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June 29, 2006

The Honorable John Negroponte
Director of National Intelligence
Washington, DC 20511

Dear Ambassador Negroponte:

I have reviewed the transcript of the June 21 "Call-In Briefing On Declassification of Key Points From a National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC) Analytic Piece" organized for reporters by your office and attributable only to "U.S. Intelligence Officials". This briefing has raised several concerns.

First, I am very disappointed by the inaccurate, incomplete, and occasionally misleading comments made by the briefers in two key instances:

- The briefers attempted to portray my requests to declassify the document as demanding that the document be released "in short order" within a 48 hour time frame, creating the impression that I pressured your office to conduct a hurried declassification review. This is false and you know it to be false. The document was first requested by Senator Santorum from the U.S. Army on April 12. He subsequently made a personal request to you for the material on June 5. He received no response to either. The fact of the matter is that the Intelligence Community had taken no action on the initial request for access to the material for over two months before even my first request. This lack of responsiveness by the Intelligence Community is what lead Senator Santorum to seek my help in the first place.
- The briefers mislead the journalists by stating that "The priority of the ISG was to look for post-Desert Storm munitions, newer stuff. It was not looking for the older stuff. And so this doesn't really bear on the issue." This assertion is demonstrably false: the Transmittal Message to the ISG's report plainly states "The goal of this report is to provide facts and meaning concerning the Regime's experience with WMD. It aims to provide a dynamic analysis rather than simple static accounting of the

debris found following Operation Iraqi Freedom.” It further noted that “Such a picture would seem to be more instructive than a simple frozen inventory of the program remnants at one point in time.”

In addition, other specific attempts were made to downplay the significance of relevant facts. Because this call was organized by your office, I assume that you authorized and were familiar with its content. I would appreciate an explanation and correction of these inaccurate and misleading assertions.

Second, I am concerned about the process followed with respect to this call. Your office provided a transcript of the call to the Committee with the names of the briefers removed. When my staff requested the names of the briefers from your office, it was provided only the name of the DNI’s representative and denied the others, despite the fact that the call was organized by your office and conducted by government employees in their official capacity. In addition, officials on the call indicated that “The attribution is U.S. intelligence officials – based on the classified nature of the material” You should be trying to stop anonymous discussion of classified information by persons unwilling to associate their names with their assertions rather than sanctioning and promoting it. Accordingly, I am renewing my request for the names of the briefers, and formally requesting a full, unredacted transcript of the call. If that material can be provided to the news media (as it was), it can be provided to the Committee. I would also like an explanation of whether, how, and for what reason the briefers may have been authorized to anonymously discuss “classified” matters on this call.

Third, I have additional concerns regarding classified matters that I will raise in a classified format.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Hoekstra". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Peter Hoekstra
Chairman