

Appendix 4

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RPTS JOHNSON

DCMN ROSEN

HEARING: BENGHAZI

Thursday, November 15, 2012

U.S. House of Representatives,
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:13 a.m., in Room HVC-304, the Capitol, the Honorable Mike Rogers [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Rogers, Thornberry, Myrick, Miller, Conaway, King, LoBiondo, Nunes, Westmoreland, Bachmann, Rooney, Heck, Calvert, Frelinghuysen, Ruppertsberger, Thompson, Schakowsky, Langevin, Schiff, Gutierrez, and Dicks.

Also Present: Senator Burr, and Christian Rock, staffer to Senator Burr.

Staff Present: J. Michael Allen, Staff Director; Christopher Doneso, Chief Counsel; Darren Dick, Deputy Staff Director; Jamil Jaffer, Senior Counsel; Katie Wheelbarger, Senior Counsel; Thomas Corcoran, Senior Policy Advisor; Leah Scott, Executive Assistant; Ashley Lowry, Chief Clerk; Bryan Smith, Budget Director; Nathan Hauser, Professional Staff Member; Sarah Geffroy, Senior Counsel; George Pappas, Professional Staff Member; Frank Garcia, Professional Staff Member; Chelsey Campbell, Professional Staff Member; Brooke Eisele, Professional Staff Member; Geof Kahn, Professional Staff Member; Susan Phalen, Communications Director; Kristin Jepson, Security Director; Todd Jones, Congressional Fellow; Mike Shank, Minority Staff Director; Michael Bahar, Minority

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General Counsel; Janet Fisher, Minority Counsel; Bob Minehart, Minority Professional Staff Member; Carly Scott, Minority Professional Staff Member; Linda Cohen, Minority Professional Staff Member; Heather Molino, Minority Professional Staff Member; and Amanda Rogers-Thorpe, Minority Professional Staff Member.

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THE CHAIRMAN: I will now recognize the ranking member for a motion to close the hearing due to security concerns.

MR. RUPPERSBERGER: Pursuant to rule 11, clause 2(g)2(a), I move the hearing be closed because disclosure of testimony, evidence, or other matters being considered would endanger national security.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would ask the clerk to call the roll as called for by the ranking member.

THE CLERK: Chairman Rogers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Thornberry?

MR. THORNBERRY: Aye.

THE CLERK: Ms. Myrick?

MS. MYRICK: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Miller?

MR. MILLER: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Conaway?

MR. CONAWAY: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. King?

MR. KING: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. LoBiondo?

MR. LOBIONDO: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Nunes?

MR. NUNES: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Westmoreland?

MR. WESTMORELAND: Aye.

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THE CLERK: Ms. Bachmann?

MS. BACHMANN: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Rooney?

MR. ROONEY: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Heck?

MR. HECK: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Ruppertsberger?

MR. RUPPERSBERGER: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Thompson?

MR. THOMPSON: Aye.

THE CLERK: And Mr. Schiff?

MR. SCHIFF: Aye.

THE CLERK: Mr. Chairman, there are 15 ayes and zero nos.

THE CHAIRMAN: The count again, please?

THE CLERK: Fifteen ayes and zero nos.

THE CHAIRMAN: The motion is carried. The committee is now in closed session for matters of national security. I want to thank our witnesses for being here today. You know, we hope that when you go back, there is issues that this committee must address based on our oversight requirements, both constitutionally and by statute. And we take those very, very seriously. We want you, when you go back, to at least tell the folks who are doing all the right things in protection of the United States that they have our gratitude and know that our system is working well. It does mean that we will have to hopefully get some answers today, and there are lots of questions by members, we will try to get to that as quickly as we possibly can.

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So thank you all for your service. Thank you for being here today. It has been over 2 months since the tragic terrorist attack on our State Department Temporary Mission Facility and CIA base in Benghazi. And this committee continues to have many outstanding questions. We start by recognizing three things that we know: First, this was a terrorist attack. It always was a terrorist attack. CIA and NCTC analysts called it an intentional assault and a planned attack on September 12.

However, after that, something seemed to happen. Analysts assessed for the next 11 days that attacks grew spontaneously out of local protests inspired by protests in Cairo. These assessments persisted despite ample evidence that there were no protests in Benghazi, known extremists with links to al-Qa'ida affiliates participated in the attack, and the attackers used effective, deadly, and coordinated tactics, especially in the 11-minute attack on the CIA base that killed Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty.

The committee has a number of questions about what information analysts had access to and when they got access to that information. I am particularly concerned about how quickly ground truth information from the State Department's Diplomatic Security Service and from the evacuees in Germany was incorporated into assessments. I am also concerned that the frankness of IC assessments, for example, Director Clapper, the statement for the record states that, "The most credible information today indicates that there was not a protest in front of the TMF ongoing at the time of the attacks."

There was no protest. You are going to show the committee surveillance video footage that there was no protest. While there may have been reporting of a protest, your assessments need to be clear and tell policymakers that those reports

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were wrong. We appreciate Intelligence Community caveats when they are appropriate. But you should not hedge your bets when you know the facts.

Second, the record shows that the IC did provide significant reporting and analysis on the heightened threat environment in Benghazi prior to the attacks. However, there was not specific information regarding the timing and/or any specific planning for the attack that took place on September 11. Third, the actions of the CIA officers and State Department security officers on the ground that day were heroic. Much of that fact has been lost in the media in their frenzy to cover this story. The men and women of the CIA and the State Department are putting themselves in harms' way on behalf of the American people every single day. The officers in Benghazi repeatedly ran into burning buildings, dodged bullets and RPGs, and fought valiantly to rescue their colleagues. I want to particularly recognize the officers of the CIA's global response staff for their valiant efforts to come to the aid of their diplomatic colleagues.

Finally, this committee is keenly interested in learning what we are doing now to identify and track down those terrorists responsible for this attack. They have American blood on their hands. And a failure to respond quickly, forcefully, and decisively will send the wrong signal to those who threaten the United States and our interests. And I fear that time may be slipping through our fingers here, and we may be at that point. This morning I want to welcome, again, all of our guests, Mr. Clapper, Mr. Morell, Mr. Olsen, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Reid, and Major General Gary Roberson, vice director for operations of the Joint Staff. Thank you all for being here.

Before I turn the floor over to our briefers, I would like to recognize the ranking member. I am going to forego my questions when this -- immediately after

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the following so that the members can get at their questions. I know you have plenty of them. Mr. Ruppertsberger.

MR. RUPPERSBERGER: Sure. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First, welcome all our distinguished guests. Acting Director Michael Morell, I want to welcome you again to the committee in these unusual, unexpected circumstances. I think you are probably the only American that has been acting director on two different occasions. You can brag that to your grandchildren years away. I am confident, in view of your very close working relationship with former Director Petraeus and your own unique expertise, you will provide us with a complete narrative of events from the CIA's perspective.

Now, before we talk about the attackers, I want to pay tribute to the defenders who performed incredibly and heroically in war-like conditions. We grieve for the fallen, but it is a remarkable accomplishment that the vast majority of our personnel survived and classified material was destroyed. And this must not be forgotten.

Our committee appreciates the pressure the Intelligence Community has been under to use all available assets to piece together what happened, how it happened, and who perpetrated this tragic terrorist attack on our Temporary Mission Facility and the annex in Benghazi. Our primary interest today is to hear from you. First, where the intelligence leads us in answering how the attacks occurred and who conducted them. Second, how much progress we are making in identifying and locating the perpetrators. And third, what are we doing in united intelligence, diplomatic, and law enforcement effort to improve our worldwide security posture, especially where our personnel are operating in a high threat

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environment. I am very impressed with the Benghazi intelligence review that the IC completed to show the committee what you knew and where you knew it. That raw intelligence shows how hard it is to piece together contradictory bits of information coming from multiple human and technical sources.

The intel review that was given to us by the DNI also makes it clear there was no intelligence before or after the attacks indicating the attacks were planned to occur on September 11. There was no one mastermind. The perpetrators belonged to different extremist and terrorist groups. And we want to hear, again, you address that issue before the committee.

In short, it seems the intelligence to this point shows the attacks were opportunistic, organized, well-armed, and inspired by the violence against our embassy in Cairo. Again, we need to hear from you if that is the assessment. I want to know whether the Community has any intelligence that changes this assessment.

Finally, I want to know what the Community is doing now to bring perpetrators to justice. I hope the Libyan government and other allies are being cooperative to detain suspects and give the U.S. access. I know that our committee asked for a list of the possible targets about 2 weeks ago, and we just got it today. So I hope that we could be a little bit more forthcoming when we ask for information in this committee to get that information instead of before a hearing.

I also expect the witnesses to give this committee a frank, detailed description of any operational planning to capture perpetrators or take any other unilateral action against them. We have a lot of material to cover, so I will end my remarks here. And again, thanks to our witnesses, to all IC personnel working so hard to get to the bottom of this tragedy. I yield back.

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THE CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Ruppertsberger. Mr. Clapper, the floor is yours. Thank you, sir.

STATEMENT OF JAMES R. CLAPPER, DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE

GENERAL CLAPPER: Good morning, Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Ruppertsberger, and distinguished members of the committee. The events of September 11th and 12th of this year represent a tragic example of the risks associated with America's global presence. Whether in the military, intelligence, or diplomatic corps, employees of the United States Government are, and will continue to be, targets of opportunity for criminals and terrorists. We represent an Intelligence Community and national security team that has been piecing together what happened that night in Benghazi, as well as assessing our own performance before, during, and after the event. We are working relentlessly to bring those responsible to justice. And as well, we are examining additional measures to cope with the new intelligence and security challenges in the region occasioned by the aftermath of the Arab Spring.

Regrettably, much of the public discourse about this tragic event has developed into simplistic, one-dimensional descriptions. Either it was a terrorist attack or it was prompted by the video. Either it was spontaneous or it was planned. Either it was led and coordinated by al-Qa'ida or it wasn't. In fact, it was a confused, complex event. It was not a simple case of black or white, but rather many shades of gray. As you will shortly see and hear in more detail, we assess that there were actually multiple attacks on the Temporary Mission Facility, and later

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against the annex that were different in scope, proficiency, and degree of organization.

For the IC's part, because these were violent criminal acts committed at least in part for political purposes, we have always considered these and the other contemporaneous assaults on our diplomatic facilities in neighboring countries as terrorist acts even if we did not explicitly say so in each and every product report we issued. Similarly with respect to the issue of a protest occurring prior to the attacks, the IC has a body of it reporting from SIGINT, HUMINT, and open sources in which witnesses, participants, and Libyan government officials cited, quote, a protest in Benghazi linked to the attack on the U.S. embassy in Cairo, and that there was some degree of spontaneity in the attacks in Benghazi.

On 15 September, the IC provided more information on the attackers, and reaffirmed our analysis that a variety of extremists participated in the attack, while also noting the level of planning and the exact sequence of events leading to the attacks remained intelligence gaps. The IC continued to refine its initial assessment of the attacks as new information became available, particularly from in-person interviews of those who were there. The analytic judgments evolved during the week of the 17th of September, and the IC published its assessment that the attacks were deliberate and organized assaults by extremists influenced by events in Cairo.

This is the first time the IC formally informed senior policymakers that our most credible information indicated there was not a protest ongoing at the time the attacks began. The IC also highlighted our continued gaps on the questions of preplanning and direction. As typically happens in such cases, first reports are invariably incomplete or inaccurate, or both. As more information was collected and

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analyzed, assessments necessarily changed. For the IC, this is a natural sequence when synthesizing new evidence. But to those less familiar with the analytical process, it seemed to represent politicization. The goal of providing timely and accurate intelligence analysis to all policymakers will be best served by recognizing and allowing for this necessary intelligence sequence.

I assure you, our early reporting, including the unclassified talking points, were certainly preliminary, but not politicized in any manner. Let me now briefly review the following four aspects: The previous incidents and warnings prior to the attacks, the nature of the attacks themselves, whom we suspect was responsible, and the assessed motivations of those involved. The IC published more than 300 finished intelligence reports on extremist activities in North Africa between 1 February and 10 September of this year. We documented hundreds of violent incidents in Libya, including at least 15 attacks on western or Libyan government targets. I would highlight three of these incidents from June alone. On the 6th, an IED exploded near the main gate of the U.S. mission compound in Benghazi, creating a 9-by-12-foot hole. A militant group named after the Egyptian blind sheik claimed responsibility. This marked the first claimed terrorist attack against U.S. interests in post-revolution Libya.

On the 8th of June, two hand grenades were placed under two empty British vehicles parked at a hotel in Sabha, a city about 400 miles south of Tripoli. One of the grenades exploded, causing damage to one of the vehicles, but no casualties. On the 11th of June, unknown assailants using two RPGs and small arms fired on a three-vehicle convoy in Benghazi, carrying the British ambassador, resulting in minor injuries. All these incidents were reported in a full range of intelligence products to policymakers, the military, and to Congress.

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With respect to warnings, on 7 September, CIA sent a cable noting the upcoming anniversary of 9/11 to all its stations and bases worldwide, which they asked to be shared with all FBI, State Department, and DOD personnel at each of these embassies. The cable noted there was no credible threat directly related to the 9/11 anniversary, but recommended sharing with liaison partners, and I quote from the cable, "we cannot rule out that AQ will choose to attack our interests overseas and/or those of our allies anywhere it can."

The cable also recommended that stations and bases work with State Department officers and remain on high alert. As both the chairman and the ranking indicated, there was no reporting that indicated specific threats to the U.S. facilities in Benghazi. And to be clear, thus far, we found no smoking gun intelligence in our holding specifically warning of an attack on U.S. facilities in Benghazi prior to 11 September.

Libya, especially eastern Libya, is awash in weapons, training camps, and extremists. The attackers, accordingly, had weapons readily available. We think they organized quickly, less than a few hours before the initial attack, after learning of the protests in Cairo, which were prompted by the video earlier that day. They saw an opportunity and they took it. The attackers did not appear to engage in a comprehensive effort to search for the Temporary Mission Facility compound for U.S. personnel. They never got into the safe area while Americans were there, never took any hostages, and did not bring explosives to blow the safe room door, and did not use a car bomb to blow the gates.

The attackers at the annex did not employ mortar fire until about 7 hours into the attack, suggesting they had not mobilized their most effective equipment when the attacks began. Here they clearly exhibited some level of training and

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proficiency. We still have not confirmed who commanded or controlled the attacks, and are uncertain if any one entity did so. We think we know some of the groups and individuals responsible. Elements of Ansar al-Sharia, a Libyan militia organized last spring; the Muhammad Jamal Network, an al-Qa'ida in Egypt upstart; a few individuals associated with al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb, or AQIM; as well as looters, vandals, and passersby.

Among the motivations that we assess may have been present that night, some may have been motivated to retaliate for the death of Abu Yahya al-Libi, prompted by al-Zawahiri's 10 September call to Libyans to avenge the death of their countryman.

Others may have been motivated by the inflammatory YouTube video; others by the anniversary of 9/11; others by the success of the protesters storming the U.S. Embassy in Cairo; and still others by simple greed, as evidenced by the looting that went on. And for many, more than one motivation likely applied. But until we actually interview those involved, we can only impute and argue about what their individual motivations were. And while on the subject of possible motivations, let me add one that did not apply. There were no detainees at either facility for attackers to free.

As you know, the FBI is leading an investigation into the attacks, and Sean Joyce can speak to that, and the events leading up to them, and the State Department is conducting an accountability review. And Under Secretary Pat Kennedy can speak to that. Like you, we are very interested in the outcome of these inquiries.

In conclusion, the officers of the Department of State, as you very appropriately and very thoughtfully acknowledged, the officers of the Department of

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State and the Central Intelligence Agency who lost their lives that day represent the very best of the United States. And the bravery and courage displayed by many of those who were there have been nothing but inspiring. On a personal level, I am yet haunted, and always will be, by the last conversation I had with Ambassador Stevens last April 27 before he departed for Libya.

As we shook hands in my office, as he took his leave, my last words to him were, "Stay safe." I will always wonder if there was some piece of SIGINT, some piece of HUMINT that would have triggered a more specific, more emphatic warning to Chris and his colleagues. After thousands of hours of review, I am convinced that the IC had no such tactical warning. I will now turn to Matt Olsen, the director of the National Counterterrorism Center, who will narrate a presentation that helps explain the sequence of events of the attack. And seeing it visually, as best we can reconstruct it, I think will really be helpful.

We have done our best on an interagency basis to portray accurately those events. But try as we might, we cannot perfectly replicate the God's eye, God's ear certitude of what actually happened. And no matter how many investigations we do, we never will. And after the presentation, we will all be available to address your questions. And I would ask that, if possible, you note and hold your questions until Matt finishes his presentation. Matt?

**STATEMENT OF MATT OLSEN, DIRECTOR, NATIONAL
COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER**

MR. OLSEN: Thank you and good morning. As Director Clapper has said, and with the committee's permission, I would now like to present a visual timeline of

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the events and the attacks in Benghazi. Before we begin, I would like to emphasize three overarching points: First, this was a complex and, at times, chaotic series of events. The details are complicated. We are continuing to learn more, as Director Clapper has said, and there is still a lot we don't know. Second, the bare factual narrative does not convey the bravery and heroism of the Americans who were there. And third, we are mindful of the fundamental fact that four Americans were killed by terrorists in Benghazi. Our overriding focus is on understanding what happened and bringing those responsible to justice. It is a commitment I know that we all share.

This presentation is based on the totality of the information that we have received since the attack. We did not learn a lot of this information -- at the time of this attack, we did not know a lot of this information. We have learned it since. Of course, the FBI's investigation is proceeding, and we are continuing to collect and to analyze intelligence. The presentation is based on all of the information that the IC has access to. So it is based on signals intelligence, human source reporting, open source reporting. It is, in particular, based on video, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], as well as the two Predator unmanned aerial vehicles that have provided video. We have looked through [REDACTED], and we have selected those particular segments that best help demonstrate the sequence of events on September 11 into September 12.

So I am going to begin with a series of maps and photos to set the scene, and then proceed directly to the sequence of events. So first Benghazi, located approximately 400 miles east of Tripoli. In Benghazi, there are four key locations that I will be focusing on: The Temporary Mission Facility I will refer to as the TMF.

You may have it referred to as a consulate. Next to that the annex or CIA base. A short distance away, about 2 miles by car, is the hospital, the Benghazi Medical Center. And then 11 miles east of the TMF the airport in Benghazi.

So here is a closer look at the key facilities. The Temporary Mission Facility, about 2.5 kilometers from the annex by car. So a closer look now at the Temporary Mission Facility itself. This is an enhanced image of the TMF. And I want to walk through this rather closely. First, the main gate on the north side of the TMF. The main gate road runs from east to west in front of the main gate. There is another road that runs from north to south inside the compound, from the main gate toward the back gate. Adjacent to the main gate is the guard house. That is where the Libyan 17 February Brigade militia security force was housed. In the middle of that image is the main building where the ambassador and the information management officer were.

Two other important buildings, the staff quarters, or Villa B, and then next to that the tactical operations center. One thing I want to highlight on this is the location of the security cameras



Let me now turn to the actual sequence of the events. And over the course of this presentation, I will use a frame that looks like this with the time at the top. So 2130 to 2145. Many of the times are in 15-minute increments; other times they are in longer increments. On the right will be an image to show what activity took place during that time. And on the left I will show video to help illuminate what happened

during that time.

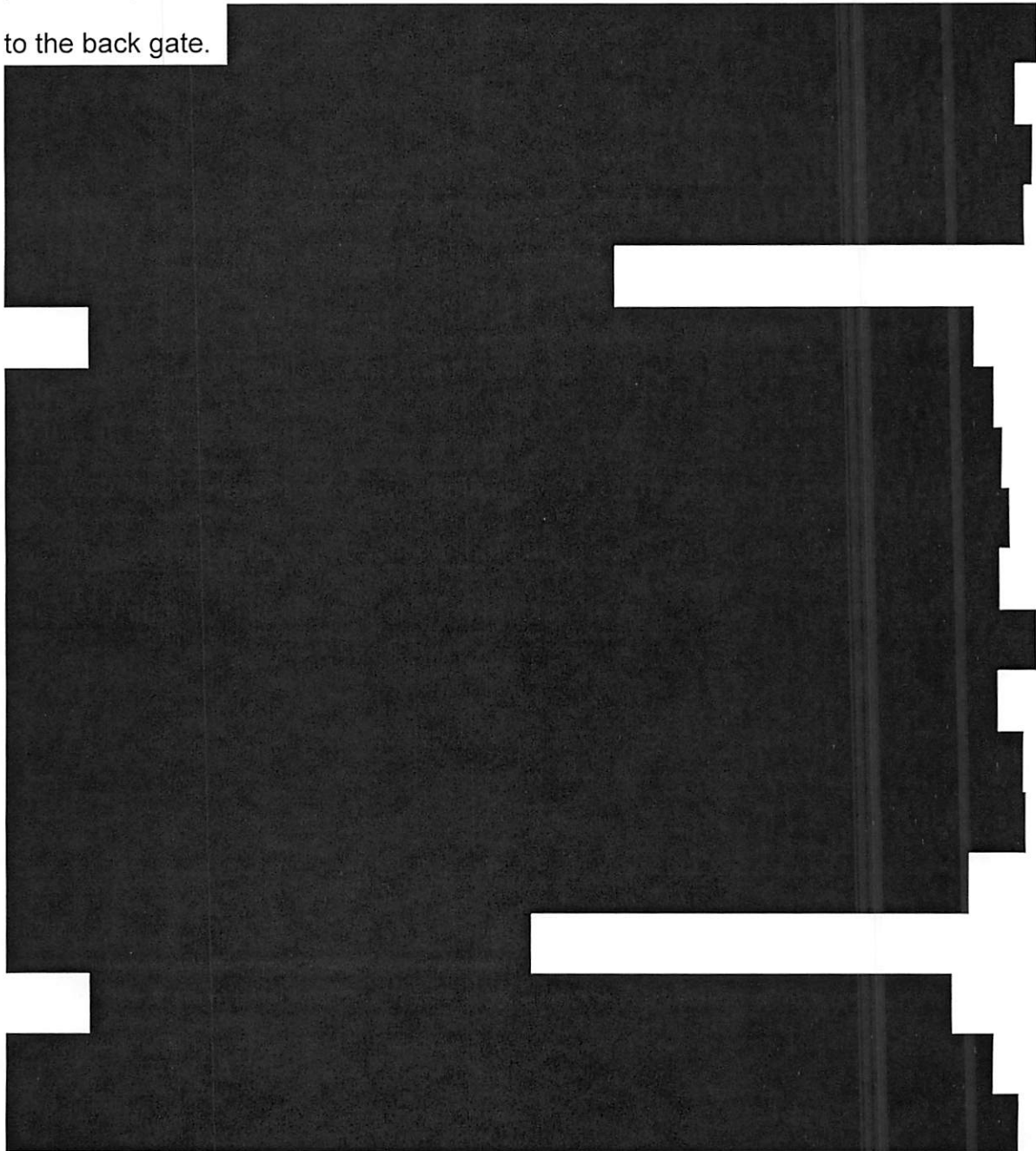
So the attack begins at approximately 2140. All the times I am going to refer to are local Benghazi time. So 2140 local time. At that time there are seven Americans at the TMF. The ambassador, the information management officer, and one Diplomatic Security agent are in the main building. There are three more Diplomatic Security agents, State Department Diplomatic Security agents just outside of the main building. And there is another Diplomatic Security agent located in the operations center. The attack begins with small arms fire [REDACTED] [REDACTED] This causes them to retreat into the compound. And this is followed by at least one explosion. And within minutes, dozens of attackers enter the TMF through the main gate. The agent who is in the operations center immediately sounds an alarm at the TMF. He then contacts a number of places, the annex, our embassy in Tripoli, the 17 February militia, and Diplomatic Security command center back in Washington.

The four Diplomatic Security agents that I have mentioned that are either in or near the main building, at the time the attack begins, one of those agents who has his protective gear and rifle secures the ambassador and the IMO in the main building safe area. So he stays with the ambassador and the IMO. The three other agents run to retrieve weapons and equipment. Two go to the staff quarters, or Villa B, and one runs to the operations center. Let me show you now a photo of the main gate. This is the main gate of the TMF taken from the main gate road, so looking from outside of the compound. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

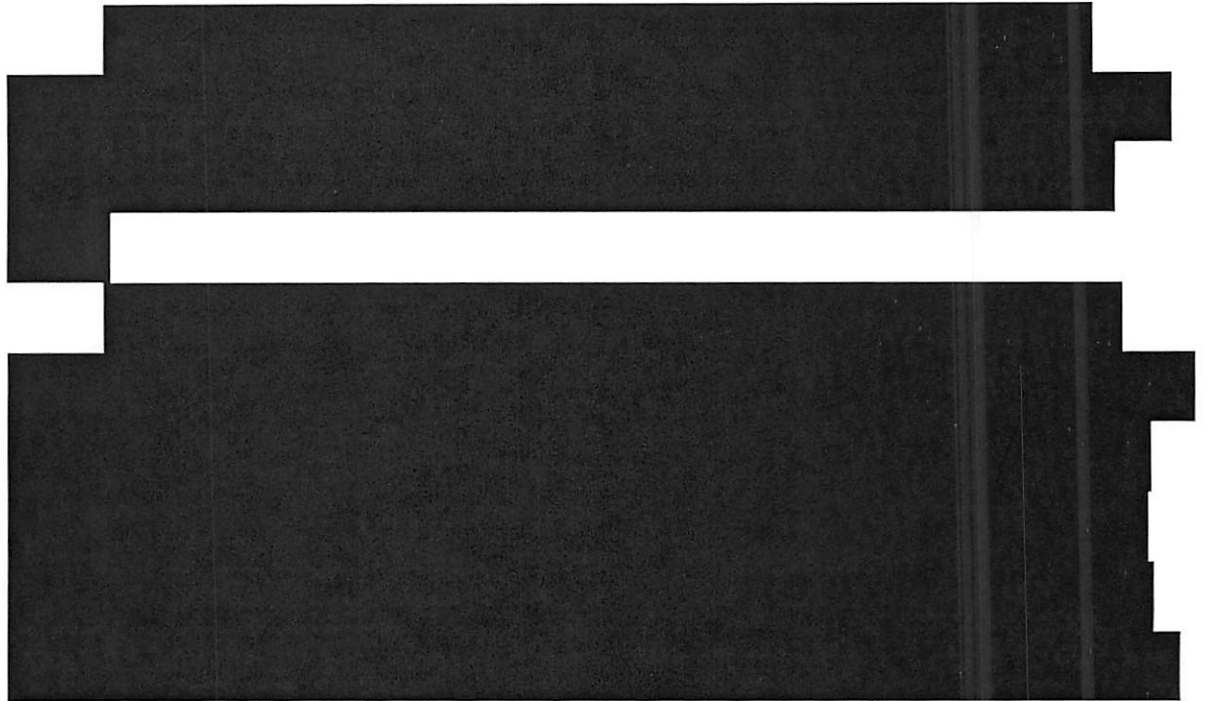
The first video I want to show [REDACTED] is facing onto the road. And you will see a Libyan [REDACTED] Security [REDACTED] truck. So a

local Libyan [REDACTED] truck parked just outside of the main gate. And if you could show, now what you will see is the truck drive away at 2142. This is immediately before the attack begins, that [REDACTED] truck drives away.

Now, the next photo is a daytime view of the main gate from inside the compound. This is looking out toward the main gate from the main building. And you see right down the middle of that photo is the road leading from the main gate to the back gate.



[Pages 19-32 redacted. An unclassified version of the timeline is at pages 4-7 of the report.]



And then finally, the evacuation to Tripoli. This is simply a timeline of the evacuation of U.S. personnel from Benghazi. The convoy arrives at the airport just around 0700. At around 0730 three wounded U.S. personnel and [REDACTED] other Americans depart. About an hour later, Libyan officials deliver the Ambassador's body to the airport. The last plane with Americans departs at 10 o'clock. And on board were all four deceased Americans and the remaining 12 Americans who were there. By 11:35 all U.S. personnel are in Tripoli.

So just to sum up, three I think key points from the review of the video and the other information we have collected. The initial attack appeared to be opportunistic. Many of the initial attackers were armed, others were not. They did appear to enter the TMF deliberately for the purposes of carrying out an attack, although they didn't appear to carry out a well-coordinated attack once inside. That is the initial stage.

The events over the course of the entire attack were really several separate events, beginning with the assault on the TMF, then subsequent looting at the TMF,

and the two major attacks, including the mortar attack at 05:15 at the Annex, the second major attack on the Annex, of course, being the most organized, the most coordinated, with a mortar crew and gunman closer to the Annex.

Mr. Chairman, that is the presentation.

THE CHAIRMAN: Ready for questions, Mr. Clapper?

Mr. Thornberry.

MR. THORNBERRY: Mr. Olsen, I don't understand opportunistic at the end. It took some planning, some organization to get in the main gate at the beginning, didn't it? I don't understand that word in that context.

GENERAL CLAPPER: Sure. I can explain.

MR. OLSEN: Sure, I can explain. There were multiple attackers going in different directions from the beginning of the attack. The term "opportunistic" comes largely from the reporting we received through SIGINT and HUMINT sources, the SIGINT and HUMINT sources, that they took advantage of an opportunity that was presented. Certainly, it is clear from the video that there were people amassed at the gate at the very beginning. But over the course of the night there were multiple waves of individuals entering, including looters, later on.

MR. THORNBERRY: I guess I understand taking advantage of the situation, not being organized. Do you think it was opportunistic that this occurred on September 11? Do you think that that had any relevance, based on the information that you all have accumulated?

MR. OLSEN: I think our general sense is that there were multiple motivations. Certainly, it is possible that the date had relevance and was a motivating factor. But there were other motivating factors from the reporting.

GENERAL CLAPPER: If I could add to that, Mr. Thornberry, there was some

██████ indicating that the attackers, or some of them, were aware of the events in Cairo, particularly the breaching of the embassy compound in Cairo, which occurred late in the day local time. And so that, if not the sentiment which motivated the people in Cairo, certainly the event, prompted by the video, which is what happened in Cairo, prompted or was a linkage to the events in Benghazi.

MR. THORNBERRY: I want to go back to that, but can I ask two kind of just clarifying questions. Who were the locals that found the Ambassador and took him to the hospital? Were they passerbyers, were they looters coming in? Who were they?

MR. OLSEN: I don't think we know the identities of those individuals. I have not seen anything to indicate that we have that information. It doesn't appear, by the fact that they took the Ambassador to the hospital, that they were of ill intent or hostile. So it is possible that they were looters that were there that happened to find the Ambassador and made the decision to take him to the hospital.

MR. THORNBERRY: Okay. Secondly, was an autopsy done on the Ambassador and the Information Officer when they got back?

MR. OLSEN: I have seen an autopsy. And I will refer to the FBI.

MR. THORNBERRY: What was the cause of death if there was?

MR. JOYCE: Yes, the autopsy was done. The coroner rules the cause of death was smoke inhalation. There was some blunt trauma injuries to his head, but not life-threatening, the coroner said. In addition, there was some injuries due to what the coroner ruled chest compressions attempting to resuscitate the Ambassador.

MR. THORNBERRY: And the Information Officer?

MR. JOYCE: I don't have the coroner's report on that. I don't have

definitively. I believe it was the same thing, smoke inhalation.

MR. THORBERRY: Mr. Morell, my strongest memory as Director Petraeus on the Friday after this event coming in and telling us this was all a spontaneous demonstration caused by the video, and when people come together, they bring RPGs in this part of the world. I mean that was the essence, and I was struck by how adamant he was that despite some prodding from the committee that he was adamant that this was spontaneous video and so forth. We will ask him about it tomorrow. But can you give me or outline in the limited time I have left the specific intelligence as of 3 or 4 days after that would cause one to be so adamant that this was spontaneous?

MR. MORELL: Mr. Thornberry, what I would like to do, because this is such a critically important question, this timeline of the analysis, Mr. Chairman, if you could indulge me for just a few minutes to kind of walk through the story about how the intelligence analysis evolved. It will take more time than Mr. Thornberry has. But I think the committee would find it valuable.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think we are okay. Let him ask for the timeline.
Go ahead.

MR. MORELL: So I recognize that the evolution of our analysis has raised concerns among Members here, raised concerns among folks in general. And because of that, I want you to know that I have personally gone back and reviewed the analysis from the very beginning to where we are now to form my own conclusions about what we said over time. And that is what I want to share with you. And what I am going to share with you is actually not just my view, but shared by everybody here at the table and also shared by my analysts.

The first point I want to make, which is to go to the darkest corner of the

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room here, is to the concern that the analysts somehow, whether we wrote it in classified documents for our policymakers or whether we condensed it down when we did the unclassified talking points for you all, that somehow we politicized that analysis. I just want to take that off the table. We did not pull our punches. We did not obfuscate in any way. We did not try to downplay the terrorist nature of the attack. And I can assure you of that. I can assure you of that.

I think you all know that analytic integrity is a core value at my place. Without it, we can't be effective. "Politization" is a dirty word at CIA, as it should be. And I can assure you that my analysts would be the first ones to throw a red flag if they ever felt that they were pressured in any way to conform their analysis to a particular view. And nobody, nobody, has raised a hand and told me that they have any concerns along that front. And [senior CIA official #1] is here, who is in charge of those analysts, and I think she can attest to that as well.

So after reviewing everything that we have written, here is my bottom line. The shifts in our line of analysis reflect what we often see in a crisis situation when we are dealing with limited and often contradictory information. And what we often see is that analysts looking at incomplete information can reach different conclusions. And when they put their heads together and get more information, they often arrive at yet another assessment. And as the information continues to flow in, they change those judgments yet again, which is exactly what I want them to do and which is exactly what you want them to do. And that is exactly what happened here.

Was it messy? Yes. Were we as precise in our language as we could possibly have been at every stage of the process? Probably not. But did we engage in a very honest, unbiased, uninfluenced effort to make the best sense of

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what we could based on the information at the time? Absolutely.

So let me try to break this down for you and this will get to your very specific question, sir.

The very first product we wrote on this topic was a hastily assembled overnight product that we call an executive update. It came out based on information as of 5 a.m. Washington, D.C., time on the 12th. Due to the breaking nature of the events, it represented a preliminary, uncoordinated assessment piecing together very, very few fragments of information. But here is the irony in all this. What we wrote that morning turned out in the end to be right, based on our current understanding of events. What we wrote that morning said, "The presence of armed assailants from the incident's outset suggests this was an intentional assault and not the escalation of a peaceful protest."

Looking back on it -- and I have looked very deeply into this -- looking back on it, do I think that we had all the information that we needed to make that judgment? Absolutely not. In fact, I can't find any basis for that judgment, making that judgment at that time. And frankly, this is the kind of judgment that I think is better made in a more carefully considered and coordinated product, not in an overnight summary of events.

What happened then after that point was that information started arriving in multiple reports that indicated that there had been a protest ongoing at the time of the assault. Some of this reporting indicated that this protest was inspired by the events in Cairo and some of it indicated that the attack grew spontaneously out of that protest.

Let me just give you a couple of examples. We have had

[REDACTED] a Libyan-based AQIM associate on the 11th of September [REDACTED] that

the Benghazi -- when the Benghazi populace heard about the security breach at the U.S. embassy in Cairo, they decided to storm the mission in Benghazi. That is where the word "spontaneous" comes from.

We had an Ansar al-Sharia extremist upload a video on the 12th of September praising the attack as a spontaneous popular uprising. Also on the 12th of September we had the first Libyan Government statement about the incident. And that statement said that a demonstration preceded the attack. In a press conference, the Deputy Interior Minister for Eastern Libya stated that the TMF was stormed after guards opened fire on the crowd gathered outside.

So IC analysts put this together and wrote on the 13th of September that the attacks "began spontaneously following the protest at the U.S. embassy in Cairo and evolved into a direct assault." They also said that, based on SIGINT, that extremists with ties to al-Qa'ida were involved in the attacks. And that is exactly what the Director briefed here to the committee.

Were we wrong on the 13th? Well, yes and no. Yes, it turned out that we were wrong that there were protests that evolved spontaneously into the attacks. Were we wrong for the right reason? And by that I mean, were we doing our best to interpret the available information as objectively as possible? Absolutely. But we were certainly not wrong about the involvement of armed extremists. We were clearly right about that. And that judgment has held up as we have written about this over time both in classified settings and in the unclassified talking points from that day forward.

In the days that followed, IC analysts had to cope with conflicting accounts about whether there was indeed a protest ongoing at the TMF when the attack began. Several additional reports were consistent with our judgment that the attack

grew spontaneously out of the ongoing protests. So we even had reports beyond the 11th and 12th that there were protests. Let me share some of those with you.

So on the 13th of September [REDACTED] an [REDACTED] associate claimed that his group took advantage of a planned demonstration at the TMF to protest the anti-Islamic films [REDACTED]. Also, on the 13th we had a [REDACTED] of AQIM members who were saying that the attack included a mixture of all the groups and that it was inspired by the storming of the embassy in Cairo. And on that same day, still on the 13th, [REDACTED] sent in a report [REDACTED] claiming that militants took advantage of a planned demonstration to carry out the attacks. So the analysts were still getting information that there was a protest. However, on the next day, on the 14th, Tripoli station sent a report citing the accounts of a CIA officer who was involved in the events when the officer arrived at the TMF. And he said that there was no sign of a protest. So this is kind of the first time in which somebody says there is no protest. But to the analysts that did not mean that there was no protest when the attack occurred because when the CIA officer arrived at the TMF was well after the attack started. So the analysts discarded that piece of information.

THE CHAIRMAN: Just a correction for the record, that is the second time. The first report also referenced no protest.

MR. MORELL: Yes, sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: For the record, I think that is important.

MR. MORELL: So on the 18th our station reported on the Libyan Intelligence Service's review, so this is the Libyan Intelligence Service telling us what they saw on the CCTV film that you just saw. And what the Libyan Intelligence Service told

us is that there were no sign of protesters.

MR. SCHIFF: What date was that?

MR. MORELL: That was on the 18th, sir. Clearly, we had to reassess what happened. So the analysts continued to refine their assessments of the attacks as more information became available. And on the 22nd of September, CIA, joined by the rest of the Intelligence Community, said that the attacks were a deliberate assault by extremists influenced by events in Cairo. The absence of a protest, however, did not lead us to conclude that the attack was planned well in advance. And that is a very, very important point.

While the tactics employed reflect a degree of preparation, we judged that the attacks could have quickly organized themselves based on the weapons, skills, and relationship they acquired during the uprising against Qadhafi. As was stated earlier, we probably will not know their personal motivations until they are detained and they are questioned. But we continue to believe, as you heard earlier, that some of them were inspired by the protests at the embassy in Cairo, while others were inspired by Zawahiri's call for revenge. And as you heard, we still do not know whether any individual or group exercised command and control.

So that is the evolution of the analysis. It was the analysts doing the best, absolutely best job they could at the time, based on the information they had at the time, and they showed a willingness to adjust their analysis as more information came in.

THE CHAIRMAN. Since you started that with a minute hand a half, I will give Mr. Thornberry 1 minute for a follow-up question.

MR. THORNBERRY: All set.

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. RUPPERSBERGER: The chairman and I were briefed yesterday, so we are going to let the members get to questions.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you all for being here and the work that all of you and staff are doing.

Mr. Morell, what was the date that you were certain that there were no protests?

MR. MORELL: So when we made the judgment was on the 22nd.

MR. THOMPSON: The 22nd.

MR. MORELL. The analysts actually came to that conclusion a couple of days before, but it took them a couple of days to write the piece in which they actually said it.

MR. THOMPSON: So the 22nd you were sure it didn't start out of a protest. And when you are doing all this and your analysts are doing this, are there translation issues that get in the way when you are getting reports from the field? One person's protest is another person's spontaneous reaction? Is that reasonable to believe?

MR. MORELL: Let me ask my Director of the Office of Terrorism Analysis, [senior CIA officer #1], to answer that question.

[Senior CIA officer #1]: Sir, absolutely. We looked at the issue, particularly in [REDACTED] We talked directly with our colleagues at [REDACTED] and elsewhere and we asked them: Did they say protest, did they say demonstration? What exactly did they say?

There were roughly about a dozen reports at the time, including [REDACTED] that talked about an extant protest. At least one piece of [REDACTED] has since been