, security lights, steel door upgrades, drop arm reinforced car barriers that was promptly sent. Later that month they were sent extra helmets, bulletproof vests, and a WMD response equipment.

In February 2012, they requested support for a major renovation of the walls surrounding the complex, including making the walls higher, adding concertina wire, laying barbed wire. That project was completed.

In March 2012, they asked to construct two extra guard positions. That was completed. In April 2012, they needed help from experts in technical security. And, by May, a special team visited to enhance security equipment and security lighting. In June 2012, following the IED incident, immediately a regional team was sent to enhance the perimeter and additional funding was approved for more guards.

In July 2012, they said that they needed a minimum of three American security officers in Benghazi from then on through July, August, and September. They always had three, four, or five American DS agents overseeing the expanded contingent of Libyan guards on site.

Those are just some of the requests and the affirmative responses, Congresswoman, that were provided specifically for Benghazi.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you.

We know that short of putting people in bunkers and never allowing them outside of embassy compounds, we're going to have some sort of a threat to our diplomatic personnel security. I mean, obviously it was not enough. What I'd like to know is, in light of that, what efforts have been put in to provide for contingency operations, especially for known potentially volatile periods in the calendar year? September 11 comes through every year; 2016, September 11 is probably going to be an especially volatile time period.

So can you talk a little bit about what you have done or what you've put into place and any difficulties you may have come across in coordinating with DOD, the intelligence agencies, others across the government?

Is there a—know this is not a secure room so we can't talk about things that are classified. But, you know, September 11 is coming. Prior to that week, are we moving aircraft carriers nearby? Are we putting an air wing on a 6-hour leash with, you know, one lift of aircraft on a 2-hour leash? What are we doing? Do we have FAST teams and FEST teams gearing up ready to go? What is going on in light of the lessons learned at Benghazi, and what did you personally direct to take charge—to happen, especially at your level of interagency cooperation?

Mrs. CLINTON. It's an excellent question, and it's really at the heart of what I hope will come out of this and the prior investigations.

In December of 2014, Assistant Secretary Starr from the State Department testified before the select committee that 25 of the 29 recommendations made by the ARB had been completed. And a September 2013 inspector general's report noted that the ARB rec-

ommendations were made in a way that was quickly taken seriously and that I took charge directly of oversight for the implementation process.

Here's some examples. More Diplomatic Security and DOD personnel are on the ground at our facilities today. We have increased the skills and competency for our Diplomatic Security agents by increasing the training time in the high-threat course. We've expanded the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat course so that the skills are shared by not just the Diplomatic Security agents, but people like Chris Stevens and Sean Smith as well.

We've also been working hard to up the interagency cooperation. The interagency security teams that you asked about earlier, Congresswoman, that's a continuing commitment that we are working on. And I know, because of this terrible tragedy, DOD is much more focused on what needs to be thought through with respect to planning and reaction.

You know, we had problems in the past with the pastor from Florida, Terry Jones, inciting riots and protests that resulted in the deaths of people, including U.N. and others who were stationed in Afghanistan. And so we're trying to stay in very close touch between the State Department and DOD.

In that case, Secretary Gates actually called him and asked him, please, not to get involved in what he was doing because it was dangerous to our troops and our civilians. Unfortunately, you know, he has a mind apparently of his own.

So we are trying to have a closer coordinated planning and response effort.

With respect to your specific questions that are really within the purview of the Department of Defense, like the deployment of certain Navy vessels, air wings, and the like, I think that DOD is trying hard to think about how particularly in North Africa and the Middle East they can respond, because, you know, one of the—one of the claims that was made that was proven to be untrue was that DOD withheld sending air support. And indeed the closest air support that would have been in any way relevant was too far away. So they're trying to think about how they better deploy and station various assets so that they can have a quicker response time.

I've not been involved intimately in this now for, you know, two years, I guess more than two years, so I can't speak directly, but I know that this was part of the important work that was underway when I left.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. You spoke about you—thank you—you spoke about making personal phone calls to ask for help from the heads of local government, and you spoke a lot about the power of the chief of the mission, the trust that you put into these professionals that are there. So when an embassy comes under attack, especially after this Benghazi attack, from this time forward, do ambassadors, do they need to call you to ask for help from other agencies of the U.S. Government?

Or do they have the ability, if there's a DOD—you know, if there is a CIA or DOD force nearby, a Marine FAST team, for example, does the ambassador have to come through security, or do they need to call you to have you call for that? How does that work?

Mrs. CLINTON. No. And there's an example out of the Benghazi attack. There was a preexisting understanding between the diplomatic compound and the CIA Annex, and there was no need for anybody at the compound to call Washington to alert the CIA Annex. They immediately contacted the CIA Annex and, you know, they sprang into action to try to come to the assistance of our team at the compound.

So we're trying to have more preexisting arrangements like that, and that goes to your question. If there are assets in the region, how do we plan for contingencies so that they can be immediately triggered and try to respond.

You know, I, obviously, spoke to the White House, I spoke to General Petraeus, I spoke to, you know, lots of other people that evening trying to get whatever help we could get. We did get a surveillance plane above the location, but it took some time to get there. It had to be diverted——

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Unarmed drone. I'm sorry, it was an unarmed drone, correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, it was unarmed. It was on our——

Ms. DUCKWORTH. UAV.

Mrs. CLINTON. Yeah. UAV, right.

So we asked for everything we could get, and everybody immediately tried to provide it. But I think now there's more awareness that maybe we should be doing these scenarios ahead of time to try to figure out what could be done without having to, you know, reinvent it every time.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Thank you.

I'm out of time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. I thank the gentlelady from Illinois.

The chair would now recognize the gentlewoman from Indiana.

Mrs. BROOKS. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I'm going to follow up on what the Congresswoman from Illinois is discussing, which is facility. And I appreciate the laundry list that you just listed with respect to the security improvements or whatever happened with respect to Benghazi.

But I have to ask you if you're familiar with the fact that in the wake of the 1998 bombing attacks in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam, Congress passed something referred to as SECCA, the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act, which requires the Secretary of State to issue a waiver under two conditions: If U.S. Government personnel work in separate facilities or if U.S. overseas facilities do not meet the security setback distances specified by the Bureau of Diplomatic Security.

The law specifies that only the Secretary of State may sign these waivers and that requirement is not to be delegated. Was a waiver issued for the temporary mission in Benghazi and the CIA Annex after the temporary mission compound was authorized through December of 2012, and did you sign that waiver, Madam Secretary?

Mrs. CLINTON. I think that the—the CIA Annex I had no responsibility for, so I cannot speak to what the decisions were with respect to the CIA Annex. That is something that I know other committees have——

Mrs. BROOKS. But you acknowledge you were responsible for the temporary mission compound?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, of course, but you put them together. I just wanted to clarify that I had no responsibility for the CIA Annex, obviously.

The compound in Benghazi was neither an embassy nor a consulate. Those are the only two facilities for which we would obtain a formal diplomatic notification, and those were the only kinds of facilities that we would have sought waivers for at the time because we were trying to, as has been testified to earlier, understand whether we were going to have a permanent mission or not.

That means you have to survey available facilities, try to find a secure facility, and the standards that are set by the interagency Overseas Security Policy Board are the goals we try to drive for. But it is very difficult, if not impossible, to do that in the immediate aftermath of a conflict situation.

The temporary mission in Benghazi was set up to try to find out what was going on in the area, to work with the CIA where appropriate, and to make a decision as to whether there would be a permanent facility. So we could not have met the goals under the Overseas Security Policy Board, nor could we have issued a waiver, because we had to set up operations in order to make the assessments as to whether or not we would have a permanent mission, whether that mission would remain open. And we made extensive and constant improvements to the physical security, some of which I mentioned before.

Mrs. BROOKS. Thank you. Madam Secretary, thank you.

So it is obvious that a waiver was not signed, and you've given a defense as to why a waiver was not signed, and it was temporary because it was made up. It was something different. The compound had never become official. And so therefore you did not sign a waiver, which when most of our people are stationed in such dangerous places—let me get into that with respect to the dangerous places.

We know that Libya, you've testified before, was incapable of providing host nation support, and that involves protecting our diplomats and other U.S. Government officials who travel there. So if the Libyan people didn't have a government capable of providing security and we didn't have U.S. military in Libya, then we have two options: We either leave when it gets too dangerous or the State Department makes sure that they provide that protection.

And I want to just chat with you a little bit about the fact that when Ambassador Stevens returned there in late May 2012, after being named the ambassador, less than 4 months later he was killed, but the number of violent attacks that occurred during that summer are off the charts. They're against Westerners.

I'd like you to refer to tab 6. It is a 51-page document prepared by your head security guy in Libya. For security incidents, serious security incidents between June 2011 and July 2012, 51 pages long, 235 significant security incidents, 235 attacks in one year. In Benghazi, there were 77 serious attacks in one year; 64 in 2012.

Now, let me just tell you, as I flip through this—and I'm not talking—Benghazi, as I showed earlier, it is a large city, about the size of D.C. or Boston. I'm not talking about violent attacks like everyday robberies, burglaries, holdups. I'm talking about assassination attempts and assassinations, bombings, kidnappings, attacks on the Red Cross. The Red Cross gave up and pulled out. The peo-

ple who always go in when disaster strikes, they pulled out. That doesn't include 20 other major incidents. Bombings on police departments, the courts.

Think about this: If you're in the city of Washington, D.C., or Boston, and we're now over in Benghazi and all of these types of bombings are happening and these security incidents are happening, there are hundreds more actually I could talk with you about, but, frankly, I don't have time.

I hope I've painted the picture, because I'm baffled. You sent Chris Stevens to Libya and to Benghazi, and granted, he never raised the flag and said, "I want out," and granted, he never said, "Shut down Benghazi," and I understand and appreciate that you deferred to him. But you also, Madam Secretary, we have no record of you ever talking to him, that you never talked to him personally after May of 2012 when you swore him in as our ambassador.

Am I wrong? Did you ever talk to Ambassador Stevens when all of this was going on in the hotbed of Libya?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mrs. BROOKS. That is a yes-or-no question, Madam Secretary. I'm sorry. Did you ever personally speak to Ambassador Stevens after—we don't know the answer—did you ever personally speak to him after you swore him in in May?

Mrs. CLINTON. I believe——

Mrs. BROOKS. Yes or no, please.

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I believe I did. But I——

Mrs. BROOKS. And when was that?

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't recall. And I want to clarify for the record that this document is about all of Libya, not just Benghazi. I don't want anybody to be misled.

Mrs. BROOKS. Absolutely, but 77 are about Benghazi.

Mrs. CLINTON. You know, Congresswoman, look, I appreciate, and I really do, the passion and the intensity of your feelings about this. We have diplomatic facilities in war zones. We have ambassadors that we send to places that have been bombed and attacked all the time. And——

Mrs. BROOKS. And you're their boss. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. You're right. You're right I am. And we——

Mrs. BROOKS. And you're their leader. Is that correct? And are there ever situations where you call them, where you bring them in, where you are personally caring and concerned and are letting them know that? Are there situations where you recall—and I'd like to know what the conversation was with Ambassador Stevens and what month it was with Ambassador Stevens, because there are no call logs with him. There's nothing from the Ops Center with him that we have found. We have no record that you had any conversations with the Ambassador after you swore him in and before he died, and you were his boss.

Mrs. CLINTON. I was the boss of ambassadors in 270 countries. I was the boss of ambassadors in places like Afghanistan, where shortly before I visited one time the embassy had been under brutal assault by the Taliban for hours. I am very well aware of the dangers that are faced by our diplomats and our development professionals. There was never a recommendation from Chris Stevens or anyone else to close Benghazi.

Now, sitting here in the comfort of this large, beautiful hearing room, it's easy to say, well, there should have been, somebody should have stood up and said do that. But that was not the case. And it is a very difficult choice with respect to any of these facilities given the level of threat and instability that we confront around the world today.

And it's deeply, deeply distressing when any of our facilities or our personnel are in danger. And we do and have done the best we can, and I think we can do better, which is why I implemented all of the ARB's recommendations, which we have barely talked about.

Mrs. BROOKS. And, Madam Secretary——

Mrs. CLINTON. And those were essential in trying to improve and better position and prepare and respond, and that's what we tried to do.

And, you know, I find it, you know, deeply, you know, saddening because, obviously, everyone, everyone who knew him, everyone who worked with him, including Libyans, as I said at the very beginning, would have given anything to prevent this from happening. Our security professionals usually, in fact more than 99-plus percent of the time, get it right.

Mrs. BROOKS. And, Madam Secretary, if we would have given anything, had you talked to him in July he would have told you that he had asked to keep the security in Libya that he had. He was told no by your State Department. We didn't give him everything. Thank you.

I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady is out of time. The witness may answer the question if she'd like to.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it's the same answer I've been giving all day. Chris Stevens had an opportunity to reach me directly anytime he thought there was something of importance. The people with whom he worked, the people who were around him and with him, they very well understood the dangers that they were confronting, and they did the best they could under the circumstances. And many of the security requests, as I just detailed, were agreed to; others weren't.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady from California is recognized.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you.

Madam Secretary, I want to begin by thanking you for your patience and your endurance during today's hearing. It's been quite a long day.

And I also want to begin by apologizing for my Republican colleagues who apparently either want to write your answers for you or testify for you, because I think it fits in better with their outlandish narratives of what happened.

And since they insist on criticizing you for not doing anything right, I want to talk to you a little bit more about a line of questioning that we pursued in the first round of questions. I asked you a little bit about what you were doing the night of the attacks in Benghazi, and I want to just continue that a little bit more.

Now, you said previously that you had spoken with the White House that evening, with the CIA, the Defense Department, and the State Department. You also spoke directly with people on the ground at the Embassy in Tripoli that night at around 7 p.m., and

I can tell from the documents that we've seen that you've asked—you asked to speak with deputy chief of mission in Tripoli.

Can you explain the purpose of that call and why you felt that was important?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, for a number of reasons. They were a source of information. They had their own sources on the ground that they were reaching out to, trying to gather additional insight into what happened, what provoked it, who was behind it.

But much more importantly even than that, they were in a great state of dismay and grief. And I thought it was important to speak with our team in Tripoli directly so that they knew that we were trying as best we could from so far away to help them and to help their colleagues.

We also had pushed to have an additional team of security officers fly from Tripoli, and really the embassy in Tripoli just took that on. They, in fact, probably came up with the idea and put it together and got the plane and sent more help on the way to Benghazi. But it was a very personal conversation between me and those who were in our embassy.

This is a place that I'd spent a lot of time and paid a lot of attention to, as I said earlier. We had to evacuate the embassy before, while Qadhafi was still in power. I talked to those people in our embassy family as they were on the ferry going from Tripoli back to Malta.

So we tried to, you know, engage with, listen to, and support our teams when they were facing these very difficult circumstances.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Now, this committee has interviewed your staff that was with you that evening of the attacks, your chief of staff, Cheryl Mills, and your deputy chief of staff, Jake Sullivan, and they explained that you personally participated in a secure video teleconference with senior officials from the intelligence community, the White House, and the Department of Defense.

Your chief of staff, Cheryl Mills, told the committee that your attendance at the deputies-level meeting broke with protocol and surprised other attendees, but that you simply said, "These are our people on the ground. Where else would I be?"

Why did you think that it was important for you to participate personally in that Deputies Committee meeting?

Mrs. CLINTON. The people who were on that SVTC were part of the operational decisionmaking, and I wanted to know firsthand from them what they were trying to do to help us, particularly DOD. Also the intelligence community, because at that time, as I recall, the CIA Annex had not yet come under attack, and we were trying to get all Americans out of Benghazi. We were trying to provide planes for evacuation.

So there was a lot of detail that was being worked out, and I wanted to be as hands-on as I could be, to know, number one, what all the other agencies were doing to help us, and what we could do to try to assist them in their efforts to get to Benghazi and do whatever was possible.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Were the participants surprised by your visit on the——

Mrs. CLINTON. Apparently they were, because they weren't expecting me to walk into the room and sit down at the table.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Do you think that your appearance on that teleconference conveyed to them how seriously you were taking the attacks and the response to the attacks?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sure it did, Congresswoman, but we'd been sounding the alarm and reaching out for several hours by then. And we were getting a very positive response from everyone. I knew——

Ms. SANCHEZ. From the Defense Department?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, the Defense Department, you know, the CIA. Obviously, the White House was deeply involved in reaching out and coordinating with us.

So we knew people were trying to help. There was never, ever any doubt about that. I just wanted to hear firsthand about their assessments of what they could do. Could they, could anybody get there in time? How were we going to evacuate the Americans?

And we were also still unsure of where our Ambassador was, which made all of this incredibly difficult for everybody in the State Department. We didn't know where he was. We didn't know whether he was alive. And it was shortly after that in the evening when we found out that he was not.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Your chief of staff also explained to this committee that you were concerned the night of the attacks, not only for the safety of your team in Benghazi, but also about your teams in Tripoli and elsewhere. She said this about you, "She was very concerned. She was also very determined that whatever needed to be done was done. And she was worried. She was worried not only about our team on the ground in Benghazi, but worried about our teams that were on the ground in Libya and our teams on the ground in a number of places given what we had seen unfold in Egypt."

Can you explain some of the context of the evening and why you were concerned, not just about what was happening in Benghazi, but the risk that Americans were at elsewhere?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that's exactly right. I was quite concerned about Tripoli because we didn't know if there would be coordinated attacks. We were still trying to gather information about who was behind what happened in Benghazi.

We, in the course of the conversations with our team on the ground in Tripoli, began to explore whether they should move from where they were in the place that was operating as our Embassy at that time to a more secure location. There were lots of considerations about what to do to keep our team in Tripoli safe.

And then, as I've testified earlier, we were very concerned about the impact of the video sparking unrest, attacks, violence in a wide swath of countries. It turned out that that was well-founded concern, as we saw the attacks and protests across the region all the way to India and Indonesia.

So there was a lot of effort being put into not only doing the immediate tasks before us in Benghazi and doing whatever we needed to do to keep our people in Tripoli safe, but beginning to talk through and prepare for what might happen elsewhere.

Ms. SANCHEZ. I want to switch line of questioning for just a second. I've got a couple minutes left.

Following the attacks on Benghazi but before the Accountability Review Board completed its work, you did a number of things to evaluate and improve security at overseas posts. This is even before the ARB had finished its investigation and issued its finding and recommendations. I know you've mentioned them multiple times today, but some of my colleagues appear to have amnesia about what you really accomplished.

So can you tell me about some of the steps that you took to implement in the State Department even before the ARB completed its work?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, although the ARB had not completed its own investigation, clearly, in the aftermath of Benghazi, we were doing our own evaluation of what had happened, what we knew about the circumstances, and what we needed to do to try to get ahead of any other potential problems.

One of the decisions that I made and discussed with General Dempsey and Secretary Panetta was how we could get more assistance from the Department of Defense. And in particular, we sent out teams to the high-threat posts that we had to get evaluations from those on the ground so that we would have a better idea of where there might be necessary upgrades to security that we could immediately try to act upon.

So we did begin a conversation with the Department of Defense, which I think it's fair to say, and as Admiral Mullen himself testified, sees the scope of the American diplomatic presence as beyond the capacity of the Defense Department to be responsive to. So we had to begin to first look at the high-threat posts, then we had to take the second layer about those that we think could become more dangerous going forward and really begin this process, which as I told Congresswoman Duckworth, I'm confident is still continuing because, you know, we can't get behind the curve in being able to predict where there might be problems in the future.

We had a perfect example of that in Yemen. You know, we kept the embassy open in Sana'a under some very difficult and dangerous circumstances for a very long time. We even moved it physically to a more well-defensed position. Thankfully, we have not had incidents resulting in American diplomats being killed, but it was a constant challenge to us.

And there are many other examples, like the one that Congressman Smith has raised twice, Peshawar, which is an incredibly dangerous high-threat post.

So what we tried to do is to close as best we could the relationship between State and DOD. So wherever DOD could help us, they would be prepared to factor that into their planning. And I was very grateful for their responsiveness.

Ms. SANCHEZ. We're grateful for yours. Thank you very much.

I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady yields back.

The chair will now recognize the gentlelady from Alabama, Mrs. Roby.

Mrs. ROBY. Secretary Clinton, I want to follow up on questions about the night of the attack and decisions made then.

You wrote in your book "Hard Choices"' that you were directing the State Department response the night of September 11, 2012,

but you also stated that you left your office on the night of the attacks and went to your home in Northwest Washington because you said you knew the next few days were going to be taxing and the Department was going to be looking to you.

I want to talk about a few things. Do you have a SCIF in your home?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I did.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. And who else was at your home? Were you alone?

Mrs. CLINTON. I was alone, yes.

Mrs. ROBY. The whole night?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, yes, the whole night.

Mrs. ROBY. I don't know why that's funny. I mean, did you have any in-person briefings? I don't find it funny at all.

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry, a little note of levity at 7:15. Noted for the record.

Mrs. ROBY. Well, I mean, the reason I say it's not funny is because it went well into the night when our folks on the ground were still in danger. So I don't think it's funny to ask you——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congresswoman——

Mrs. Roby [continuing]. If you were alone the whole night.

Mrs. CLINTON. Congresswoman, you asked if I had a SCIF. I had secure phones. I had other equipment that kept me in touch with the State Department at all times. I did not sleep all night. I was very much focused on what we were doing.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. Who was at your office when you left? Was Cheryl Mills, your chief of staff, still at the office when you left?

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't remember. I know that a lot of my staff were there.

Mrs. ROBY. I'm going to go through and name them, we'll see if you remember. Jake Sullivan, was he still there?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, when—yes, they were all there when I left. They were all there certainly when I left.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. Victoria Nuland was there when you left?

Mrs. CLINTON. When I left everyone was there, is my——

Mrs. ROBY. Philippe Reines was there?

Mrs. CLINTON. I can give you a blanket answer. When I left——

Mrs. ROBY. Well, no, I'm going to ask specifics. Was Patrick Kennedy there?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sure he was.

Mrs. ROBY. Was Philippe Reines there?

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't know. I don't know whether he was——

Mrs. ROBY. What about Stephen Mull?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sure that the core team at the State Department was still there.

Mrs. ROBY. Beth Jones?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sure she was.

Mrs. ROBY. And Bill Burns and Thomas Nides?

Mrs. CLINTON. I have no specific recollection of any of the names you've given me, because when I left I knew I would stay in touch, and I do not know how long anybody else stayed at the State Department.

Mrs. ROBY. What time did you learn that Sean Smith had died?

Mrs. CLINTON. That was earlier in the evening.

Mrs. ROBY. So that was before you left?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. And then what about Ambassador Stevens, was that before?

Mrs. CLINTON. It was before I left.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. And then what about his confirmation of his death, before or after you left?

Mrs. CLINTON. We knew that, yes.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. And what about the recovery of his body? Was that before or after you left?

Mrs. CLINTON. We got word that we had a sighting of——

Mrs. ROBY. Confirmation.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I'm trying to tell you what we knew and how we found out, because it was something that we were trying to determine and we had mixed signals about what we learned. And it was our understanding, and certainly by the time I left, that he was most likely not alive. But I'm not sure exactly when we were able to confirm that because it depended upon getting first-hand information from a Libyan contact.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. Where were you when you learned of the second attack? Were you at home or at the office?

Mrs. CLINTON. I was at home.

Mrs. ROBY. And did you go back to the State Department when you learned about the second attack or did you stay home?

Mrs. CLINTON. I stayed home. I went to the State Department early in the morning. The CIA Annex attack, as I recall, was, you know, late in the evening, early the next morning, by our time around 5 a.m. or so in Benghazi.

Mrs. ROBY. Did you meet with the President that night?

Mrs. CLINTON. I talked with the President. I did not meet with him.

Mrs. ROBY. How many times did you talk to the President?

Mrs. CLINTON. I talked to the President that evening. That was the only time I talked with him on the 11th, and then I went over to the White House the next morning.

Mrs. ROBY. So once. And do you recall what time you spoke to the President? You said that evening. Do you recall more specifically what time?

Mrs. CLINTON. I think it was late in the evening. I don't know exactly when.

Mrs. ROBY. What did you discuss?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry, what?

Mrs. ROBY. What specifically did you discuss with the President?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I don't usually talk about my discussions with the President, but I can tell you we talked about what had happened during the day. I thanked him for his very strong support because he made it absolutely clear that everyone was supposed to be doing all they could, particularly DOD, to assist us wherever possible, and I'm sure I thanked him for that.

Mrs. ROBY. What did he say to you?

Mrs. CLINTON. Again, I don't talk about the conversations I have with the President. We talked about the events of the day and his determination to do everything he could to try to help our people in Benghazi.

Mrs. ROBY. Did you meet with Secretary Panetta?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I did not.

Mrs. ROBY. Did you speak to Secretary Panetta?

Mrs. CLINTON. The next day.

Mrs. ROBY. Not on the 11th?

Mrs. CLINTON. No.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. Did you talk with General Dempsey?

Mrs. CLINTON. The next morning I did.

Mrs. ROBY. So you did not meet with him or talk with him on the 11th?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congresswoman, it wasn't necessary. Everybody was doing everything they could think of to do. It's one of the reasons I sat in on the SVTC.

Mrs. ROBY. I'm just trying to figure out if you did or you didn't.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I'm telling you, I sat in on the SVTC that Congresswoman Sanchez was asking me about because I wanted to talk to the operational people and they were represented on that SVTC. They were the ones who were carrying out the orders that they received from the President on down.

Mrs. ROBY. What about Petraeus? When did you speak to him?

Mrs. CLINTON. I spoke to Petraeus that afternoon because I knew that we had an agreement with the CIA Annex, and I spoke with him about an hour after finding out about the attack and after gathering information about what we thought was happening in Benghazi.

Mrs. ROBY. Did you—our surviving agents were evacuated to Tripoli the morning of the 12th. Did you talk to the survivors either that night or once they arrived in Tripoli?

Mrs. CLINTON. We did not speak to them directly. We obviously made arrangements for them to be safely evacuated and then to be transported to a hospital facility that we thought was safe from any potential attacks.

Mrs. ROBY. Did you talk to them the next day?

Mrs. CLINTON. No.

Mrs. ROBY. Did you talk to them later that week?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I did not.

Mrs. ROBY. Did you talk to them when they first got back to the United States?

Mrs. CLINTON. I did not talk to them until they had had an opportunity to be debriefed and to provide information that would help us understand what happened, help the intelligence community and help the FBI as they were trying to build their case, and——

Mrs. ROBY. How would it have harmed the case that was trying—that they were trying to build for you, Secretary of State, just to check in on their well-being?

Mrs. CLINTON. I did check on their well-being. I——

Mrs. ROBY. No. Personally.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I did personally talk with the people who were taking care of them, transporting them to Germany.

Mrs. ROBY. Them, the survivors, when did you talk to the survivors?

Mrs. CLINTON. I talked to the survivors when they came back to the United States, and one, who was for many months in Walter Reed, on the telephone.

Mrs. ROBY. Okay. And——

Mrs. CLINTON. You know——

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. Going back to Panetta and Dempsey, you had stated that they were the decisionmakers——

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. But you never spoke with them while your people were on the ground?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry.

Mrs. ROBY. I want to make sure this is clear. Panetta and Dempsey were the decisionmakers when it came to response. We've already talked about the FEST, so I'm not going to get back into that, but what I'm trying to clarify is that they were the decisionmakers, your people were on the ground in harm's way, and you never had a conversation with them.

Mrs. CLINTON. I did not need to. During the turmoil of that afternoon and into the evening, we knew the President had personally told them both in the Oval Office that he expected them to do everything they possibly could do. And I knew that they would then turn to those officers responsible for carrying out that order. They were represented on that SVTC. That's why I sat in it.

And remember, too, Congresswoman, we had a lot of other threats coming in. We were still worried about Cairo. We had——

Mrs. ROBY. Well, I understand, but you had your people on the ground that were being attacked.

I want to get back to the survivors in the little time I have left. Did you talk to the survivors directly at all——

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, I did.

Mrs. ROBY [continuing]. At any point? Can you tell us when?

Mrs. CLINTON. It was kind of a rolling series of conversations. When they came back to the State Department, I met with and talked with them. As you know, their names have never been made public. I don't intend to today.

Mrs. ROBY. Can you give me a month?

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry. What?

Mrs. ROBY. A month?

Mrs. CLINTON. It was—for some of them, it was less time than that, and for one of them, I did not—I talked with him on the phone. I did not get to physically see him until he'd been released from the hospital, and that was early in 2013.

Mrs. ROBY. I think, Mr. Chairman, there's two messages here. I think the first message is that—is the message that you sent to your personnel the night of the attack, that you went home. They all stayed there, and you didn't go back till the next morning. I think the second message that is sent is that you used the FBI's inquiry as an excuse not to check in with your agents who were on the ground who survived that horrible night just to ask them how they were.

And I yield back.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, if I could respond, Congresswoman. I think that, again, is part of a theory that you and your colleagues are attempting to weave.

It was made very clear that the FBI wanted a fresh and clean opportunity to speak with the survivors, which I totally understand, and, in fact, their investigation has led to the charging of at least one person, and I hope we find all of them and bring them to justice.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentlelady yields back.

The gentleman from Washington is recognized.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to start by pointing out that at this point, Secretary Clinton has testified here for longer than she did in the previous two testimonies on this subject combined. We've been here now for 9½ hours, and the questions are increasingly badgering; I would even go on to say increasingly vicious. And, again, we're hoping to elicit information that will help us learn what happened and learn how to prevent future attacks.

And it seems to me that really what the majority is doing is they simply wish to wear you down and hopefully get you to say something that they can then later use. I just—I don't see the utility of that. When the chairman returns, I'd be curious as to if we just plan on going all night continuing to badger the witness or if there is in fact an end point to this because I don't think it's fair to the witness to have to sit there for that long and go over intimate details.

I mean, I guess we learned whether or not you had a fax machine, so I guess that was useful. But, you know, "did you talk to this person," "did you talk to that person," "was this person there," "was the other person there." And, you know, let me just say, I'm very impressed by the number of answers you have and by the memory you have of all the details of this event, but I hope we will consider how much longer we're going to continue to do this.

And as to the last line of questioning, I mean, to imply that you didn't care about your personnel. How many countries, how many different embassies, different consulates did you visit during your time as Secretary of State, roughly? I know you don't know that off the top of your head.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, at least 112, and I think more than that because I sometimes visited the embassy itself plus the consulate in a country that I was in.

Mr. SMITH. And can you give us a flavor—I know you went at one point to the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo because I have an interest in that area, which is a very dangerous place to be—can you give us a flavor for some of the places where you visited your personnel?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I did go to the Democratic Republic of Congo. I went to Eastern Congo because of the horrific violence there and the particularly unstable situation in that region.

I, obviously, went to Yemen, and I have made many trips to Afghanistan and Pakistan and had the opportunity to visit our diplomats and our development experts in dangerous places.

One of the, you know, one of the places that is particularly hard now is Iraq, and it was hard then.

Egypt during the revolution was very challenging, and there I came under giant protests against the United States, against me

personally. On a visit to the consulate in Alexandria, my team was pelted with tomatoes and shoes and other insults hurled at us, which put a lot of pressure on the Diplomatic Security.

I, obviously, went to Tunis and worked hard to help support Tunisia, and they, as of now, seem as though they are working toward some kind of resolution.

I visited Beirut.

I was in Jordan and in Turkey numerous times during the uprising against Syria.

So I think that it's a long list, and it's by no means——

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. A complete one.

Mr. SMITH. And let me just say that the line of questioning recently has been basically implying that you don't care. Okay? There's no other way to interpret what we just heard, is to say: "Oh, you didn't make this phone call, you didn't talk—well, what month, what day, what time, you know?" "Did you really care?" "Did you visit them three times or just two?" Okay? The line of questioning is implying that you don't care.

And there are two things that are troubling about that. First of all, you do, or you wouldn't be doing this, or you wouldn't be representing the people that you do and doing the jobs that you did. But second of all, whether or not you care has nothing to do with learning what happened in Benghazi and how to solve the problem.

So all the while—and I was chastised last time for claiming that the majority was trying to be partisan, and then we got a recitation of your political back and forth about how to talk about, you know, who should get credit for Libya, you know, being chastised for that, but it is clear that they are trying to attack you personally. And I really wish that we could focus on the issues instead of that. But to get into that level of questioning, I think, is not helpful to this committee, and it's not even helpful to the Republicans, for that matter. It's clear that you care.

And I'll simply go back to where we've been a couple of times. Tell us again, how many embassies do we have in the world?

Mrs. CLINTON. We have 270 countries we're represented in.

Mr. SMITH. Right. And on some level, the Secretary of State, Secretary Kerry now, you before, is responsible for all of them?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mr. SMITH. And how many personnel, roughly?

Mrs. CLINTON. Seventy thousand, between the State Department and USAID.

Mr. SMITH. And you're responsible for all of them as well.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's true, Congressman.

Mr. SMITH. Can any human being on the face of the planet protect every single one of them every second of every day?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mr. SMITH. That's a rhetorical question.

Mrs. CLINTON. We can try. We can try. And, you know, Congressman, we have, as I just said, 270 consulates and embassies. We are represented in 194 countries. Some of them are very friendly to us. Some of them are our adversaries.

But I do want to pick up on the point you were making because I really appreciate it very much, Congressman. I care very deeply

about the people who serve our country. I worked with them. I knew them. I saw them in action. On my last full day as Secretary of State, we were able to hold a ceremony awarding the five Diplomatic Security agents the highest award for heroism that the State Department has to offer. We held it then because we wanted to be sure that the fifth man could be there because he'd been in the hospital for so long, and he was able to be there.

I got a chance to meet their families. I got a chance all at once, not just individually but all together, to thank them and commend them for their heroism. And I'll tell you, the agent who had been in the hospital all those months, as I was leaving, he called me over and he said: Secretary, please do everything you can to make sure I get to go back in the field. And I told him I would, and it was one of the requests I made on the way out the door. He was determined to go back to do what he could to protect our diplomats, to protect you when you travel. And I was so struck then, as I had been so many times before, about the quality and the integrity and the courage of those Americans who serve us, whether in uniform or out. I care very deeply about each and every one of them.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

And I do have one other point to make. Do you happen to know where the CIA Director, General Petraeus, was when the second attack happened on the CIA and where he went? Well, I——

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I do not. I don't know where he was when I reached him and spoke with him.

Mr. SMITH. Yeah. He was home operating out of a SCIF, and after the attack, he continued to operate out of that SCIF. Which again is why this would be a far more productive investigation if we actually had the CIA Director and DOD instead of trying to pick apart every single solitary thing you said or did during the course of this, and sometimes even going before and after that. If we actually were trying to get to the truth of this, we would have a broader array of people to talk to so that we could get there, instead of picking you apart at every, every conceivable turn.

You know, we've gone back and forth. And I just want to make one other point. Congressman Jordan, you know, I like you. I have a great deal of respect for you. But this, you know, whole going back twice now to the "some" having implied that this was because of a video, somehow you just substitute the word "some" for "I" and think that there's no difference whatsoever in that sentence, and that's mind-boggling. I mean, and then to badger over and over and over and over again: "Why did you say it was because of the video?" "Well, I didn't." "Why did you say it was because of the video?" "Well, I didn't." "Why did you say it was because of the video?" You know, I guess this can go on for another 6 or 7 hours, but I think we all understand the English language. And when you say "some have implied," that means—well, I guess it means that some have implied; some others have implied. So, you know, it's just very frustrating.

I serve on the Armed Services Committee with Mac Thornberry, who's the chairman of that committee, and we disagree about a heck of a lot, but we have great arguments in that committee. But it never ever comes close to descending to this level. Congress can, in fact, function. The House Armed Services Committee, under

Buck McKeon's leadership before him, under Mac Thornberry's leadership now, and all of the members of that committee, they aggressively question administrative witnesses. And I've seen it. And we've gone back and forth and done it. But there is always an element of respect for the fact that we are all doing a very difficult job, you know.

And anyone across this dais who's been in a tough campaign knows what it's like to have every single thing you say, every single thing you do, every look that is on your face, everything that you wear picked apart. It's not helpful. It's not helpful to the American public, and it's not helpful to the political process, and it's damn sure not helpful to the people who died in Benghazi or to their families. So I hope we can do better, and I hope that we can be done with the repetitive badgering after 9½ hours.

And I thank you for putting up with it for that long and for your service.

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman yields back.

The chairman now recognizes the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Jordan.

Mr. JORDAN. Secretary Clinton, to get to the truth about Benghazi, we need the complete record. Your emails are part of the record, and we believe the record might be incomplete in part because your version of events surrounding your email situation keeps changing. Last month, on September 20, you said, "I'm being as transparent as possible, more transparent than anybody else ever has been."

You didn't say "more transparent than anybody"; you said, more transparent than anybody else ever. Now, my definition of transparency includes being honest and straightforward, and being honest and straightforward right from the start, right from the get-go.

Let's look at a few things that you said here in the last few months. On March 10, you said this: you provided all work-related emails, erring on the side of anything that might be a Federal record. In September you revised that statement and you said Mr. Blumenthal had some emails that you didn't. Of course, the revised statement was after we interviewed Mr. Blumenthal about Benghazi and found out that we didn't receive from you and the State Department the same information we received from him.

In March, you said it was your practice to email government officials on their dot-gov accounts. Later, you revised that statement, and you said there was a fraction of emails with work-related information sent to government officials on their personal accounts.

Mr. SMITH. I'm sorry, but what does this have to do with what happened in Benghazi?

Mr. JORDAN. Of course——

Mr. SMITH. When are we going to get there?

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman is not recognized. The gentleman from Ohio controls the time.

Mr. JORDAN. This is—and it has everything to do because we want the records so we can get to the truth. And maybe if the gentleman—if the gentleman from Washington would have shown up for more than just 1 hour of one interview, he might know a little

more about the situation as well and the lack of getting the records.

Of course, this second statement, the revised statement, was after this committee had contacted Huma Abedin, Jake Sullivan, Philippe Reines, asking for their personal accounts, which of course you knew would mean we would get their emails, and that first statement in March was not accurate.

In March, you said no classified information was sent or received on your personal accounts. You later revised your statement and said no information marked classified was sent or received on your personal account. And, once again, your revised statement was after the Inspector General for the Intelligence Community had examined your emails and determined that, yes, some indeed were classified.

Secretary Clinton, it seems like there's a pattern, a pattern of changing your story. In March, you say one thing. The truth comes out. Weeks and months later, you say something else.

That's not being the most transparent person ever. That's not even being transparent. So if your story about your emails keeps changing, then how can we accept your statement that you've turned over all work-related emails and all emails about Libya?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I have said repeatedly that I take responsibility for my use of personal email. I've said it was a mistake. I've said that it was allowed, but it was not a good choice. When I got to the Department, we were faced with a global financial crisis, major troop decisions on Afghanistan, the imperative to rebuild our alliances in Europe and Asia, an ongoing war in Iraq, and so much else.

Email was not my primary means of communication, as I have said earlier. I did not have a computer on my desk. I've described how I did work, in meetings, secure and unsecure phone calls, reviewing many, many pages of materials every day, attending——

Mr. JORDAN. I appreciate——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. A great deal of meetings. And I provided the Department, which has been providing you, with all of my work-related emails, all that I had, approximately 55,000 pages, and they are being publicly released.

Mr. JORDAN. I appreciate that. And let's get into that. Those 55,000 pages, there were 62,000 emails, total emails on your system. You have stated that you used a multistep process to determine which ones are private, which ones are public, which ones belong to you and your family, which ones belonged to the taxpayer.

Who oversaw this multistep process in making that determination of which ones we might get and which ones that were personal?

Mrs. CLINTON. That was overseen by my attorneys, and they conducted a rigorous review of my emails and were——

Mr. JORDAN. And these are the folks sitting behind you there, Mr. Kendall, Ms. Mills, Ms. Samuelson?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes. That's right.

Mr. JORDAN. All right. And you said "rigorous." What does that mean?

Mrs. CLINTON. It means that they were asked to provide anything that could be possibly construed as work-related. In fact, in my opinion, and that has been confirmed by both——

Mr. JORDAN. But I'm asking how——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. The State Department and——

Mr. JORDAN. But I'm asking how it was done. Was—did someone physically look at the 62,000 emails, or did you use search terms, date parameters? I want to know the specifics.

Mrs. CLINTON. They did all of that. And I did not look over their shoulders because I thought it would be appropriate for them to conduct that search, and they did.

Mr. JORDAN. Will you provide this committee—or can you answer today, what were the search terms?

Mrs. CLINTON. The search terms were everything you could imagine that might be related to anything, but they also went through every single email.

Mr. JORDAN. But that's not answering the question. What were the search terms? Search terms means terms. What terms did you use——

Mrs. CLINTON. I did not——

Mr. JORDAN [continuing]. And what were the date parameters? With what date did you start? What was the end date and the emails in between they were going to look at?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I asked my attorneys to oversee the process. I did not look over their shoulder, I did not dictate how they would do it. I did not ask what they were doing and how they——

Mr. JORDAN. So you don't know?

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Made the decisions.

Mr. JORDAN. You don't know what terms they used to determine which ones were your emails and which ones the State Department got and therefore we might get?

Mrs. CLINTON. You know, the State Department had between 90 and 95 percent of all the ones that were work-related. They were already on the system. In fact, this committee got emails——

Mr. JORDAN. I'm not asking about those. I'm asking about the 62,000 that were exclusively on your system.

Mrs. CLINTON. Ninety to 95 percent of all work-related emails were already in——

Mr. JORDAN. Well, we know that the National Archivist—Secretary Clinton, we know the National Archivist said 1,250 were clearly personal, no way we should have—no way you should have sent them to the State Department. And then we also know that 15 you missed because we got those from Mr. Blumenthal when he came and was—for his deposition.

So if you missed 15 you should have given us and you gave us 1,250 that, not we say, but the National Archivist says you never should have turned over, you erred on both sides. So, again, that's why we want to know the terms because if you've made a mistake both ways, you might have made more mistakes we don't know.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, first of all, you had nine hours with one of my attorneys. And since, I think, the Democrats just finally released the transcript——

Mr. JORDAN. And I——

Mrs. CLINTON. I haven't had a chance——

Mr. JORDAN. And I specifically asked Ms. Mills. I did.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mr. JORDAN. I did. I asked her about this, and she gave me basically the same kind of answer you're giving me.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, she'll be happy to supplement the record if she——

Mr. JORDAN. Well, she's not on the witness stand today; you are, and I'm asking you.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, but I asked my attorneys to do it. I thought that was the appropriate way to proceed.

Mr. JORDAN. Let me do one other statement. Let me do one other statement——

Mrs. CLINTON. Okay.

Mr. JORDAN [continuing]. Because it sounds like—I hope you'll turn those—I hope we'll know the terms. I think the American people would like to know what terms you used to determine what we might get so that we could get all the information on Libya and find out what happened where these four Americans gave their lives. I think that's critical.

In March you also said this: your server was physically located on your property, which is protected by the Secret Service. Now, I've had a hard time figuring this out, because this story's been all over the place, but there was one server on your property in New York and a second server hosted by a Colorado company and housed in New Jersey. Is that right? There were two servers?

Mrs. CLINTON. No.

Mr. JORDAN. Okay.

Mrs. CLINTON. There was a—there was a server——

Mr. JORDAN. Just one?

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. That was already being used by my husband's team, an existing system in our home that I used. And then, later, again, my husband's office decided that they wanted to change their arrangements, and that's when they contracted with the company in Colorado.

Mr. JORDAN. And so there's only one server, is that what you're telling me, and it's the one server that the FBI has?

Mrs. CLINTON. The FBI has the server that was used during the tenure of my State Department service.

Mr. JORDAN. Okay. In your statement, you say, which was protected by the Secret Service. Why'd you mention the Secret Service?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, because——

Mr. JORDAN. And here's why I'm—could a Secret Service agent standing at the back door of your house protect someone in Russia or China from hacking into your system? Why did you mention the Secret Service agent?

Mrs. CLINTON. Out of just an abundance of being transparent.

Mr. JORDAN. Transparent? I—but—and how—what's the relevance to protecting from classified information?

Mrs. CLINTON. There was nothing marked classified on my emails, either sent or received. And I want to respond——

Mr. JORDAN. You used the right term there, you used "marked." That's the one—that's what you——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, but that's——

Mr. JORDAN. You used the revised statement there.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, there was a lot of confusion, because many Americans have no idea how the classification process works, and therefore, I wanted to make it clear that there is a system within our government, certainly within the State Department, where material that is thought to be classified is marked such so that people have the opportunity to know how they are supposed to be handling those materials.

Mr. JORDAN. I've got one——

Mrs. CLINTON. And that's why it became clearer, I believe, to say that nothing was marked classified at the time I sent or received it.

Mr. JORDAN. All right. All I know is that's different than what you said in March.

I've got one last question. The FBI's got your server. They're doing a forensic review of your server. They may, they may recover emails that you deleted from your system. So I didn't say this, you said it, and you just said it a little bit ago, too, transparency. You said you were the—more transparent than anybody else ever. So I want to just ask you one simple question. If the FBI finds some of these emails that might be deleted as they're reviewing your server, will you agree to you allow a mutual third party, like a retired Federal judge, to review any emails deleted to determine if any of them are relevant to our investigation?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, as you point out, there is a security inquiry being conducted by the Department of Justice, and I trust that they will do whatever is appropriate to reach their conclusions.

Mr. JORDAN. But would you, as the most transparent person ever, would you commit to say if—whatever they find, I went to a retired Federal judge to evaluate that and look and see if we need some of that information to get to the truth?

Mrs. CLINTON. I have been releasing my emails to the public. That is transparency. And as I stand by my statement, so far as I know, in the modern era, I am the only government official who's ever done that.

Mr. JORDAN. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Westmoreland.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Thank you.

Secretary Clinton, so far today I've said good morning, good afternoon, and——

Mrs. CLINTON. Are you all serving breakfast, Congressman?

Mr. WESTMORELAND [continuing]. Good evening, so let me go ahead and say good night.

You know, I may be the only person on this side that doesn't really care about your personal email because I know that I think you said Colin Powell had one.

The thing that bothers me is that it was a personal server. I think that's the difference because Mr. Powell's emails all went through the State Department server. So just to clarify it, I think

the problem is that you had the full control of your emails because they were on a private server and not the government server.

The other thing I'd like to say is to Ms. Duckworth, if you would read the testimony of the number of Diplomatic Security agents that served in Benghazi, most of them were temporary duty, 45-, 60-day people that served. If you will read that, I think you'll find that a lot of these things that the Secretary said as far as enhancements was paid for by petty cash out of their own money and not really fulfilled or completed.

The other thing I want to ask you, Madam Secretary——

Ms. DUCKWORTH. Will the gentleman yield for just 20 seconds?

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Yeah.

Ms. DUCKWORTH. I think that's why it behooves us as Members of Congress to increase the security budget for the State Department. They routinely get less than they need, and I think that Americans in general would not begrudge more money for security to safeguard our diplomats. But I agree with you that the report does say that.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, reclaiming my time. There was $20 million that she was going to send to Libya for their security upgrades.

You mentioned the sixth man, that you had to wait on the sixth man.

Mrs. CLINTON. The fifth man. I'm sorry. The fifth man.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Okay. All right. I was going to say there must have been somebody hiding in a closet or something that we didn't know about.

You also said in one of the last things that the State Department sent more security from Tripoli to Benghazi during the attack?

Mrs. CLINTON. Uh-huh.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. There was not a State Department person on that plane. There were four GRS agents and two TDY DOD people.

Mrs. CLINTON. And——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. And an interpreter.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, that—that is exactly right, and that's why the cooperation and coordination that——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, ma'am——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. I have been talking about with Congresswoman Duckworth——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. From all the information we've got, Mr. Glen Doherty is the one that said, we are going down to help our brothers. And he got permission from the chief of station to go down there, and he took three other GRS agents and then he got the two DOD guys that wanted to go, volunteered to go, they took their interpreter, they chartered the plane and they went down there. It was not a State Department deal. And, in fact, if you want to know the truth, the only option that the State Department had was the FEST team, as we—you and I talked about before.

Now, you mentioned that it was for rebuilding. And I've got the State Department thing here about the FEST. And I would read it, but it's going to take up too much of my time, but there's not anything in—it doesn't say anything about rebuilding anything. It says that it's for crisis-management expertise; time-sensitive informa-

tion; planning for contingency operations; hostage-negotiating expertise, which we thought at one time that the Ambassador may have been kidnapped; reach-back to Washington, D.C., agencies; and specialized communications capabilities.

Now, that's what it says on the State Department web site. And, you know, that would have been the one thing that you could have done to get people on the way over there to help those folks that were still in an ongoing battle that was ready to go, sitting there, but you know what? It never got—that plane never got out of the hangar. Those people never got assembled. And we've got a chain of emails that the first recommendation came back is the FEST from your own people, and then the FBI told your employees that the best way to handle the situation was to send the FEST team and that was the way it had always been done.

So did you make the decision not to send the FEST team?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, first, let me say that it's important to recognize that our Deputy Chief of Mission, Greg Hicks, was fully engaged in helping to put together the team that flew from Tripoli to Benghazi. And we were very grateful that the CIA station chief and his colleagues were behind that, and we were, you know, very appreciative.

They, as you know, didn't get there in time because the attack on the compound was very swift; it was over in less than an hour, but they did help eventually to evacuate. And it was just an additional tragedy that Mr. Doherty lost his life in attempting to stave off the attack on the CIA Annex.

With regard to the FEST recommendation, everything you read was no longer applicable to our compound in Benghazi. Unlike the FEST team responding in Nairobi, where we were going to have an ongoing embassy presence, that was our embassy, the FEST team was very much involved in helping to stand up the communications and literally begin to get the embassy functioning again, despite the fact that Americans and many of the locally employed staff had been murdered in the terrorist attack. So it was our judgment that the FEST team was not needed, was not appropriate for Benghazi.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. But you really didn't know what was going on at that point, when you could have pulled——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, we did know. We knew from the reports we were getting back from our Diplomatic Security officers that they had had to abandon the facility, that it had been set on fire, it——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Okay.

Mrs. CLINTON. And—and it was—they were forced to take refuge with our CIA colleagues at the CIA Annex. And remember, the FEST team is not an armed reaction force. That is not what a FEST team does.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Ma'am, I know that.

Mrs. CLINTON. And so we had armed reinforcements coming from Tripoli.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. But that was the only tool that you had to get people over there yourself, not the DOD.

Mrs. CLINTON. But the——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. This was the——

Mrs. CLINTON. I'm sorry, Congressman.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well——

Mrs. CLINTON. I mean, look——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Evidently it has been—it has served its purpose from being put into different places it has responded to.

But I want to talk to you just a little bit about your emails, and that is that I think you said it was October that you received the letter that asked you and former secretary of states to present all their emails. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That's my memory, yes.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Okay. Now, in August, the State Department met with your attorneys to talk about the lack of the emails that they had. Did you know that?

Mrs. CLINTON. I didn't at the time, no.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. You didn't know that they were meeting—that the State Department was meeting with your attorneys?

Mrs. CLINTON. Not—not at that time. And as you also recall, the State Department was beginning to turn over to this committee my emails, because they had between 90 and 95 percent of all my work-related emails——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. But——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. In the State Department system.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. But, ma'am, they met with your attorney, and your attorney that they met with happened to be Cheryl Mills, which was your chief of staff.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's correct. That's correct.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Now, is that weird that your attorney was your chief of staff, so that attorney-client privilege may have kicked in there——

Mrs. CLINTON. She was——

Mr. WESTMORELAND [continuing]. Somewhere?

Mrs. CLINTON. She was my counsel before she was my chief of staff. She became my counsel again after she was my chief of staff.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, I know that when the email went out that night, it called everybody under secretary, director, spokesman, and it said, Ms.—she—Ms. Mills was counselor. It didn't say chief of staff. And that was the night of the attack.

But let me just go a little bit further. You said that you found out in October, but your attorneys met with the State Department, and I believe it was in August. Now, from that time, you said you turned over everything and that your lawyers went through this. And I believe it was in November, after finding out in October, that they had reviewed all these emails. Now, the State Department hadn't been able to give us all those emails in 2 years, but your attorneys—how many—you must have some of the fastest reading attorneys in the world to go through that, and I know you've got a group of them sitting behind you, but how many attorneys does it take to go through 65,000 emails in 2 months?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, first of all, the process to provide information to the Congress with respect to Benghazi started before I left the State Department. There was a concerted effort to gather up any information that might be responsive.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Did you tell them you had a private server at that time?

Mrs. CLINTON. You know, I don't—I know that——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, if they were gathering emails, you had to tell them that you had a private server——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Mr. WESTMORELAND [continuing]. Because you were there.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, the server is not the point; it's the account. And I made it a practice to send emails that were work-related to people on their government accounts. In fact——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Ma'am——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. You know, Secretary Kerry is the first Secretary of State to rely primarily on a government account. So——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. But I'm not talking about the account; I'm talking about the server. But one last point. Let me just—I'll close with this, and then the chairman can give you time to answer. You want me to tell you what I thought? I think that your attorneys sat down with the State Department, and they said: We've got a problem, and so we've got to come up with something that this is not just the secretary having these emails in a private server, so I tell you what let's do. Let's go back and ask Madeleine Albright, who was Secretary of State in 1997, that never even had an email account, or let's go back and ask, you know, Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, and me to provide all this information.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Regular order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I'm just telling you, it smells, it doesn't smell right.

And so I yield back.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, if I could respond, I think in the course of trying to answer and archive information, the State Department determined that they did have gaps in their record-keeping, and it was much more than about me. They had gaps with respect to others, both other Secretaries and others within the State Department. And the technology in the State Department, indeed, throughout our entire government, is notoriously difficult and often unreliable. And I think it was the State Department's efforts to try to fill some of those gaps. So I didn't know at the time that there had been such a meeting. I learned of it subsequently.

And when I received a copy of the letter that was sent by the State Department to me and the other three preceding secretaries of state, I immediately said, "Well, let's help them fill the gaps," even though I believed that the vast majority of my emails were already in their system, and we did. We conducted the investigation, the survey that I have described to you, and turned over more than 30,000 work-related emails, 55,000 pages, to the State Department; 90 to 95 percent were already there. We sent so many that some were going to be returned because they were clearly not work-related.

We did our best. I did my best to make sure that if there were gaps in record-keeping, at least my materials would be there to help fill any gaps above and beyond the 90 to 95 percent of emails that were already in the system.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Well, I'm not an attorney, but I think Ms. Mills is a good attorney——

Ms. SANCHEZ. Regular order, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WESTMORELAND [continuing]. And she never told you——

Ms. SANCHEZ. At this late hour, I——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. She never told——

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. Insist that——

Mr. WESTMORELAND. She never told you——

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. 4 minutes after regular 10 minutes of time——

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman is——

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. Should be cut off with questioning.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman is out of time, just like almost every other member has been out of time.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Not 4 minutes out of time, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, you'd be surprised.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Well, it's a late hour——

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman from California——

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. And our witness has been here for more than 9 hours.

Chairman GOWDY. And as soon as——

Ms. SANCHEZ. I think in the interests of brevity——

Chairman GOWDY. And as soon as the gentlelady finishes, I'll recognize the next member.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that courtesy.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman from California is recognized.

Mr. SCHIFF. Well, Madam Secretary, I don't know how you're doing, but I'm exhausted. If we stay here much longer, you're going to have to take that 3:00 a.m. phone call from the committee room. In fact, your testimony has not only gone on longer than both of your prior testimonies to the House and Senate combined, but I'm, I don't know if "pleased" is the right word, but I'm able to inform you that your testimony now has gone on longer than all of the other hearings that we have held combined, but in the interest of full disclosure, we haven't done very much. So we've only had three hearings in the last year and a half, but still that's pretty impressive because some of those hearings were with multiple witnesses, and you have now outlasted all of them.

But I do think you can tell when you're getting to the point of diminishing returns when you have members of the panel who are inventing testimony for you or imagining conversations you're having with your lawyer as well.

As for your emails, I feel like channeling Bernie Sanders here tonight, but I'm no Larry David, and I know I wouldn't do it right, so instead, I'll tell you about the other person I agree with on your emails, and it's our chairman, who was asked on Fox News by Chris Wallace what your email use has to do with investigating what happened in Benghazi, and Chairman Gowdy's response was: "Well, probably not much of anything."

As we, you know, I hope wind up tonight, I want to just make one observation about your emails because I think it's true of the investigation generally. For all the talk about your emails, what's interesting to me is not a member here, either on the news or in leaked form or whatever, has said anything about the content of your emails that added any insight to what we already know. So it's fascinating to me that for all of this talk, they have not pointed to a single thing in those emails of substance that alters our under-

standing of what happened in Benghazi; that alters the conclusions of those seven or eight other investigations.

And what's true of your emails is true of this broader investigation, which is here we are 17 months later, $4.5 million later, and we have nothing new to tell the American people.

I have struggled to find something to ask you tonight that hasn't already been asked an infinite number of times, an infinite number of ways, and I'm not going to go through the exercise of searching for a question to be asked again. It's too late for that.

But having, I guess, started by pondering what the core theory was of my colleagues—and I do appreciate at least one of them taking a stab at it. I do feel it's my responsibility now as I wind up to tell you what my theory of what's happening is. Speaker Boehner did not want to form this committee. He said so, not to me, but he said so on national TV. He said: "What is to be gained by having yet another committee after all the other committees we've had investigate? What is to be gained by this? This is a bad idea."

At some point, something changed the Speaker's mind. Now, I'm not in the room when the Speaker makes the decision to reverse course. In reading a profile of our chairman, he wasn't in the room either. He got a call from the Speaker when he was back in his district saying: I've decided to form a select committee. How would you like to be the chairman? I bet Mr. Chairman wishes he never got that call.

So who was in the room? Well, Kevin McCarthy was in the room. There was nobody better situated to know why this committee was formed or why the Speaker changed his mind than the Speaker's number two, Kevin McCarthy. So, with all due respect to our chairman who says, "Shut up, other Members. You don't know what you're talking about," I'd have to say actually the one person who does know what he's talking about was Kevin McCarthy. So that's why I think we're here.

And it would be one thing if it was that common in isolation. It would be another if we didn't have one of their own team, a GOP investigator, who's going to vote for whoever the Republican nominee is, he tells us proudly, saying the same thing. But it's the way we've conducted ourselves that is the most compelling evidence that that's the only object here.

I mean, I think we've seen amply tonight in the questions, there's very little interest in what actually happened. There's not much interest in how we can prevent it in the future. But there's a lot of interest in trying to score points against you tonight. Everybody, I think, on this side of the podium is hoping they're the one that does the gotcha that makes the news. Well, it's a terrible abuse of our responsibility and our power, and I think we'll rue the day that we did this.

I have no questions, Madam Secretary. And I appreciate your patience.

And I yield back. I'd be happy to yield to my colleague, Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Secretary, I want to associate myself with the voice of my colleague, but I want to go back to the ARB. In my 20 years on the Oversight Committee, one of the things that I've tried to do is try to make sure that I've protected the reputa-

tions of the people who come before our committee, be they Republican witnesses, be they Democrat or independent. The reason being, that I realize that there's life after the hearing. And so often, Madam Secretary, what happens is people come before these hearings, their family is watching, colleagues watching. They are torn apart, and then, in many instances, we think to correct it later on. Instead of it appearing on the front page of the newspaper, it's on page 33 at the bottom in a little paragraph.

And you were talking a little bit earlier about the night of the tragedy. And I've done a lot of depositions in my life as a lawyer, but I can tell you, and I think you should be very proud of this, when I listened to Cheryl Mills, to Mr. Sullivan, and Ms. Abedin, when they talked about this night and what you did that night, in their transcribed interviews, all of them were basically brought to tears. And I remember sitting there saying to myself, you know, if you can create a culture in an organization where people, in talking about their boss and how she reacted and what she felt, that would bring them to tears, it says a lot. And I realize that you've gone through a lot, but the fact still remains that—and it bothers me when I hear people even imply that you didn't care about your people. That's not right. And then I sit here and I watch you, and I saw how you kind of struggled when you were talking about that night. And I just for one want to thank you, and I appreciate what you've done. It has not been easy.

You're right. It's easy to sit up here under these lights and Monday morning quarterbacking about what could have been, what should have been done. You have laid it out. I think you have said you have—this has not been done perfectly. You wish you could do it another way. And then the statement that you made a few minutes ago when you said, you know, I have given more thought to this than all of you combined.

So I don't know what we want from you. Do we want to badger you over and over again until you get tired, until we do get the gotcha moment that he's talking about? We're better than that. We are so much better. We are a better country, and we're better than using taxpayer dollars to try to destroy a campaign. That's not what America is all about.

So you can comment if you like. I just had to get that off my chest.

Madam Secretary.

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you, Congressman.

I came here because I said I would, and I've done everything I know to do, as have the people with whom I worked, to try to answer your questions. I cannot do any more than that. The answers have changed not at all since I appeared two years ago before the House and the Senate.

And I recognize that there are many currents at work in this committee, but I can only hope that the statesmanship overcomes the partisanship. At some point, we have to do this.

It is deeply unfortunate that something as serious as what happened in Benghazi could ever be used for partisan political purposes. And I'm hoping that we can move forward together. We can start working together. We can start listening to each other.

And I appreciate greatly what you said, Ranking Member Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

Chairman GOWDY. Madam Secretary, before we go to Mr. Pompeo, Mr. Schiff from California made reference to a phone call that I received from Speaker Boehner, which he's correct, I did. And Speaker Boehner never mentioned your name in the phone call.

And then my friend from California suggested that maybe I wished I had not received that phone call, and I'd like to assure him that he could not be further from the truth.

Learning about the four people, two of whom you worked with and all four of whom we count as fellow Americans, is worth whatever amount of political badgering that may come my way. I have seen the personification of courage and public service. So, Adam, to answer your question is, no, I don't regret it. I'm a better person for having learned more about the four people that we lost in Benghazi, and that's why we signed up for it.

And, with that, I'll go to Mr. Pompeo.

Mr. POMPEO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Schiff, you also suggested that you had to be in the room with the Speaker. You're right. He was originally against the formation of this committee, but you don't have to guess as to why he formed it. He made it clear when he announced this committee. It was because the State Department turned over information in a FOIA request that had not been turned over to the previous committees. He was concerned about that, and he realized that the State Department and other government agencies may well not have provided those other committees the information they needed to complete their task. So you don't need to speculate.

One more administrative item. Mr. Westmoreland said there was a meeting between your counsel, Ms. Mills, and State Department regarding your emails. He said the meeting was in August. It was actually in July. It was a little bit earlier, and I just wanted to make sure that the record reflected that.

Secretary Clinton, I have a few questions to ask you. We've saved them for the end of the day because it may be that you can't provide answers to me to these questions in an open setting, but it's been a long day, I wanted to give you that heads up. These are questions that I would like to get answered, but it may be that an open hearing is not a place which you'll be permitted to provide those answers because of the nature of the answers you'll provide. These are yes-or-no questions.

Were you aware or are you aware of any efforts by the U.S. Government in Libya to provide any weapons, either directly or indirectly or through a cutout, to any Libyan rebels or militias or opposition to Qadhafi's forces?

Mrs. CLINTON. That was a very long question, and I think the answer is no.

Mr. POMPEO. Were you aware or are you aware of any U.S. efforts by the U.S. Government in Libya to provide any weapons, directly or indirectly or through a cutout, to any Syrian rebels or militias or opposition to Syrian forces?

Mrs. CLINTON. No.

Mr. POMPEO. Were you aware or are you aware of any efforts by the U.S. Government in Libya to facilitate or support the provision of weapons to any opposition of Qadhafi's forces, Libyan rebels, or militias through a third party or country?

Mrs. CLINTON. No.

Mr. POMPEO. Did you ever consider the idea of using private security experts to arm the opposition?

Mrs. CLINTON. Using private security?

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. Did—I'll ask the question again. Did you ever at any time consider the idea of using private security experts to arm the opposition in Libya?

Mrs. CLINTON. Not seriously, no.

Mr. POMPEO. What does "not seriously" mean, ma'am?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think you're referring to a reference in one of Sid Blumenthal's emails.

Mr. POMPEO. No, ma'am. I'm referring to a reference in your email.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, the answer is no.

Mr. POMPEO. Ma'am, I'll read you the email. It says: "FYI"—this is to Mr. Sullivan, seated behind you. It says: "FYI, the idea of using private security experts to arm the opposition should be considered."

Were you just not serious?

Mrs. CLINTON. It was not considered seriously.

Mr. POMPEO. But you thought about it. You thought it might be both appropriate and lawful when you sent that note to Mr. Sullivan.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I'm open to ideas, but that doesn't mean that they're either considered seriously or acted upon.

Mr. POMPEO. Were there any further emails or discussion with respect to that issue of potentially arming private experts—or having private experts arm the Libyans?

Mrs. CLINTON. Not that I'm aware of.

Mr. POMPEO. Another series of yes-or-no questions, Madam Secretary. Did you ask the Department of Defense how you were going to get your people out the evening that the incident occurred?

Mrs. CLINTON. That was one of the matters that was discussed with the Department of Defense, yes.

Mr. POMPEO. And did you ask about what assets were positioned in place that they might be able to help?

Mrs. CLINTON. Of course. That was part of the conversation from the very beginning.

Mr. POMPEO. Did you ask about how long it might take them to arrive either in Tripoli or Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, we did.

Mr. POMPEO. You earlier said today, a couple hours back, that there were no military resources that could have arrived in Benghazi in a reasonable time. That is your testimony from today. What was a reasonable time?

Mrs. CLINTON. According to what we were told by the Defense Department, within a number of hours. There was not any way to get assets deployed in time to get to Benghazi. Of course, it was too late for our compound. And the idea of evacuating from the CIA

Annex was seriously addressed before the attack but then, obviously, implemented after.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. But when the initial attack occurred, you had no idea how long the incidents would continue, did you?

Mrs. CLINTON. It was over within an hour.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. There was a subsequent attack and could have been a third and a fourth. So when the initial attack occurred, did you have any idea what the magnitude and the duration of the events of that night would be?

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, I don't understand your question. We knew that the attack was over. We knew that our Diplomatic Security team had to evacuate from the compound to the CIA Annex, and we were in a frantic search to find Ambassador Stevens.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. But several hours elapsed, and there was a subsequent attack. And you didn't know that that subsequent attack would take place, I'll concede that.

My question is, why was heaven and earth not moved at the initial sound of the guns, maybe even putting tankers in the air from McConnell Air Force Base in Kansas? You simply didn't know how long the series of events was going to continue, nor did you know how long the risk to the people that worked for you was going to remain.

Mrs. CLINTON. Congressman, you will have to ask the Defense Department these questions. We certainly asked that all effort be made to deploy any assets that could be of use in Benghazi. I know that they put a number of assets in the United States, in Europe, on alert, but we were advised that it would take a number of hours to get there. And, with respect to the CIA Annex, you should talk with the intelligence community about that.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am, we will do that. And, in some cases, we have asked those questions.

You talked earlier about Mr. Khattala, who is sitting in a prison cell not too far from where you and I are sitting here this evening. I, too, share your view that I am glad that we have pulled one of the terrorists involved in the murder of U.S. Government people on that night.

When that attack took place, Mr. Khattala, according to the indictment from the Justice Department, Mr. Khattala and his folks removed documents from the temporary mission facility. Were you aware of that?

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes, we later became aware that documents had been removed. But there were no classified documents at Benghazi.

Mr. POMPEO. And how do you know that?

Mrs. CLINTON. We know it through our own investigation about what documents were at Benghazi. And there were no classified materials, to the best of our information.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. Do you know if there was sensitive information?

Mrs. CLINTON. I suppose it depends on what one thinks of as sensitive information. There was information there, and some of it was burnt, either wholly or partially, some of it was looted, and some of it was recovered eventually.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, do you know where that material that was looted went? Do you know into whose hands it fell? And do you know the nature and contents of that material?

You seem very confident it wasn't classified. I don't share your confidence. But, nonetheless, do you know where that material went?

Mrs. CLINTON. I think that it is very difficult to know where it ended up, but I want to just reiterate the point that I made. This was not a facility that had the capacity to handle classified material, and there was, to the best of our information, Congressman, no classified material at the Benghazi facility.

Mr. POMPEO. Ma'am, the fact that it wasn't capable of handling classified material doesn't mean that there wasn't any classified material there. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, the procedure is not to have classified material at such a facility. And, again, to the best of our knowledge, there was not any there.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. You are not supposed to have classified email on your private server either, and we——

Mrs. CLINTON. And I did not, Congressman.

Mr. POMPEO. We are aware that sometimes classified material ends up in places where it ought not be.

I want to go back to your statement that you said you didn't ever seriously consider arming private security experts. Tell me why you ever considered it at all.

Mrs. CLINTON. We considered a whole range of issues. We knew that the insurgents fighting Qadhafi needed support, and what they were provided was air support facilitated by the United States. The United States did not provide any private contractors to assist them.

Mr. POMPEO. There was an email that was from Mr. Blumenthal and an email before that also discussed the same situation. Do you know who Marc Turi is?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, I don't recall that I know who that is.

Mr. POMPEO. He was a private trafficker in weapons. He was working with Mr. Stevens and attempting to develop an authorization with the State Department so that he could in fact deliver those weapons into Libya.

Does any of that ring a bell to you?

Mrs. CLINTON. No, it does not.

Mr. POMPEO. So you never saw the email that was from Mr. Stevens to—I think it went to Mr. Sullivan, where he says to Mr. Turi—this is Mr. Stevens. Now, he says to Mr. Turi, "Thank you for this information"—information about his attempts to get authority to ship arms into Libya. He says, "Thank you for this information. I'll keep it in mind and share it with my colleagues in Washington. Regards, Chris"—or, actually, "Regards, Chris Stevens."

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't know anything about that specifically. I do know that you're referring to a document, and if you are, could you tell us what tab it's at?

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. I am not certain it is in there as a tab, but I am happy to provide it to you.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman, regular order.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, it's a little difficult to answer questions about documents——

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. I don't have, but I can answer you.

Whatever was considered, either out of politeness or out of interest, there was not any action taken, so far as I know.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman, regular order.

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Chairman, may I just have 60 more seconds?

Chairman Gowdy. Yes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman, the last Republican questioner went over by 4 minutes. And given that we are allowed 10 minutes of questioning each and the late hour and the fact that we are a minute beyond testimony already, I think that it is appropriate to ask for regular order and that questioning be closed for this particular member of the panel.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman is recognized for 60 seconds.

Mr. POMPEO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to come back to one issue we talked about a couple of hours back about accountability. You said that you didn't have the authority, lawful authority, to terminate any employees. Is that correct?

Mrs. CLINTON. That is correct. And——

Mr. POMPEO. Okay.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. It is because of the laws and the regulations of our government, Congressman.

Mr. POMPEO. Did you have the authority to provide a counseling statement to any employee?

Mrs. CLINTON. I do not know what you're referring to.

Mr. POMPEO. In other words, you couldn't fire them, but you could put a letter in their employment file saying, hey, you didn't do your job well. Did you undertake that?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think it was pretty well known that the ARB did not think they did their job.

Mr. POMPEO. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. CLINTON. And the ARB specifically said—and some of this has been declassified, as you know—about personnel matters that they could not find breach of duty, but they were as firm in saying that there were failures in the performance of the people that they named.

Mr. POMPEO. I will just ask——

Ms. SANCHEZ. Chairman, regular order.

Mr. POMPEO [continuing]. Just two yes-or-no questions.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Sixty seconds has already elapsed. I believe the chairman granted——

Mr. POMPEO. I will wait for the next round.

Ms. SANCHEZ [continuing]. 60 additional seconds.

Mr. POMPEO. I yield back.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Chairman, before my time starts, he just said something that I just want to make sure we are clear. He just said he is going to wait for his next round. I thought we were kind of closing down here.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Parliamentary inquiry. How late are we going tonight?

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman is recognized to ask two yes-or-no questions.

Mr. POMPEO. Madam Secretary, did you ask someone or did you prepare a counseling statement or letter of reprimand for any employees at the State Department connected with the incidents of September 11, 2012?

Mrs. CLINTON. There was a process that is the appropriate process for dealing with issues concerning performance, and that was followed. It continued into my successor's term, and the Secretary of State, Secretary Kerry, made whatever the final determinations were.

Mr. POMPEO. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair will now recognize the gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you very much.

I know the hour is late, but, Madam Secretary, I need to go back to something, the ARB.

You know, maybe it is because I am getting older and care about legacy, reputation, and that kind of thing, but there is an 83-year-old gentleman named Ambassador Pickering. And I have heard a lot of testimony. I was there for his deposition, or transcribed interview—I don't remember which it was—and then his testimony before the Oversight Committee. And when he talked about his appointment to the ARB, he talked about what an honor it was. And I think the thing that bothers me about a lot of this that has gone on is that, when there have been attacks on the ARB, it's as if, I mean, that is like attacking him. And at 83 years old, I refuse to sit here and let that go by.

And I remember listening to him, and I said to myself, you know, this is the kind of guy that we all ought to honor, serving under presidents for 40 years, Democrat and Republican, high up on the chain with regard to integrity. I mean, I don't even see how you even attack this guy, all right?

And one of the things he said in his testimony, he said—you appointed him, and he talked about the appointment. And I quote from his June 4 testimony. He said, "Chris Stevens worked for me as my special assistant for 2 years when I was Under Secretary of State. This was not any kind of vendetta, but I felt that Chris gave me 2 wonderful years of his life in supporting me in very difficult circumstances and that I owed him, his family, and the families of the other people who died the best possible report we could put together." And he went on and said some other things that were so powerful.

And then when I hear the implications of people attacking the report, talking about he wasn't independent or they weren't independent, it is like an attack against him. And I could say the same thing about Admiral Mullen.

And I just want you to tell us about why you picked the folks that you picked. And, by the way, it is done by law. I mean, that is what——

Mrs. CLINTON. Right.

Mr. CUMMINGS [continuing]. You are supposed to do. The law says you are supposed to pick these people.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Mr. CUMMINGS. And so why don't you tell us how you picked them? Were you looking for a "yes" report? I mean, what were you looking for?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Congressman, I greatly appreciate your strong words of commendation on behalf of both Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen.

You're right, the statute is very clear: The Secretary of State picks four of the five members of the Accountability Review Board. As I said earlier today, there have been 19 Accountability Review Board reports, and I think myself and prior secretaries have been very fortunate that they could call on distinguished Americans with long records of service to perform this very important task.

When I was thinking about who has the integrity, the independence, the experience to give us an unvarnished look at what happened, the first person I thought of was Ambassador Tom Pickering.

He, as you rightly say, served our nation for more than four decades. He holds the rank of Career Ambassador. That's the highest position in the Foreign Service. He served as Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. He served as our U.S. Ambassador to Russia, India, Israel, El Salvador, Nigeria, and Jordan. And he also served as the U.S. Ambassador and representative to the United Nations, where he led the U.S. effort under the first Bush administration to build a coalition in the U.N. Security Council during and after the first Gulf War.

He's a man who had served in high posts and dangerous posts. He understood what was to be expected, and I counted on him in giving me the most comprehensive report possible.

I also wanted to find somebody with military experience. Because these questions that have been raised about, you know, could we have gotten assets there, what actually happened with the Diplomatic Security agents?

And Admiral Mike Mullen, who had just recently retired as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, was, again, I thought, the perfect choice to work with Ambassador Pickering. As you know, he was nominated by President George W. Bush to be Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. He served as Chief of Naval Operations. He led NATO's Joint Force Command, U.S. Naval Forces in Europe, commanded a missile cruiser, a missile destroyer, a tanker. He served in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf—excuse me.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Do you need some water, Madam Secretary?

Chairman GOWDY. Would you like us to take a 60-second, 2-minute break?

Mrs. CLINTON. No. Let me grab a lozenge.

So, Congressman, I had the utmost confidence in both of them.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you.

Let me say this. You know, this hearing began with the chairman reading a list of questions that he claimed were unanswered. In fact, those questions had been asked and answered many times.

As a matter of fact, when we go back to the last questioner, you know, it was Speaker Boehner who—as a matter of fact, last Tuesday, Madam Secretary, Speaker Boehner acknowledged to Fox News the allegation that the U.S. Government was involved in an

illegal weapons program in Libya has been—and this is according to him—investigated by the House Intelligence Committee and debunked. That is what Speaker Boehner said about this illicit weapons transfer situation.

Do you want us to hold up, Madam?

Mrs. CLINTON. No. Go right ahead.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Okay.

And so, going back, today—so these questions, again, were asked and answered. The new documents we obtained and the interviews we conducted don't contradict the conclusions from the previous investigations. They simply confirm them.

Even after this marathon grilling, the Select Committee has found no evidence of any nefarious activity on the part of the secretary. She did not order the military to stand down, and there is still no indication that she approved or denied requests for security in Benghazi.

And as the day has dragged on, the Select Committee's costs has raised up to $4.8 million. That's taxpayer dollars, by the way.

Two weeks ago, the State Department informed the Select Committee that it had spent $14 million responding to requests relating to Benghazi over the past three years. This does not include the costs incurred over the past three years by other Federal agencies, such as the Department of Defense. In a letter to Congress on March 11, 2014, the Defense Department estimated that the total cost it has expended during previous congressional reviews ran into, "the millions of dollars."

So that is at least $20 million right there. And that is a conservative estimate because it does not include the cost of the seven previous investigations by congressional committees. When I think about that amount, $20 million, $20 million, it pains me to imagine what that money could have done.

I don't want anyone to mistake what I am saying. Of course we needed to know what happened in Benghazi so we could take action to help prevent it in the future. And I have personally investigated this. We compiled an entire database of information on our web site about a year ago. We put together a 133-page compendium. We released a new report this week with the results of 54 interviews.

And I want all of those transcripts to be made public to the American people after the appropriate redactions. They ought to be released. I want the American people to see every word—of course, with appropriate redactions, because I don't want anybody accusing me of saying otherwise.

But, finally, my point is this. Instead of spending this entire $20 million on these eight investigations, we could have dedicated at least some part of those funds to actually increasing security for our diplomats overseas. Even if it were just a fraction of that amount, I can't help but wonder how many consulates could have been improved, how many embassies could have been better protected, and how many more of our patriotic American diplomats would be safer today.

And so, with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman GOWDY. The gentleman yields back.

Madam Secretary, I couldn't help but think, when he was using the $20 million figure, that is two more ISIS fighters that we could have paid for. I refuse to put a price tag on the lives of four Americans.

Your figure of $20 million is wrong, Mr. Cummings, and that is not what the State Department told us. But I don't care what the figure is; there is no price tag when it comes to justice for four people who gave their lives for this country.

Madam Secretary, with respect to the ARB, I want to ask you this. If you were investigating Benghazi or what happened in Benghazi and there was an author of an email three months to the day—three months to the day—from when our four fellow Americans were killed, the author of the email says, "anti-American demonstration," "looking for Americans to attack," "game-changer," "soft target," "no continuity," "the cost to continue to do business there may become challenging," would you want to talk to the author of that email if you were investigating Benghazi?

Mrs. CLINTON. The Accountability Review Board had full run of the State Department to talk to anyone they chose to talk to. It's my understanding they conducted more than 100 interviews. And they were well aware, as their report reflects——

Chairman GOWDY. I don't want——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Of the dangerous situation in Libya.

Chairman GOWDY. I don't want to interrupt you. That actually was not my question. My question is, would you want to talk to that person? Not whether or not the ARB did, because the ARB actually did talk to that person. My question is, wouldn't you want to talk to that person if you were investigating Benghazi?

I promise it is not a trick question. The answer is, yes, you would want to talk to the person who authored that email.

Mrs. CLINTON. And, as you just said, Mr. Chairman, the ARB did.

Chairman GOWDY. Yes. And the co-chair of the ARB called your chief of staff and told the author of that email not to go to Congress. That is my point.

My point is the ARB did some good things. That is why our first two hearings were on making sure the recommendations by the ARB were actually implemented.

But when the author of that email is going to be brought before Congress and one of the co-chairs calls your chief of staff and says, "I don't think that that witness is going to be a good witness," Madam Secretary, with all due respect, she is a fact witness. Whether she is good or bad, the author of that email has a right for Congress to question them. I mean, that is not even a close question.

So somebody can be a good person—and I have no doubt that Mr. Mullen and Mr. Pickering both are. But this is also what I don't doubt: I don't doubt that that phone call was made to Ms. Mills saying, "Don't send Charlene Lamb before Congress. She is not going to make a good witness."

And I don't doubt that there is not a transcript from any of the ARB interviews. And you may say, well, why does that matter? If you are going to write a report and you want to write a report with specificity and particularity, you have to cite the transcript. And I

can't tell you a single question that was asked of a single ARB witness because there is no transcript.

So my point is not that the ARB did a bad job or a good job. My point is, from the standpoint of a serious investigation, it was an inadequate job. And I want to hopefully prove that to you.

There used to be a stack up there, when Mr. Smith was with us, about all of the previous investigations that Congress and the ARB had done. Did any of those previous congressional investigations or the ARB have access to your emails?

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, first of all, the witness you are referring to did appear before Congress——

Chairman GOWDY. That was not my point. My point——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, but your implication was that that witness was stopped from going to Congress. And——

Chairman GOWDY. No, she——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. In fact, that did not happen, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. No, she definitely came. No, that is not my implication. My implication is the co-chair of what you call an independent Accountability Review Board was calling someone he was supposed to be investigating to say, "Please don't send that witness to Congress. They are not going to show up well." That is my point.

My point is, how could you consider that to be—I mean——

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, look——

Chairman GOWDY [continuing]. Have you ever heard of a judge calling the DA——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. You know, Mr. Chairman——

Chairman GOWDY [continuing]. Or the defense attorney and saying, "Don't call that witness"?

Mrs. CLINTON. Mr. Chairman, I really don't care what you all say about me; it doesn't bother me a bit. I do care a lot about what you're implying about Admiral Mullen, and I will not sit here and hear that. Admiral——

Chairman GOWDY. Well, ma'am——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Mullen served this country with great distinction. He served the State Department with great distinction in being the co-chair of the Accountability Review Board. And I think his work speaks for itself. And I'm sorry that——

Chairman GOWDY. Well, let me ask you about his work.

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. I'm sorry that the important work that was done by that board is held in such low regard by some members of this committee, and I deeply regret it.

Chairman GOWDY. Are you doubting that he placed a phone call? Is that the purpose of what you are saying?

Mrs. CLINTON. I know nothing about the phone call.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, I do because he testified before another congressional committee. He admits it was a mistake, Madam Secretary. I don't know why you can't.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Chairman GOWDY. He admits it was a mistake to call and say, "Don't send a fact witness before a congressional committee."

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I think that shows——

Chairman GOWDY. It doesn't mean he is a bad person. It just means that when you hold up the ARB as independent and your

chief of staff picked most of the folks on it—Patrick Kennedy had a role in picking some of the folks on the ARB despite the fact that some people think Patrick Kennedy may have also been involved in approving or not approving—if you need to read a note from your lawyer, you are welcome to, Madam Secretary.

Mrs. CLINTON. No. It's just hard to sit here listening to the comments you're making about someone that I consider to be a great American. If he said he made a mistake, that's even more proof of what a fine gentleman he is and what a great public servant he's been. It doesn't in any way, what you're saying, impugn his service for 40 years and certainly not his service on the Accountability Review Board.

I can't help it, Mr. Chairman, that you all don't like the findings of the Accountability Review Board.

Chairman GOWDY. Ma'am, we had two hearings——

Mrs. CLINTON. I can't help it that you don't like the findings of all the other congressional committees.

Chairman GOWDY. We had two hearings where we did nothing but discuss the implementation of the ARB findings, Madam Secretary. So, with all due respect, we have had more hearings about the ARB findings than we have with you. So don't tell me that we don't care about the ARB. We had two hearings.

My point is this. The ARB nor the previous congressional investigations had access to your emails, did they?

Mrs. CLINTON. I don't know what they had access to. I know that, during the time I was at the State Department, there was certainly a great effort to respond to your predecessor, Congressman Issa's inquiries. And many thousands of pages of information was conveyed to the Congress. And I know that the State Department has worked diligently and persistently to try to respond to the many requests that it has received. And I think that, given the pressure and the stress of business they have been under, they have, you know, performed as well as they could.

So you will be getting and, in fact, the entire world will be getting all of my emails, because they are all going to be public, and you will be able to read them along with everybody else.

Chairman GOWDY. Madam Secretary, that actually was not my question. My question was whether or not the previous congressional committees and ARB had access to your emails. That was my question.

Mrs. CLINTON. Ninety to 95 percent of my work-related emails were in the State system. If they wanted to see them, they would certainly have been able to do so.

Chairman GOWDY. You know what? That is maybe the tenth time you have cited that figure today.

Mrs. CLINTON. It is.

Chairman GOWDY. And I have not heard anyone other than you ever cite that figure. Who told you that 90 to 95 percent of your emails were in the State Department system? Who told you that?

Mrs. CLINTON. We learned that from the State Department in their analysis of the emails that were already on the system. We were trying to help them close some gaps that they had. But they already——

Chairman GOWDY. Can you provide me——

Mrs. CLINTON. They already——

Chairman GOWDY. Can you provide me with a name? Because when I asked the State Department about 10 days ago, what is the source of that figure, they shrugged their shoulders.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, you can look for the state.gov addresses, and they certainly pop up——

Chairman GOWDY. Right. And the inspector general report, Madam Secretary, the inspector general report—which you can't argue by perfect analogy, but you can certainly extrapolate—the inspector general report found that less than 1 percent—less than 1 percent—of State Department emails, record emails, were captured.

So they give a number of less than 1 percent, and you give a number of 90 percent.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I don't know what you are referring to. I can only speak about my emails, my work-related emails, and——

Chairman GOWDY. Well, let's talk about your work-related emails. We asked for them last year, and the State Department gave us eight. If they had 90 percent of yours, why did we only get eight?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I don't know initially what you asked for, but I know that they tried to be responsive. Ninety to 95 percent of them were on state.gov. I understand that the committee broadened the scope of their request, and I think that, in response, the State Department has been trying to provide what you have requested.

In the meantime, they are going through the process of making all of my emails public.

Chairman GOWDY. You think our first request—there were only eight emails responsive to our first request?

Mrs. CLINTON. I can't speak to it. I believe your——

Chairman GOWDY. I can——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. First request was for Benghazi, and I believe that the State Department did a diligent search. Then I believe you expanded it to Libya and weapons and maybe a few other terms, and I believe they conducted a diligent——

Chairman GOWDY. Well, our jurisdiction hasn't grown, Madam Secretary. Our jurisdiction is the same thing it was.

Let me ask you this. You say that you turned over everything. I don't get a chance to watch you a lot on television, but when I see you are interviewed, you make a point of saying, "I turned over everything."

Mrs. CLINTON. All my work-related emails, yes.

Chairman GOWDY. How do you know that?

Mrs. CLINTON. I know that because there was an exhaustive search done under the supervision of my attorneys, and that is exactly the outcome. We turned over every work-related email.

In fact, as somebody referred to earlier, we turned over too many. The State Department and the National Archives said there were 1,246 out of the 30,000-plus that they have already determined did not need to be turned over.

Chairman GOWDY. And you have a——

Ms. SANCHEZ. Regular order, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY [continuing]. Really good groups of attorneys, which makes me wonder how they missed 15 of them.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, if you are talking about Mr. Blumenthal, which I assume you are, he had some that I didn't have, and I had some that he didn't have. And I was under no obligation to make any of his emails available unless I decided they were work-related. And the ones that I decided that were work-related I forwarded to the state.gov accounts of the people with whom I worked.

Chairman GOWDY. Madam Secretary, is there any question that the 15 that James Cole turned over to us were work-related? There is no ambiguity about that. They were work-related.

Mrs. CLINTON. They were from a personal friend, not any official government—not any government official. And they were, I determined on the basis of looking at them, what I thought was work-related and what wasn't. And some I didn't even have time to read, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. So are you telling me the 15——

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman, regular order.

Chairman GOWDY. Are you telling me that the 15——

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. I will tell the gentlelady from California that I am going to take a little bit extra time just like everybody else has and that we can either do it this round——

Ms. SANCHEZ. May I——

Chairman GOWDY. We can either do it this round or we can do it next round.

Ms. SANCHEZ. May I make a simple inquiry about how many more minutes the chairman plans?

Chairman GOWDY. The fewer the interruptions, the quicker I can get done. I will put it to you that way.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Okay.

Chairman GOWDY. How's that?

Ms. SANCHEZ. I am just being mindful of the time.

Chairman GOWDY. My question to you on the 15 is, did your lawyers find them and decide that they weren't work-related or did they not find them?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I don't know why he had emails I didn't, and I don't know why apparently I had emails he didn't. And all I can tell you is that I turned over every work-related email in my possession.

Chairman GOWDY. All right.

I am going to make two more observations, and then we're going to call it a night.

The first observation that I would make is that when you speak to the public, you say, "I turned over everything." That is, for the most part, a direct quote. When you have talked to the public, you say, "I turned over everything."

When you talk to the court, you say, "While I do not know what information may be responsive for purposes of this lawsuit, I have directed that all my emails on clintonemail.com in my custody that were or potentially were Federal records be provided to the Department of State, and, on information and belief, that was done."

Why the different explanation depending on who you are talking to?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, one is a shorthand, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, why not just tell the court, "I turned over everything"?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, you know how lawyers are. They use more words, perhaps, than they need.

Chairman GOWDY. Trust me, I know that. And they charge you for every one of them.

Mrs. CLINTON. Yes. I'm well aware of that, Mr. Chairman. And the clock is ticking.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, one more. One more. And I will pay Mr. Kendall's fee for the last question. How's that?

Mrs. CLINTON. Oh, I don't think you want to do that, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman GOWDY. I probably can't do it.

You see my point, though? You are very definitive when you are talking to the American people that you turned over everything.

Mrs. CLINTON. That's right.

Chairman GOWDY. But there are those kind of lawyerly fudge words when you are talking to court, "on information and belief."

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Chairman GOWDY. And the reality is, even tonight, you cannot tell us that you turned over everything, because you didn't think you missed the 15.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, I didn't have them. I turned over everything I had. Everything I had——

Chairman GOWDY. Which means the system you had——

Mrs. CLINTON [continuing]. Has been turned over to the State Department.

Chairman GOWDY [continuing]. Somehow missed those 15.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well——

Chairman GOWDY. Last question on your system. Mr. Cummings said that your email arrangement was inappropriate. I think the President may have said it was a mistake. You have said that it was a mistake.

My question to you, Madam Secretary, is, was it a mistake for the four years that you had that email arrangement? Was it a mistake for the almost two years that you kept the public record to yourself? Or has it manifested itself as a mistake in just the last six months?

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, since I believed that all of my work-related emails to dot-gov accounts were being captured and preserved, it wasn't until I was asked to help the State Department to fill in what they saw as some recordkeeping gaps, not just with me but with others.

I did the best I could during those four years and thought that everything that I was emailing that was work-related was being preserved.

Chairman GOWDY. If you can find the source for the 90 to 95 percent, I would be grateful for it, and we would probably have fewer questions. If there is a source that you can provide that 90 to 95 percent were on the State Department system, then I will know that I need to ask the State Department what took them so long.

Because I am just telling you, Madam Secretary, I got eight emails the first time I asked, and now I have over 1,500. So there is some disconnect there.

Mrs. CLINTON. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that is a fair question. And I'm not at the State Department any longer, but I do want to defend them.

They are under the most extraordinary pressure to answer congressional inquiries. I saw a figure recently that FOIA requests have jumped something like 300 percent. They don't have the resources; they don't have the personnel. They take their responsibility of reading every single line and, as Ranking Member Cummings reminded us, having to redact personal information, personnel information.

Obviously, they take it very seriously. I think they are doing the best they can, and I know that they have tried to be responsive to you and to the many other requests that have come their way.

Chairman GOWDY. Well, Madam Secretary, on behalf of all of us, we want to thank you for your patience and for your willingness to come. And you have been willing to come in the past, as I noted in my opening, and we appreciate it.

And, with that, we will be adjourned.

Mrs. CLINTON. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 9:00 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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