

But I will not live with it by agreeing to less than the amount of time that is needed to debate an issue about the future of our kids, our service personnel, the men and women who put on a uniform and risk their lives every day. I believe they should sit at the top of the list. And S. 1315 does not put them there. S. 1315 puts at the top of the list a new special pension program for people who have never had a service-connected injury.

I am as sympathetic to those who fall into the category of having helped us. I might mention again, the Filipinos who live in the United States who fought in the Philippines for us, we take care of; we have integrated them fully into the Veterans' Administration. They receive every service our veterans do. To those Filipinos who live in the Philippines who have service-connected injuries, we have made sure compensation is in this bill to take care of them.

But for those who do not have service-connected injuries, I cannot see where they fit at the top of the list of \$221 million and our kids go below it, as it relates to what they need for the severely disabled injuries they have been faced with.

I have a number of soldiers in North Carolina, at least they are stationed in North Carolina, that fall into this category. When we see Eric Edmundson's family spend \$47,000 on a van, and \$14,000 of that comes out-of-pocket, I have to ask: Where are our priorities? Where are the priorities of the Congress in defense of these kids? Well, they are in \$221 million getting ready to go to the Philippines. That is where they are. That is the debate we are going to have over the next several days. If it takes a week or if it takes a month, then we will have that debate. At some point, we will take a vote. I believe the American people will see the advantage, the need, to make sure the No. 1 priority is our kids in uniform, our veterans who come back who will be serviced by this very important piece of legislation.

I am committed to Chairman AKAKA that once we can dispose of the issue of this special pension, I am more than willing to vote for the rest of the bill because it is a good bill. It brings some needed benefits to our veterans.

It never should have been locked up for the length of period this was. But make no mistake about it, no matter how good a bill is, if you want to structure it in a way that debate does not flourish in the Senate, then we have done an injustice to the American people. The most deliberative body in the world is supposed to be one that you are not corralled into agreeing to a certain amount of time to debate on an issue; it is where everybody's voice is heard, it is where every bit of information about an issue can be presented. It is where charts can display what words cannot explain.

That is what the next several days will be about with S. 1315. I am con-

vinced that at the end of this process, not only will Members in this body be enlightened by what we are able to talk about, but the American people will be enlightened, and hopefully this body will vote, hopefully in the majority way, that the priority, the No. 1 priority is our men and women in uniform when they come home.

VETERANS BENEFITS ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2007

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I urge my colleagues to support consideration of S. 1315, as reported by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, the proposed Veterans Benefits Enhancement Act of 2007. This is a comprehensive bill that would improve benefits and services for veterans, both young and old, and it should be debated and voted on.

I believe that a brief recap of how we came to seek cloture on this veterans bill would be helpful in assisting my colleagues in their deliberation on cloture.

Last June the committee held a markup during which the then-ranking member, the Senator from Idaho, offered an amendment that would have modified a provision of the bill relating to Filipino veterans of World War II. This amendment would have reduced the amount of pension that Filipino veterans residing in the Philippines would receive.

I stress that the amendment was not to eliminate pension benefits for these veterans from the bill entirely—it was merely to reduce the benefit in line with what the Senator from Idaho viewed as appropriate. I disagreed with his assessment and we debated the issue. Ultimately, his amendment was not adopted.

As that markup concluded, the Senator from Idaho noted that he intended to bring his amendment regarding the pension issue to the floor during consideration of S. 1315, a step I certainly understood and accepted.

The report on S. 1315 was filed in August and I expected that it would come to the floor in September. However, there was an unexpected change in the committee's Republican leadership in early September, with the Senator from Idaho being replaced by the Senator from North Carolina. I did not push for consideration of S. 1315 while the new ranking member took over the responsibilities of the position.

When in October, committee staff began, at my direction, to seek agreement for the bill to be brought to the floor, those efforts were not successful.

Later in the fall, despite his suggestion that there was need for debate, the former ranking member curiously objected to my attempt to gain unanimous consent to debate the bill. I wrote to my colleague in an attempt to find a middle ground between the level of pension benefits in the bill as reported, and the level that he had sought during the June markup.

On December 13, 2007, I received a letter from the former ranking member that indicated that he did not feel that we were far apart from finding a compromise on the bill, and that he looked forward to working with me to gain final passage.

However, my optimism was short-lived. On that same day, the majority staff received a counteroffer from the minority staff, on behalf of the committee's new ranking member, the Senator from North Carolina, which proposed to entirely eliminate pension benefits for Filipino veterans residing in the Philippines from the bill.

Shortly thereafter, I was surprised to learn that this counteroffer was embraced by the committee's former ranking member—rendering his offer to negotiate null and void.

Additional efforts earlier this year to find a compromise or, at a minimum, to enter into an agreement for debate, were again rejected.

Now, after over 7 months of obstruction in bringing this bill to the floor, we have to resort to a cloture vote on the motion to proceed to the bill, an action unprecedented in the history of the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

I am dismayed that, along with the Filipino veterans provisions included in the bill, a number of other worthy provisions have not been enacted because of obstruction by the minority.

Among other things, S. 1315, as reported, would: Establish a new program of insurance for service-connected veterans; expand eligibility for retroactive benefits from traumatic injury protection coverage under the Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance program; increase the maximum amount of veterans mortgage life insurance that a service-connected disabled veteran may purchase; recognize that individuals with severe burn injuries need specially adapted housing benefits; and extend for 2 years the monthly educational assistance allowance for apprenticeship or other on-the-job training.

This is by no means a comprehensive recitation of the 8 titles and 38 provisions that are in this omnibus legislation. However, I hope it gives our colleagues an overview of the types of benefits that servicemembers and veterans stand to gain by passage of this legislation.

I ask our colleagues to vote in favor of cloture so as to bring this measure to the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican whip.

SADDAM HUSSEIN AND AL-QAIDA

Mr. KYL. Mr. President, it has been commonplace for critics of the war in Iraq to minimize, if not actually dismiss entirely, the links between Saddam Hussein and terrorists generally and al-Qaida specifically. This is part of a systematic effort by some, especially now that there are irrefutable signs of progress from the military

surge in Iraq, to change the narrative on the war. Instead of debating the way forward, they prefer instead to relitigate the past. In fact, earlier this month the distinguished majority leader stated:

Prior to the invasion of Iraq, there was not a terrorist in Iraq. And now, of course, there are lots of them.

It is true that there are a lot of terrorists in Iraq which, of course, is the reason why we are still there fighting them and need to stay there until they are defeated. But it is not true that there were no terrorists in Iraq prior to our invasion. In fact, Saddam's ties to terrorists are well known and were confirmed yet again in a recent report commissioned by the Pentagon's Joint Forces Command. This report found that Saddam Hussein actively supported and financed terrorist activities during the years he controlled Iraq. The report, entitled "Iraqi Perspectives Project: Saddam and Terrorism: Emerging Insights from Captured Iraqi Documents," was released on March 13. It was the product of the analysis of over 600,000 documents captured in Iraq since 2003. It concluded that Saddam's security forces and Osama bin Laden's terrorist network "operated with similar aims (at least in the short term)."

According to the report:

Though the execution of Iraqi terror plots was not always successful, evidence shows that Saddam's use of terrorist tactics and his support for terrorist groups remained strong up until the collapse of his regime.

The report found that Saddam Hussein worked with several different terrorist groups, including groups with direct ties to al-Qaida. Many were engaged in a jihad against the United States and its allies. It wasn't necessary to read with excruciating detail the entire 1,600-page report to find proof of these links; all of the above was available for all to see in the brief abstract that accompanied the report.

Stephen Hayes offers extensive analysis of the entire report by the Joint Forces Command in the Weekly Standard magazine on March 24, 2008.

I ask unanimous consent to have his article printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Weekly Standard, Mar. 24, 2008]

SADDAM'S DANGEROUS FRIENDS: WHAT A PENTAGON REVIEW OF 600,000 IRAQI DOCUMENTS TELLS US

(By Stephen F. Hayes)

This ought to be big news. Throughout the early and mid-1990s, Saddam Hussein actively supported an influential terrorist group headed by the man who is now al Qaeda's second-in-command, according to an exhaustive study issued last week by the Pentagon. "Saddam supported groups that either associated directly with al Qaeda (such as the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, led at one time by bin Laden's deputy, Ayman al-Zawahiri) or that generally shared al Qaeda's stated goals and objectives." According to the Pentagon study, Egyptian Islamic Jihad was one of many jihadist groups that Iraq's former dictator funded, trained, equipped, and armed.

The study was commissioned by the Joint Forces Command in Norfolk, Virginia, and produced by analysts at the Institute for Defense Analyses, a federally funded military think tank. It is entitled "Iraqi Perspectives Project: Saddam and Terrorism: Emerging Insights from Captured Iraqi Documents." The study is based on a review of some 600,000 documents captured in postwar Iraq. Those "documents" include letters, memos, computer files, audiotapes, and videotapes produced by Saddam Hussein's regime, especially his intelligence services. The analysis section of the study covers 59 pages. The appendices, which include copies of some of the captured documents and translations, put the entire study at approximately 1,600 pages.

An abstract that describes the study reads, in part:

Because Saddam's security organizations and Osama bin Laden's terrorist network operated with similar aims (at least in the short term), considerable overlap was inevitable when monitoring, contacting, financing, and training the same outside groups. This created both the appearance of and, in some way, a 'de facto' link between the organizations. At times, these organizations would work together in pursuit of shared goals but still maintain their autonomy and independence because of innate caution and mutual distrust. Though the execution of Iraqi terror plots was not always successful, evidence shows that Saddam's use of terrorist tactics and his support for terrorist groups remained strong up until the collapse of the regime."

Among the study's other notable findings:

In 1993, as Osama bin Laden's fighters battled Americans in Somalia, Saddam Hussein personally ordered the formation of an Iraqi terrorist group to join the battle there.

For more than two decades, the Iraqi regime trained non-Iraqi jihadists in training camps throughout Iraq.

According to a 1993 internal Iraqi intelligence memo, the regime was supporting a secret Islamic Palestinian organization dedicated to "armed jihad against the Americans and Western interests."

In the 1990s, Iraq's military intelligence directorate trained and equipped "Sudanese fighters."

In 1998, the Iraqi regime offered "financial and moral support" to a new group of jihadists in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq.

In 2002, the year before the war began, the Iraqi regime hosted in Iraq a series of 13 conferences for non-Iraqi jihadist groups.

That same year, a branch of the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) issued hundreds of Iraqi passports for known terrorists.

There is much, much more. Documents reveal that the regime stockpiled bombmaking materials in Iraqi embassies around the world and targeted Western journalists for assassination. In July 2001, an Iraqi Intelligence agent described an al Qaeda affiliate in Bahrain, the Army of Muhammad, as "under the wings of bin Laden." Although the organization "is an offshoot of bin Laden," the fact that it has a different name "can be a way of camouflaging the organization." The agent is told to deal with the al Qaeda group according to "priorities previously established."

In describing the relations between the Army of Muhammad and the Iraqi regime, the authors of the Pentagon study come to this conclusion: "Captured documents reveal that the regime was willing to co-opt or support organizations it knew to be part of al Qaeda—as long as that organization's near-term goals supported Saddam's long-term vision."

As I said, this ought to be big news. And, in a way, it was. A headline in the New York

Times, a cursory item in the Washington Post, and stories on NPR and ABC News reported that the study showed no links between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein.

How can a study offering an unprecedented look into the closed regime of a brutal dictator, with over 1,600 pages of "strong evidence that links the regime of Saddam Hussein to regional and global terrorism," in the words of its authors, receive a wave-of-the-hand dismissal from America's most prestigious news outlets? All it took was a leak to a glib reporter, one misleading line in the study's executive summary, a bone-headed Pentagon press office, an incompetent White House, and widespread journalistic negligence.

On Monday, March 10, 2008, Warren P. Strobel, a reporter from the McClatchy News Service first reported that the new Pentagon study was coming. "An exhaustive review of more than 600,000 Iraqi documents that were captured after the 2003 U.S. invasion has found no evidence that Saddam Hussein's regime had any operational links with Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda terrorist network." McClatchy is a newspaper chain that serves many of America's largest cities. The national security reporters in its Washington bureau have earned a reputation as reliable outlets for anti-Bush administration spin on intelligence. Strobel quoted a "U.S. official familiar with the report" who told him that the search of Iraqi documents yielded no evidence of a "direct operational link" between Iraq and al Qaeda. Strobel used the rest of the article to attempt to demonstrate that this undermined the Bush administration's prewar claims with regard to Iraq and terrorism.

With the study not scheduled for release for two more days, this article shaped subsequent coverage, which was no doubt the leaker's purpose. Stories from other media outlets tracked McClatchy very closely but began to incorporate a highly misleading phrase taken from the executive summary: "This study found no 'smoking gun' (i.e. direct connection) between Saddam's Iraq and al Qaeda." This is how the Washington Post wrote it up:

An examination of more than 600,000 Iraqi documents, audio and video records collected by U.S. forces since the March 2003 invasion has concluded that there is 'no smoking gun' supporting the Bush administration's prewar assertion of an 'operational relationship' between Saddam Hussein and the al-Qaeda terrorist network, sources familiar with the study said."

Much of the confusion might have been avoided if the Bush administration had done anything to promote the study. An early version of the Pentagon study was provided to National Security Adviser Steve Hadley more than a year ago, before November 2006. In recent weeks, as the Pentagon handled the rollout of the study, Hadley was tasked with briefing President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney. It's unclear whether he shared the study with President Bush, and NSC officials did not respond to repeated requests for comment. But sources close to Cheney say the vice president was blindsided.

After the erroneous report from McClatchy, two officials involved with the study became very concerned about the misreporting of its contents. One of them said in an interview that he found the media coverage of the study "disappointing." Another, James Lacey, expressed his concern in an email to Karen Finn in the Pentagon press office, who was handling the rollout of the study. On Tuesday, the day before it was scheduled for release, Lacey wrote: "1. The story has been leaked. 2. ABC News is doing a story based on the executive summary tonight. 3. The Washington Post is doing a

story based on rumors they heard from ABC News. The document is being misrepresented. I recommend we put [it] out and on a website immediately."

Finn declined, saying that members of Congress had not been told the study was coming. "Despite the leak, there are Congressional notifications and then an official public release. This should not be posted on the web until these actions are complete."

Still under the misimpression that the Pentagon study undermined the case for war, McClatchy's Warren Strobel saw this bureaucratic infighting as a conspiracy to suppress the study:

The Pentagon on Wednesday canceled plans for broad public release of a study that found no pre-Iraq war link between late Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and the al Qaeda terrorist network. . . . The reversal highlighted the politically sensitive nature of its conclusions, which were first reported Monday by McClatchy.

In making their case for invading Iraq in 2002 and 2003, President Bush and his top national security aides claimed that Saddam's regime had ties to Osama bin Laden's al Qaeda terrorist network.

But the study, based on more than 600,000 captured documents, including audio and video files, found that while Saddam sponsored terrorism, particularly against opponents of his regime and against Israel, there was no evidence of an al Qaeda link.

An examination of the rest of the study makes the White House decision to ignore the Pentagon study even more curious. The first section explores "Terror as an Instrument of State Power" and describes documents detailing Fedayeen Saddam terrorist training camps in Iraq. Graduates of the terror training camps would be dispatched to sensitive sites to carry out their assassinations and bombings. In May 1999, the regime plotted an operation code named "Blessed July" in which the top graduates of the terrorist training courses would be sent to London, Iran, and Kurdistan to conduct assassinations and bombings.

A separate set of documents presents, according to the Pentagon study, "evidence of logistical preparation for terrorist operations in other nations, including those in the West." In one letter, a director of the Iraqi Intelligence Service (IIS) responds to a request from Saddam for an inventory of weapons stockpiled in Iraqi embassies throughout the world. The terrorist tools include missile launchers and missiles, "American missile launchers," explosive materials, TNT, plastic explosive charges, Kalashnikov rifles, and "booby-trapped suitcases."

The July 2002 Iraqi memo describes how these weapons were distributed to the operatives in embassies.

Between the year 2000 and 2002 explosive materials were transported to embassies outside Iraq for special work, upon the approval of the Director of the Iraqi Intelligence Service. The responsibility for these materials is in the hands of heads of stations. Some of these materials were transported in the political mail carriers [Diplomatic Pouch]. Some of these materials were transported by car in booby-trapped briefcases.

Saddam also recruited non-Iraqi jihadists to serve as suicide bombers on behalf of the Iraqi regime. According to the study, captured documents "indicate that as early as January 1998, the scheduling of suicide volunteers was routine enough to warrant not only a national-level policy letter but a formal schedule—during summer vacation—built around maximizing availability of Arab citizens in Iraq on Saddam-funded scholarships."

The second section of the Pentagon study concerns "State Relationships with Ter-

rorist Groups." An IIS document dated March 18, 1993, lists nine terrorist "organizations that our agency [IIS] cooperates with and have relations with various elements in many parts of the Arab world and who also have the expertise to carry out assignments" on behalf of the regime. Several well-known Palestinian terrorist organizations make the list, including Abu Nidal's Fatah-Revolutionary Council and Abu Abbas's Palestinian Liberation Front. Another group, the secret "Renewal and Jihad Organization" is described this way in the Iraqi memo:

It believes in armed jihad against the Americans and Western interests. They also believe our leader [Saddam Hussein], may God protect him, is the true leader in the war against the infidels. The organization's leaders live in Jordan when they visited Iraq two months ago they demonstrated a willingness to carry out operations against American interests at any time."

Other groups listed in the Iraqi memo include the "Islamic Scholars Group" and the "Pakistan Scholars Group."

There are two terrorist organizations on the Iraqi Intelligence list that deserve special consideration: the Afghani Islamic Party of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad of Ayman al Zawahiri.

This IIS document provides this description of the Afghani Islamic Party:

It was founded in 1974 when its leader [Gulbuddin Hekmatyar] escaped from Afghanistan to Pakistan. It is considered one of the extreme political religious movements against the West, and one of the strongest Sunni parties in Afghanistan. The organization relies on financial support from Iraq and we have had good relations with Hekmatyar since 1989.

In his book *Holy War, Inc.*, Peter Bergen, a terrorism analyst who has long been skeptical of Iraq-al Qaeda connections, describes Hekmatyar as Osama bin Laden's "alter ego." Bergen writes: "Bin Laden and Hekmatyar worked closely together. During the early 1990s al-Qaeda's training camps in the Khost region of eastern Afghanistan were situated in an area controlled by Hekmatyar's party."

It's worth dwelling for a moment on that set of facts. An internal Iraqi Intelligence document reports that Iraqis have "good relations" with Hekmatyar and that his organization "relies on financial support from Iraq." At precisely the same time, Hekmatyar "worked closely" with Osama bin Laden and his Afghani Islamic Party hosted "al Qaeda's terrorist training camps" in eastern Afghanistan.

The IIS document also reveals that Saddam was funding another close ally of bin Laden, the EIJ organization of Ayman al Zawahiri.

In a meeting in the Sudan we agreed to renew our relations with the Islamic Jihad Organization in Egypt. Our information on the group is as follows:

It was established in 1979.

Its goal is to apply the Islamic shari'a law and establish Islamic rule.

It is considered one of the most brutal Egyptian organizations. It carried out numerous successful operations, including the assassination of [Egyptian President Anwar] Sadat.

We have previously met with the organization's representative and we agreed on a plan to carry out commando operations against the Egyptian regime.

Zawahiri arrived in Afghanistan in the mid-1980s, and "from the start he concentrated his efforts on getting close to bin Laden," according to Lawrence Wright, in *The Looming Tower*. The leaders of EIJ quickly became leaders of bin Laden's orga-

nizations. "He soon succeeded in placing trusted members of Islamic Jihad in key positions around bin Laden," Wright reported in the definitive profile of Zawahiri, published in the *New Yorker* in September 2002. "According to the Islamist attorney Montasser al-Zayat, 'Zawahiri completely controlled bin Laden. The largest share of bin Laden's financial support went to Zawahiri and the Jihad organization.'"

Later, Wright describes the founding of al Qaeda.

Toward the end of 1989, a meeting took place in the Afghan town of Khost at a mujahideen camp. A Sudanese fighter named Jamal al-Fadl was among the participants, and he later testified about the event in a New York courtroom during one of the trials connected with the 1998 bombing of the American embassies in East Africa. According to Fadl, the meeting was attended by ten men—four or five of them Egyptians, including Zawahiri. Fadl told the court that the chairman of the meeting, an Iraqi known as Abu Ayoub, proposed the formation of a new organization that would wage jihad beyond the borders of Afghanistan. There was some dispute about the name, but ultimately the new organization came to be called Al Qaeda—the Base. The alliance was conceived as a loose affiliation among individual mujahideen and established groups, and was dominated by Egyptian Islamic Jihad. The ultimate boss, however, was Osama bin Laden, who held the checkbook.

Once again, it's worth dwelling on these facts for a moment. In 1989, Ayman al Zawahiri attended the founding meeting of al Qaeda. He was literally present at the creation, and his EIJ "dominated" the new organization headed by Osama bin Laden.

In the early 1990s, Zawahiri and bin Laden moved their operations to Sudan. After a fundraising trip to the United States in the spring of 1993, Zawahiri returned to Sudan where, again according to Wright, he "began working more closely with bin Laden, and most of the Egyptian members of Islamic Jihad went on the Al Qaeda payroll." Although some members of EIJ were skeptical of bin Laden and his global aspirations, Zawahiri sought a de facto merger with al Qaeda. One of his top assistants would later say Zawahiri had told him that "joining with bin Laden [was] the only solution to keeping the Jihad organization alive."

Again, at precisely the same time Zawahiri was "joining with bin Laden," the spring of 1993, he was being funded by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. As Zawahiri's jihadists trained in al Qaeda camps in Sudan, his representative to Iraq was planning "commando operations" against the Egyptian government with the IIS.

Another captured Iraqi document from early 1993 "reports on contact with a large number of terrorist groups in the region, including those that maintained an office or liaison in Iraq." In the same folder is a memo from Saddam Hussein to a member of his Revolutionary Council ordering the formation of "a group to start hunting Americans present on Arab soil, especially Somalia." A second memo to the director of the IIS, instructs him to revise the plan for "operations inside Somalia."

More recently, captured "annual reports" of the IIS reveal support for terrorist organizations in the months leading up to the U.S. invasion in March 2003. According to the Pentagon study, "the IIS hosted thirteen conferences in 2002 for a number of Palestinian and other organizations, including delegations from the Islamic Jihad Movement and the Director General for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of al-Ahwaz." The same annual report "also notes that among the 699 passports, renewals and other official

documentation that the IIS issued, many were issued to known members of terrorist organizations."

The Pentagon study goes on to describe captured documents that instruct the IIS to maintain contact with all manner of Arab movement and others that "reveal that later IIS activities went beyond just maintaining contact." Throughout the 1990s, the Iraqi regime's General Military Intelligence Directorate "was training Sudanese fighters inside Iraq."

The second section of the Pentagon study also discusses captured documents related to the Islamic Resistance organization in Kurdistan from 1998 and 1999. The documents show that the Iraqi regime provided "financial and moral support" to members of the group, which would later become part of the al Qaeda affiliate in the region, Ansar al Islam.

The third section of the Pentagon study is called "Iraq and Terrorism: Three Cases." One of the cases is that of the Army of Muhammad, the al Qaeda affiliate in Bahrain. A series of memoranda order an Iraqi Intelligence operative in Bahrain to explore a relationship with its leaders. On July 9, 2001, the agent reports back: "Information available to us is that the group is under the wings of bin Laden. They receive their directions from Yemen. Their objectives are the same as bin Laden." Later, he lists the organization's objectives.

Jihad in the name of God.

Striking the embassies and other Jewish and American interests anywhere in the world.

Attacking the American and British military bases in the Arab land.

Striking American embassies and interests unless the Americans pull out their forces from the Arab lands and discontinue their support for Israel.

Disrupting oil exports [to] the Americans from Arab countries and threatening tankers carrying oil to them.

A separate memo reveals that the Army of Muhammad has requested assistance from Iraq. The study authors summarize the response by writing, "the local IIS station has been told to deal with them in accordance with priorities previously established. The IIS agent goes on to inform the Director that this organization is an offshoot of bin Laden, but that their objectives are similar but with different names that can be a way of camouflaging the organization."

We never learn what those "previous priorities" were and thus what, if anything, came of these talks. But it is instructive that the operative in Bahrain understood the importance of disguising relations with al Qaeda and that the director of IIS, knowing that the group was affiliated with bin Laden and sought to attack Americans, seemed more interested in continuing the relationship than in ending it.

The fourth and final section of the Pentagon study is called "The Business of Terror." The authors write: "An example of indirect cooperation is the movement led by Osama bin Laden. During the 1990s, both Saddam and bin Laden wanted the West, particularly the United States, out of Muslim lands (or in the view of Saddam, the 'Arab nation'). . . . In pursuit of their own separate but surprisingly 'parallel' visions, Saddam and bin Laden often found a common enemy in the United States."

They further note that Saddam's security organizations and bin Laden's network were recruiting within the same demographic, spouting much of the same rhetoric, and promoting a common historical narrative that promised a return to a glorious past. That these movements (pan-Arab and pan-Islamic) had many similarities and strategic parallels

does not mean they saw themselves in that light. Nevertheless, these similarities created more than just the appearance of cooperation. Common interests, even without common cause, increased the aggregate terrorist threat.

As much as we have learned from this impressive collection of documents, it is only a fraction of what we will know in 10, 20, or 50 years. The authors themselves acknowledge the limits of their work.

In fact, there are several captured Iraqi documents that have been authenticated by the U.S. government that were not included in the study but add to the picture it sketches. One document, authenticated by the Defense Intelligence Agency and first reported on 60 Minutes, is dated March 28, 1992. It describes Osama bin Laden as an Iraqi intelligence asset "in good contact" with the IIS station in Syria.

Another Iraqi document, this one from the mid-1990s, was first reported in the New York Times on June 25, 2004. Authenticated by a Pentagon and intelligence working group, the document was titled "Iraqi Effort to Cooperate with Saudi Opposition Groups and Individuals." The working group concluded that it "corroborates and expands on previous reporting" on contacts between Iraq and al Qaeda. It revealed that a Sudanese government official met with Uday Hussein and the director of the IIS in 1994 and reported that bin Laden was willing to meet in Sudan. Bin Laden, according to the Iraqi document, was then "approached by our side" after "presidential approval" for the liaison was given. The former head of Iraqi Intelligence Directorate 4 met with bin Laden on February 19, 1995. The document further states that bin Laden "had some reservations about being labeled an Iraqi operative"—a comment that suggests the possibility had been discussed.

Bin Laden requested that Iraq's state-run television network broadcast anti-Saudi propaganda, and the document indicates that the Iraqis agreed to do this. The al Qaeda leader also proposed "joint operations against foreign forces" in Saudi Arabia. There is no Iraqi response provided in the documents. When bin Laden left Sudan for Afghanistan in May 1996, the Iraqis sought "other channels through which to handle the relationship, in light of his current location." The IIS memo directs that "cooperation between the two organizations should be allowed to develop freely through discussion and agreement."

In another instance, the new Pentagon study makes reference to captured documents detailing the Iraqi relationship with Abu Sayyaf, the al Qaeda affiliate in the Philippines founded by Osama bin Laden's brother-in-law. But the Pentagon study does not mention the most significant element of those documents, first reported in these pages. In a memo from Ambassador Salah Samarmad to the Secondary Policy Directorate of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, we learn that the Iraqi regime had been funding and equipping Abu Sayyaf, which had been responsible for a series of high-profile kidnappings. The Iraqi operative informs Baghdad that such support had been suspended. "The kidnappers were formerly (from the previous year) receiving money and purchasing combat weapons. From now on we (IIS) are not giving them this opportunity and are not on speaking terms with them." That support would resume soon enough, and shortly before the war a high-ranking Iraqi diplomat named Hisham Hussein would be expelled from the Philippines after his cell phone number appeared on an Abu Sayyaf cell phone used to detonate a bomb.

What's happening here is obvious. Military historians and terrorism analysts are en-

gaged in a good faith effort to review the captured documents from the Iraqi regime and provide a dispassionate, fact-based examination of Saddam Hussein's long support of jihadist terrorism. Most reporters don't care. They are trapped in a world where the Bush administration lied to the country about an Iraq-al Qaeda connection, and no amount of evidence to the contrary—not even the words of the fallen Iraqi regime itself—can convince them to reexamine their mistaken assumptions.

Bush administration officials, meanwhile, tell us that the Iraq war is the central front in the war on terror and that American national security depends on winning there. And yet they are too busy or too tired or too lazy to correct these fundamental misperceptions about the case for war, the most important decision of the Bush presidency.

What good is the truth if nobody knows it?

Mr. KYL. The Joint Forces Command report sheds light on the relationship between Saddam Hussein and Ayman al-Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's second in command.

I quote:

Saddam supported groups either associated directly with al Qaeda (such as the Egyptian Islamic Jihad (EIJ), led at one time by bin Laden's deputy Ayman al-Zawahiri) or that generally shared al Qaeda's stated goals and objectives.

Mr. Hayes notes in his article that Zawahiri's organization was being financed by Saddam Hussein at the very time Zawahiri was working almost exclusively with bin Laden. In fact, Zawahiri had been working with al-Qaida from its inception in late 1989. By 1993, Zawahiri, as the leader of the EIJ, sought to merge the organization with al-Qaida and, in fact, the two terrorist organizations eventually merged in 1998.

The Standard further reported that:

Captured documents revealed that the regime was willing to co-opt support organizations it knew to be part of al Qaeda as long as that organization's near-term goals supported Saddam's long-term vision.

The more than 600,000 documents likely revealed only a fraction of what we will ultimately know of the true relationship between bin Laden, the global jihad, and Saddam Hussein. Given this information, it is a surprise that many in the mainstream media have concluded only that there was no smoking gun linking al-Qaida and Saddam Hussein, thus failing to report the key findings in the report to the American people.

I am not one who supports relitigating why it was necessary for the United States to remove Saddam Hussein from power. But for those who find themselves stuck in the past, the Iraqi Perspective Project provides yet another substantial body of evidence, adding to that which was before the Congress when we authorized the Iraq mission. I want to refer to one item in that body of evidence, a letter, dated October 7, 2002, from CIA Director George Tenet to the Honorable Bob Graham, then chairman of the Select Committee on intelligence. Among the things he writes in this letter, these are the items that were available to us

before we authorized the invasion of Iraq. He refers to a question by Senator BAYH about Iraqi links to al-Qaida. He says Senators could draw the following points from unclassified documents. There was, of course, much more that was classified. I will quote this brief portion of his letter:

Our understanding of relationship between Iraq and al-Qa'ida is evolving and is based on sources of varying reliability. Some of the information we have received comes from detainees, including some of high rank.

We have solid reporting of senior level contacts between Iraq and al-Qa'ida going back a decade.

Credible information indicates that Iraq and al-Qa'ida have discussed safe haven and reciprocal non-aggression.

Since Operation Enduring Freedom, we have solid evidence of the presence in Iraq of al-Qa'ida members, including some that have been in Baghdad.

We have credible reporting that al-Qa'ida leaders sought contacts in Iraq who could help them acquire WMD capabilities. The reporting also stated that Iraq has provided training to al-Qa'ida members in the areas of poisons and gases and making conventional bombs.

Iraq's increasing support to extremist Palestinians, coupled with growing indications of a relationship with al-Qa'ida, suggest that Baghdad's links to terrorists will increase, even absent US military action.

I commend the Joint Forces Command for its ongoing, exhaustive review of this record of intelligence collected in Iraq. I urge all colleagues to take the time to educate themselves on its findings. I urge the administration to undertake a serious effort to correct the misimpressions formed in recent years about this important issue.

There can be no doubt. Saddam Hussein was a threat. He actively supported terrorists both in and outside of Iraq, and the world is a safer place for him having been removed from power.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

EQUAL PAY DAY

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, tomorrow is Equal Pay Day. What is Equal Pay Day? That is the day that symbolizes how far into the year a woman must work from the previous year on average to earn as much as a man earned by December 31 of last year. It is unbelievable to me that more than four decades after passage of the Equal Pay Act and the Civil Rights Act, women are still making only 77 cents on the dollar to what a man makes. In Iowa, it is even worse. The Iowa Workforce Development Agency found that across all industries, women in my State make less than 62 percent of what men make.

Discrimination takes many forms. Sometimes it is brazen and in your face, like Jim Crow and apartheid. Sometimes discrimination is silent and insidious. That is what is happening in workplaces across America today. Millions of female-dominated jobs—social workers, teachers, childcare workers, nurses, so many more—are equivalent

to male-dominated jobs, but they pay dramatically less. The Census Bureau has compiled data on hundreds of job categories, but it found only five job categories where women typically earn as much as a man. Defenders of this status quo offer all manner of bogus explanations on why women make less. How many times have you heard the fairy tale that women work for fulfillment and men work to support their families? Of course, this ignores the great majority of single women who work to support themselves and married women whose paycheck is all that allows their families to make ends meet, to put a little bit of money away for a rainy day or perhaps to send a child to college.

It ignores the harsh reality that so many women face in the workplace where they have to work twice as hard to be taken seriously or, say, get pushed into being a cashier when they had applied for a better paying sales job. These pervasive acts of discrimination deny women fair pay and they also deny women basic dignity.

Let me cite one example of the discrimination I am talking about. Last year in a hearing in our Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, we heard remarkable testimony from Dr. Philip Cohen of the University of North Carolina. Dr. Cohen compared nurses' aides, who are overwhelmingly women, and truck drivers who are overwhelmingly men. In both groups, the average age is 43. Both require "medium" amounts of strength. Nurses' aides on average have more education and training. But nurses' aides make less than 60 percent of what truck drivers make.

Given that this discrimination is so obvious and pervasive, you would expect that women would have no trouble at all obtaining simple justice in our court system. But in a major decision last June, in the case of *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company*, the Supreme Court actually took us backward. In a 5-to-4 ruling, the Court made it extremely difficult for women to go to court to pursue claims of pay discrimination, even in cases where the discrimination is flagrant.

A jury acknowledged that Lilly Ledbetter, a former supervisor at Goodyear, had been paid \$6,000 less than her lowest paid male counterpart. But the Supreme Court rejected her discrimination claim. Why? The Court held that women workers must file a discrimination claim within 180 days of their pay being set, even if they were not aware at the time that their pay was significantly lower than their male counterparts.

Justice Ginsburg said, in a forceful dissent, this is totally out of touch with the real world of the workplace. In the real world, pay scales are often kept secret and employees are in the dark about their coworkers' salaries. Lacking such information, it is difficult to determine when pay discrimination begins. Furthermore, vast dis-

crepancies are often a function of time. If your original pay was a little bit lower than your colleague's pay, and then over 20 years you get smaller raises every year, you end up with a huge gap after 20 years. But if you can only sue for the most recent pay determination, this misses 20 years of discrimination. As a result, in Ms. Ledbetter's case, she is going to get a dramatically smaller pension for the rest of her life based upon that lower pay level.

Ms. Ledbetter, who testified before our committee last year, is injured twice: Over 20 years of flagrant discrimination in the workplace and getting paid less, and now for the remainder of her life, as a retired person, she will get less pension because of that discrimination. Twice she is injured.

What the Ledbetter decision means is that once the 180-day window for bringing a lawsuit is passed, the discrimination gets grandfathered in. This creates a free harbor for employers who have paid female workers less than men over a long period of time. Basically it gives the worst offenders a free pass to continue their gender discrimination.

Ledbetter was a bad decision, but there is one thing we can do with Supreme Court decisions. We can pass legislation to fix them. So I have joined with Senator KENNEDY and others to reverse the damage done by that decision. Our bill would establish that the "unlawful employment practice" under the Civil Rights Act is the payment of a discriminatory salary, not the original setting of the pay level.

Well, this is a good start, but it is not enough. It is not good enough to go back to the way the law worked last year because women, as I said, are still making less than 77 cents on the dollar as compared to men. That is intolerable. Moreover, if pay scales are still kept secret, if there is not transparency, how can women know if they are being discriminated against?

That is why we need to pass my Fair Pay Act, a bill which I have introduced in every Congress going back to 1996. I just keep introducing it every Congress. Here is what it does. It is very simple. In addition to requiring that employers provide equal pay for equivalent jobs, my bill would require disclosure of pay scales and rates for all job categories in a given company. Now, I did not say they had to disclose every single person's pay. I said pay scales for categories of jobs. Now, this would give women the information they need to identify discriminatory pay practices, and this could reduce the need for costly litigation in the first place.

When Lilly Ledbetter testified before our committee last year, I asked her—I told her about the bill; I told her what kind of information it would provide—I asked her if she had that information, could she have, 20 years ago, negotiated for better pay and avoided litigation? She answered: Of course.

Well, there are countless more Lilly Ledbetters out there who are paid less