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1-27-99 U.S. Counters Iraq's Increased Aggression

By Linda D. Kozaryn

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—The United States is meeting Iraq's increased aggression head-on and will continue to do so as long as it lasts, according to Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon.

"Iraq is mounting a very aggressive, determined, day-in-and-day-out attack against the planes patrolling the no-fly zone," Bacon said here Jan. 26. The United States is "responding appropriately" to that higher threat level in its continuing effort to enforce the U.N.-mandated no-fly zones, he said.

U.S. pilots have "adequate authority" to protect themselves and their missions, Bacon said. President Clinton expanded that authority recently at the request of Marine Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, commander of U.S. Central Command and Operation Southern Watch, he added.

Bacon would not detail the rules of engagement, but stressed the United States and its coalition partners firmly intend to enforce the no-fly zones. "We are determined to do so in a way that protects our pilots ... and prevents Saddam Hussein from organizing his troops to attack his neighbors or his own people," he said.

Since the coalition's Desert Fox bombing operation in late December, Iraq has intensified its defiance of the no-fly zones, declaring them invalid. More than 100 Iraqi planes have violated the zones, and Iraqi forces have attacked coalition planes with anti-aircraft missiles and guns. The United States has responded in kind, striking missile sites and radar systems in both northern and southern Iraq.

Along with aircraft incursions, the Iraqis have positioned more anti-aircraft missiles and other air defense assets in the no-fly zones, Bacon said. This violates the 1991 U.N.-Iraq Gulf War cease-fire agreement. He noted U.S. planes previously ignored Iraqi missile sites in the zones because they did not challenge coalition patrols—but now that they do, the United States is striking back.

"Our goal is to be able to execute the patrols over the no-fly zones without threats from Iraq," Bacon said. "This is a choice for Saddam Hussein to make. So far, he is suffering losses on a daily basis. If he chooses to continue suffering those losses, we will continue to inflict those losses on him. ... As long as he continues to threaten and attack our planes, we will respond.

"If he wants to honor the no-fly zone and return to his previous status of not attacking our planes, we will be pleased and we will see that as a sign of good sense on his part."

U.S. and coalition pilots of operations Southern and Northern Watch have flown about 200,000 patrol sorties to enforce no-fly zones over Iraq north of the 36th parallel and south of the 33rd parallel. The zones, created after the Gulf War, were mandated by U.N. Security Council Resolutions 678, 687, and 688 to deter Iraq's use of aircraft against its people and its neighbors.

1-26-99 DoD Press Briefing - 1:50 p.m. (EST)

Presenter: Mr. Kenneth H. Bacon, ASD (PA)

Mr. Bacon: Good afternoon.

Q: What is the latest word from Central Command on the whereabouts of the missing AGM-130 and whether there were any American missiles that hit the residential area in Basrah?

A: As Gen. Zinni explained yesterday, we have been responding to provocative attacks against our airplanes by Iraq, and we have been responding appropriately by targeting elements of the air defense system that he's using against our planes.

We have analyzed yesterday's information and found that an AGM-130 did miss its target and explode in a residential neighborhood several kilometers away from its target. We do not have any independent estimate of casualties or fatalities that can back up what the Iraqis have said about this.

I want to repeat that we are not targeting civilians. We are in fact taking every step we can to avoid targeting civilians or avoid creating collateral damage in civilian neighborhoods, because we are not attacking the people of Iraq. We have no animus against them whatsoever. In fact, we have a lot of sympathy for the people of Iraq, but we are attacking a large air defense system that's being used in an attempt to defeat the policing of the no-fly zones.

Q: The reason for the mistake?

A: Well, CENTCOM and the Air Force are still looking at that. I don't think they have a definitive report yet on why it happened. I will point out that precision guided munitions, while highly accurate, are not infallible. And precision creates a great chance of accuracy but does not ensure accuracy in every case.

Q: Where was it that we believe the stray bomb hit? Was it in central Basrah? Was it south of Basrah?

A: It was in a district of Basrah called the Aljemeriyah district. Q: The Iraqi authorities yesterday said that several missiles hit in residential areas of Basrah. Do you have any evidence that any other ordnance other than this one AGM-130 struck any civilian targets? A: No. We believe that the other ordnance hit the military targets at which they were directed.

Q: One of the other things that Sandy Berger apparently had to say was that the rules of engagement have been changed for American pilots, which, as I recall from this podium, has been denied in the past. Are American pilots operating under a broader mandate than they have been? A: First of all, I don't think we've denied anything about rules of engagement. What we've said is that our pilots have adequate authority to protect themselves and to protect their missions. That authority has been expanded by the President within the last month, and that's been done at the request of Gen. Zinni and his military commanders. Beyond that, we don't discuss details of rules of engagement. But as I said earlier, the Iraqis are aggressively trying to defeat our patrols of the no-fly zone. They're trying to shoot down coalition aircraft, and our pilots have adequate authority to respond against the entire air defense system.

Brad?

Q: If Gen. Zinni doesn't have authority over the northern operation, did Gen. Clark request similar permission and receive it? A: In the north and the south our planes are operating under the same rules of engagement.

Q: When was this change made, by the way?

A: I think it was made about three to four weeks ago.

Q: Can you...

Q: On the AGM-130. Do you know if there's been any guidance preventing the forces from using them until you determine what in fact went wrong? A: I'm not aware that that's the case. There are a lot of reasons that an AGM-130 might not hit its target. They're generally very accurate missiles, but as I say, these are very complex systems, and there's always a chance that one can go slightly off target. Q: Have the AGM-130... I forgot what I was going to say now. Has it been used in combat before?

A: Yes, it was used in Bosnia in 1995 [sic]. {NOTE: There were nine GBU-15s that were dropped in Bosnia. The first use of the AGM-130, which is a GBU-15 fitted with a rocket motor, was in Iraq on Jan. 11, 1999.} Q: Is this a TV, visual guided munition? Is it radar guided? Or could it have been misguided by the Iraqis?

A: I'm not going to speculate on what happened. It can either be guided through a TV camera or an infrared image finder. Q: Yesterday, Gen. Zinni said that the air defense system was centralized and coordinated. Taking those words, so far the retaliation for the paintings and the AAA and the SAMs has been fairly localized. But if the air defense system is centralized, say in Baghdad, does that mean that we're going after the system there?

A: I recall in December we did attack the nerve center of some of Saddam Hussein's military systems, and we are going after parts of the system that we think we can successfully attack and degrade, and I won't go beyond that, but we are attacking the system quite broadly.

Q: Can you, under these rules of engagement, can they attack parts of the system that are outside of the no-fly zone in central Iraq?

A: I don't think I'll get into any details of the rules of engagement.

Q: A point of clarification, Ken. Did you say earlier that you could not correlate where this missile landed with where the Iraqi casualties were found in Basrah?

A: I didn't say that. What I said was we have no independent confirmation of the reports that Iraq has made about casualties or fatalities.

Q: But there is a correlation between where it landed and where the buildings were destroyed?

A: Yes, according to their accounts. It appears to have landed in that neighborhood.

Q: What I'm trying to get at, is there any reason to think that this missile didn't kill some number of Iraqis?

A: I don't think that I have any independent confirmation whether it did or it didn't. It is a powerful missile with a 200,000 pound warhead.

A 2,000 pound warhead. Still a powerful missile. (Laughter) So it created some damage. We realize that, and we regret any civilian casualties. But this was done in response to a provocative attack against our planes by Saddam Hussein, and I think that should be clear.

Q: Without getting into details of the ROE, can you talk about the broader tactical goals of expanding the number and types of targets that American pilots are allowed to strike? What are you trying to do? Send a different kind of message to Saddam Hussein than we had been sending before with the more tit for tat kind of response?

A: The message we're sending has not changed. We are determined to patrol the no-fly zone which we do pursuant to U.N. Security Council resolutions. We are determined to do so in a way that protects our pilots, and we're determined to do so in a way that prevents Saddam Hussein from organizing his troops to attack his neighbors or his own people. Those are the goals of the no-fly zone. They remain the goals. What's changed here primarily is that for the first time since the imposition of the no-fly zone, Iraq is mounting a very aggressive, determined, day-in and day-out attack against the planes patrolling the no-fly zone. We are responding appropriately to a higher level of aggressiveness from Saddam Hussein, but our goals are exactly the same, that is to patrol the no-fly zone that was set up to prevent Saddam Hussein from attacking his own people as he has in the past, or from attacking his neighbors as he has in the past.

Q: In the initial reports of yesterday's attacks in the south from the U.S. Central Command, U.S. F-14s were listed as part of the planes that took part in the strike. Later information didn't include the F-14s. Can you just clear up what happened there? Were any F-14s involved in this action?

A: Which action are you talking about?

Q: The attacks against air defenses in the south yesterday, the same attack which resulted in this one errant missile. Initially, are you aware that...

A: The attack that... F-14s do not launch AGM-130s. They're launched by F-15Es, and this one was launched by an F-15E.

Q: But initially Central Command put out the list of planes that took part in military action in the south yesterday and listed F-15s, F-14s, and F-18s. And subsequently, they amended the list and omitted the F-14s. I'm just curious what...

A: I saw the initial list. I'll go back, or somebody will go back and double check. I'm not...

Q: I'm just wondering if there is a story there that we should be asking about.

A: No.

Q: What happened to the F-14s.

A: No. I mean we use a variety of planes. We use the EA-6B Prowlers as well. We use a variety of planes.

Q: Still, it seems like this is a day, as you said, it's a day-to-day operation. They target us, we respond on a day-to-day basis. With the expanded rules of engagement in place now, why then are we not taking out the increased Iraqi equipment in the no-fly zone on a more comprehensive basis? Why are we letting them sit there and only deal with it on a day-to-day basis?

A: I think that we are having a grave impact on the Iraqi air defense system, and a grave impact on the number of weapons they have to bring to bear against our planes, and we will continue to do that until the threat goes away.

Q:...7,000 missiles that they could direct against us from ground to air?

A: Without getting into specifics, they do have a large number of missiles. They have a much smaller number of radars and associated equipment.

Q: But coming back to that very point then, if you continue to do this on a day-to-day basis as it is going on right now, is it not the case that this could go on for months ad nauseam?

A: I think you've put your finger on the real issue here. This is a choice for Saddam Hussein to make. So far, he is suffering losses on a daily basis. If he chooses to continue suffering those losses, we will continue to inflict those losses on him. If he wants to honor the no-fly zone and return to his previous status of not attacking our planes, we will be pleased, and we will see that as a sign of good sense on his part. But right now he's attacking our planes, and we are attacking back broadly in response to his aggression against our planes, and we will continue to do that as long as the attacks continue. Q: Have we ceased firing AGM-130s while we find out the reason this one misfired?

A: Not that I'm aware of, no. In fact I know we have not ceased firing AGM-130s. The AGM-130 is a weapon that has performed well and will continue to perform well. As I said, we used it in Bosnia [sic], and we've used it a number of times in Iraq.

Q: When you said this was used in Bosnia, are you sure it was the AGM-130? Is this similar to the SLAM missile? It's not similar? A: No, it's different. This is actually an evolutionary weapon. It started as a MK-84 2,000 pound bomb, gravity bomb. Then it was upgraded to become the GBU-15 when fins and wings were applied, and a guidance system. And now the AGM-130 has a rocket engine attached to it which gives it greater range, greater speed, and greater accuracy. Q: Do you recall the instance in Bosnia it was used?

A: I do not specifically recall.

Q: Could you take that question, though, because I believe we were told the first use of the AGM-130 in combat was in the northern no-fly a few weeks back.

A: I will check that, but I was briefed by a pilot today who claims to have used one of these in Bosnia, so I'll go back and check with him. Q: What date he used it...

A: I'll definitely go back and check with him.

Q: There were a limited number of operations in Bosnia in which U.S. planes actually dropped bombs, so it shouldn't be too difficult to figure out what...

A: We will check that out. Jim?

Q: I just want to clarify what you mean. Earlier you said that we would continue to hit these missiles sites essentially until the threat goes away. Does that mean the goal now is to destroy Iraq's air defenses, or to just continue these strikes until the Iraqis cease threatening American war planes?

A: I think I began that remark by saying this was a choice for Saddam Hussein to make. As long as he continues to threaten our planes and to attack our planes, we will respond.

Q: So the immediate goal is not to destroy his entire air defense system, it's simply to end the threat, the current threat against American pilots.

A: Our goal is to be able to execute the patrols over the no-fly zones without threats from Iraq.

Q: Does the U.S. consider the mere existence of these SAM missile sites along these no-fly zones a threat to our pilots, and, therefore, is it open season on all these missile sites, whether they pose an immediate, active threat to pilots in the air?

A: I understand your question. As you know, we've been flying around and among Iraqi missile sites for years without striking them because they have not posed a threat to our planes, they have not attacked our planes. Now they are attacking our planes, and we are responding appropriately to those attacks.

Q: Under the new expanded rules of engagement, does that mean now the U.S. mission is to take out all these air defense systems along a no-fly zone whether they light up the planes, whether they actually fire? Is it open season... Are we going to launch preemptive strikes against all these missile sites in the north and south?

A: I'm not going to discuss the specifics of the rules of engagement except to say that we will take whatever action we think is necessary to protect our pilots.

Q: And the U.S. considers the mere existence of the SAM missile sites in these no-fly zones an active threat to American pilots? A: As I said to you before, we've been flying around and among missile sites for a long period of time unchallenged, and we did not respond to them at the time. Now we are facing an entirely different and more aggressive modus operandi by Saddam Hussein's forces, and we are responding appropriately to that heightened aggressiveness by Saddam Hussein's forces, and we will continue to respond if he continues to attack our planes.

Q: Let's take this one step further, I think, if I can expand on what Jim was saying. Let's assume that today there were incidents in the northern no-fly zone in particular in which radar was used against our planes. Does this mean that if tomorrow we should fly we don't have to wait for a similar painting? We can hit targets if we feel they "threaten"? A: Ivan, I understand all these questions. I'm not going to answer them.

It ought to be clear; I'm not going to give details about how we're going to operate in the no-fly zones except to say we will take appropriate action to protect our pilots.

Q: Any movement of Iraqi ground forces?

A: Not that I'm aware of, no.

Q: You and other officials have talked about the Iraqis moving additional surface-to-air missile assets into the no-fly zone. Is that not a violation of the no-fly zone?

A: Yes, it is a violation, and we are responding to those violations. Q: So is it not logical that the ones they're moving in, in violation of the no-fly zone, would be open targets? Whether they're turned on or not?

A: I don't know how many times I have to say this, but I'll say it one more time so you can all get it down. We will take appropriate actions to defend our pilots. We are doing so.

Q: Does it appear that Iraq is continuing to keep this conflict alive for propaganda purposes? I know Madeleine Albright was having a pretty bad time in Russia yesterday on the subject of Iraq. Is he stringing this little conflict out, going to draw us back into the interior of Iraq for propaganda purposes, do you think?

A: I can't psychoanalyze what the Iraqi military is doing. Maybe somebody should go to one of Tariq Aziz's press conferences and ask him that question. But the issue here, I think, is that

they are attacking our planes, which are flying to protect the people of Iraq as well as Iraq's neighbors from attack. We are going to respond to those attacks appropriately, and we are.

Q: Do you have confirmation that Iraq has moved special water-borne commandos to the Basrah or the Shatt al Arab area, posing a new and higher threat to American ships that might be standing by just off territorial waters?

A: Without commenting on any specific intelligence organization, we take seriously the possibility of attacks against our ships. Our ships are prepared to deal with such attacks if they were to occur, and we are prepared to deal with any assets that might be used to launch such attacks.

Q: Have you seen any interesting movement of Iraqi troops in the Basrah area that might be more threatening, or the upgrading of systems that might be more threatening, a land threat?

A: We have not seen, I do not believe we have seen a significant increase in the land threat.

Q: Another threat to ships question. At one point Iraq had Exocet anti-ship missiles. Do they still have those?

A: I'd have to go check on that. It's not something I've looked into recently.

1-26-99 Pentagon Confirms Strike in Iraqi Neighborhood

By Linda D. Kozaryn

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—A U.S. missile fired at an Iraqi radar site Jan. 25 went astray and exploded in a residential neighborhood near the city of Basra in southern Iraq. At the time, U.S. forces were responding to provocative attacks against coalition aircraft by targeting elements of Saddam Hussein's air defense system, Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon said here Jan. 26.

"We have analyzed yesterday's information and found that an AGM-130 did miss its target and exploded in a residential neighborhood several kilometers away from its target," Bacon said. Other ordnance fired during the incident hit the military targets at which they were directed, he added. Defense officials have no independent estimate of casualties or fatalities resulting from the errant strike, Bacon noted.

Coalition forces take every step possible to avoid targeting civilians or creating collateral damage, Bacon stressed. "We are not attacking the people of Iraq. We have no animus against them whatsoever. In fact, we have a lot of sympathy for the people of Iraq. But we are attacking a large air defense system being used in an attempt to defeat the policing of the no-fly zones." Central Command officials are still investigating why the missile missed its mark. "Precision-guided munitions, while highly accurate, are not infallible," Bacon remarked.

Shortly after the Jan. 25 attack, U.S. Marine Corps Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, commander of U.S. Central Command and Operation Southern Watch, met with reporters at the Pentagon. He said Saddam Hussein is ultimately responsible for any civilian casualties related to coalition air strikes against Iraqi air defense sites.

The commander noted that Hussein has increased the possibility of collateral damage by placing his air defense systems, military forces and aircraft in close proximity to civilians. This use of human shields, he said, "clearly points out his disregard and lack of care about his own population."

"We deeply regret any civilian casualties, regardless of what the cause may be, but these exchanges have been initiated by Saddam Hussein," Zinni said, and "No one can guarantee that these strikes will not have errors or that we might not have errant ordnance."

In the Jan. 25 incident, Central Command officials said, two U.S. Air Force F-15Es and four F/A-18s patrolling the southern

no-fly zone responded to threats from anti-aircraft artillery and four Iraqi MiG fighters. They responded by dropping precision-guided munitions and launching ground-attack missiles.

All coalition aircraft returned safely to base. Since Operation Desert Fox in mid-December, U.S. officials report, the Iraqis have tripled the number of anti-aircraft missile batteries in the south and have stepped up the pace, intensity and coordination of their air defenses in the north and south.

Iraq's air defense system consists of jet fighters, anti-aircraft gun and missile batteries, radars and early warning systems and communications, Zinni explained. In recent weeks, more than 100 Iraqi aircraft committed more than 70 no-fly violations, the Iraqis have fired missiles at

coalition planes in nearly 20 incidents, plus fired anti-aircraft artillery and targeted coalition planes with radar.

“It’s evident to us that this entire system has been centrally controlled and turned on to oppose our enforcement of the no-fly sanctions, both north and south,” he said. “We view this threat as centralized and deliberate, and we view the entire air defense system that’s being set against us as the objective in any response that we take.”

Iraq’s declared objective, according to Zinni, is to violate the no-fly zones and to shoot down coalition aircraft. One can only speculate about Hussein’s purpose, whether it’s to parade an American pilot in Baghdad or to drum up support among other Arab leaders, he said.

“We’ve seen packages of [Iraqi] airplanes, two and three per flight, coming down in coordinated fashion, working in cooperation with surface-to-air missile—SAM—batteries, trying to lure our plane into what has become known as ‘SAMbushes,’” he said. U.S. pilots do not fall for the bait, and Iraqi pilots are quick to leave the zones.

Overall, Zinni remarked, these incursions may be acts of desperation on Hussein’s part. “What’s the cure for this?” the general asked. “A post-Saddam regime.” Central Command officials said 12 Iraqi fighters committed five no-fly violations in the south and one in the north Jan. 25. Along with the reactive strike in Basra, other incidents occurred where Iraqis in the north targeted coalition patrol aircraft and fired on them with anti-aircraft artillery.

Zinni said U.S. aircraft struck back, firing on missile batteries and other air defense facilities in the north and south. European Command officials said, coalition aircraft again struck radar sites in the north Jan. 26 in response to Iraqi threats.

In one incident, a U.S. Marine Corps EA-6B fired a missile at an Iraqi radar after being targeted. In three other, separate engagements, Air Force F-15E fighters attacked air defense sites with precision-guided munitions or missiles after being targeted by Iraqi radar.

DoD News Briefing

1-25-99: Operation Southern Watch Update Presenter: General Anthony C. Zinni, CINC, CENTCOM

Mr. Bacon: General Zinni—the Commander of the Central Command is in town—has arrived in town for the CINC's conference, and we asked him to come by and address some of the questions of the day, and he's happily here. This will be relatively short, 15 or 20 minutes, because you have to file, and he has to do other things as well.

General Zinni.

General Zinni: Let me make a few statements to begin with and maybe address some of the points that I think you may bring up.

Since DESERT FOX, we've had over 70 no-fly zone violations with well over 100 Iraqi aircraft involved, and there's been almost 20 incidents of missile firings at our planes, AAA firings and radar illuminations in that same period of time.

What we're seeing now is an increase in frequency, intensity, [and] coordination of their entire air defense system against our planes flying in both the north and the south.

We are seeing, for example, almost three times the number of surface-to-air missile batteries in the southern area, and movement of these surface-to-air missile batteries on occasion, which obviously makes it more difficult for our flyers to know where they are and where the threat may be posed.

You all know, I believe, that the anti-air defense system is composed not only of aircraft, fighters that would come down and engage planes, but also the surface-to-air missiles, AAA batteries, radars, early warning means, and communications. It's evident to us that this entire system has been centrally controlled and turned on to oppose our enforcement of the no-fly zone sanctions, both north and south.

We have seen this degree of coordination in fairly sophisticated ways since DESERT FOX. On several occasions we've seen packages of airplanes, two and three per flight coming down in coordinated fashion, working in cooperation with surface-to-air missile batteries, trying to lure us down into what has become known as SAMbushes. We have obviously detected early warning systems, optical guidance means being used obviously to prevent turning on radars, which would make targeting for us much easier.

This has been a clear indication that this is orchestrated and obviously is part of the declared objective by the Iraqi leaders to violate the no-fly zone sanctions and to shoot down our planes that are patrolling these zones.

We responded within our rules of engagement by defending ourselves and attacking this air defense system.

Today we had five violations of the no-fly zone in the south and one in the north by a total of 12 Iraqi fighters; plus, we had radar illumination of our aircraft in the north and also AAA fire detected by our aircraft in the north. We responded with attacks in the north and the south. These attacks were against missile batteries, radars, early warning systems, communications,

both in the north and in the south—not the same systems in the north and south, but included in both attacks.

There was a report today of civilian casualties in the Basrah area. As I told you, we struck targets in the south and in this general area, and we are in the process now of reviewing our strikes and other intelligence to determine if the possible cause of this might have been one of our missiles, if in fact, these casualties are confirmed.

As you know, our targeting and execution of our strikes are done in a manner to minimize any civilian casualties or damage to civilian property. No one can guarantee that these strikes will not have errors or that we might not have errant ordnance, but we do take every possible attempt to ensure that that doesn't happen, both in our planning and in the process of our execution.

We deeply regret any civilian casualties, regardless of what the cause may be, but these exchanges have been initiated by Saddam Hussein. This has been a deliberate onset of repeated attacks against our forces. I think just by following the track since DESERT FOX you realize these are increasing not only in numbers but in intensity, and we've seen, in fact, that the sophistication and the coordination and the experimentation, if you will, on the ways to come at us have increased.

This poses a threat to our aircraft, both in the north and the south. We view this threat as centralized and deliberate, and we view the entire air defense system that's being set against us as the objective in any response that we take. And we will defend our pilots and our aircraft against these attacks.

I'll be glad to take your questions.

Q: Having said that, this is sort of a moderate response, I guess you'd say, yet we have been told by senior defense officials that if this continues there would not be a tit for tat response, but a response going in and taking out much of his air defense system, airfields, and what have you.

Is that in the works? Is that imminent? And how long will we be patient?

A: I wouldn't get in, obviously, into any planning or discussion of any plans. I would say that if you look at this in its total, this would not have been a tit for tat response if you're on the other end. Since DESERT FOX and since he's chosen to engage us in this manner, he's lost considerable portions of his air defense system.

Now I would tell you right up front that he has a very robust system, with a lot of redundancy and the ability to repair or to replace to an extent. That extent may be getting strained now, and I don't think he's in a position that he could continue to sustain these losses at these rates with his lack of success.

Q: Let me follow up, if I may. You talked about, I believe, over 70 violations involving Iraqi aircraft.

A: Yes.

Q: Yet none of these targets today were aimed against the aircraft. Do you have any plan to take out his planes on the ground?

And one other formal question on that is, we've fired air-to-air missiles several times at these planes and haven't hit anything. Are the missiles faulty? They're very expensive. What's going on?

A: I think what you're saying is maybe lack of the will to engage by these Iraqi pilots. They obviously come down, tuck their nose in, and then race home. Our ability to engage them, obviously, would had to have been at very long range.

Remember, I mentioned that in some cases these planes have attempted to lure us into missile engagement zones where there's heavy surface-to-air missile fire that we could draw. We obviously don't fall for this sort of bait or lure, and we have engaged him at longer ranges because we know he won't close in any further to engage us before he races back north or south of the line.

Q: General Zinni...

Q:...take the planes out on the ground? There was one last part of the question.

A: I think a decision to take the campaign to something like that is a policy decision and not within my purview.

Q: General Zinni, based on what you know now, how likely is it that the damage Iraq says was done to a residential neighborhood in Basrah was in fact caused by an errant U.S. missile? Do you think it's very likely, not very likely? Based on what you know now.

A: Based on what we know now, I think there's still a need for us to review the strike. It's possible that we did have a missile that didn't perform as expected, but before I would say any more, I want to make sure that we've investigated thoroughly. We need more information. We should have that shortly. It's obviously in the general area of where we have conducted a strike. We did not conduct a strike in any fashion, in any way where we expected any collateral damage, and we took every precaution to avoid it.

Q:...hand Saddam Hussein a propaganda coup?

A: I think civilian casualties, obviously regretted by us, are the cause of actions initiated by Saddam Hussein. I think the placement of air defense systems, the placement of military forces—obviously what we've seen since DESERT STORM, the dispersal of aircraft in cities, the movement of military units and putting them in close proximity to civilians, the use of human shields—I think clearly points out his disregard and his lack of care about his own population. These actions are the result of his initiating strikes against our aircraft that were simply patrolling the no-fly zone.

Q: General...

Q: General, let me confirm that these strikes were caused by...

Q: Sir...

Q:...American missiles. Will the American government apologize to the Iraqis?

A: I think first of all we have to make a determination as to what the cause is and we're in the process of doing that, and I don't want to get into hypothetical situations or next steps. Let us first determine [as] best we can what the cause might be of this incident.

Q: General...

Q:...the pilots, sir?

A: I'm sorry?

Q: Were there any preliminary indications from the pilots when they returned, that they may have been, there may have been a problem with them?

A: Obviously we review and have debriefings from each mission. In the course of these debriefings and reviews we have the possibility of one missile that may have been errant. There's still a requirement and a need for us to look closer and to further examine this, and that's in the process now.

Q: General, what's he do? What's his strategy? What's behind this? Is he trying to increase his support in the Arab nations by having incidences frequently? Is he trying to get ahold of a couple of American pilots perhaps as trophies? What do you think he's doing, and what do you think is the remedy? What's the strategy to counter...

A: I think, first of all, clearly, he wants to shoot down an American airplane. Whether he wants a pilot to parade in Baghdad, what his purpose is, who the target audience is for this act, is it the so-called Arab street? He obviously has not succeeded in convincing Arab leaders in the region to support him. They obviously feel that he's been responsible for everything that's happened. That's come out in statements they've made. He's much more isolated. A question could be made as to whether these are becoming acts of desperation. What's the cure for all of this? A post-Saddam regime, in my view.

Q: General, you said initially, I think, that there were three times as many SAM batteries in the southern zone. Did you mean three times as many since DESERT...

A: Yes.

Q: Is that not a violation of the southern no-fly zone? How come we're allowing them to remain there?

A: These are violations, and of course they have been moved around. They have on occasion engaged us and illuminated us, and we have engaged them.

There were closer to three times. There's less now. And that's a result of the violations of the no-fly zone.

Q: What other weapon systems have you seen the Iraqis move into the southern zone? Especially around Basrah.

A: We've had reports of a buildup of some missile systems that could be ground missile systems. We've had reports, again, that have been in the open media of potential armor movement. We have not see anything that we feel poses a direct threat to us or to Kuwait. But there's been some activity and some buildup on the ground side.

Q: There was a report that an oil refinery was hit today. Do you have any insight as to that?

A: No, I don't.

Q: General, there have been now more than about two dozen of these incidents where U.S. aircraft have dropped missiles or bombs on air defense sites. What degradation to the system have these caused?

A: I don't want to get into specifics because we get into intelligence sources. We know we have damaged his air defense system. We know there are missile systems that he's lost, radars that he's lost, and other attendant parts of this overall air defense system—communication facilities, etc. Some of these have been replaced; some of these have been moved around.

Obviously, during DESERT FOX we hit a missile repair facility for these types of missiles, and we know we did significant damage there.

We are still in the process of assessing his overall capabilities and what damage we've done and his ability to reconstitute and repair. We are seeing certain things that are encouraging for us. I would not like to go into detail, again because of intelligence sources.

Q: General Zinni, today the provocation in the south was the incursion by Iraqi aircraft in the southern no-fly zone, and the response was an attack against surface-to-air missiles on the ground. Is that in any sense a preemptive strike? Is that in any way preemptive in the sense that it's not—you didn't chase the planes back over the no-fly zone?

A: Again, I would say that we viewed the entire air defense system as the threat, and we do [so] for good reason. This entire system, we have seen, in a coordinated fashion directly threaten our planes, where missile batteries and planes in coordination have engaged in some sort of tactic to lure us in. We've obviously detected the early warning and communication and coordination procedures. So we have taken the view that this entire air defense system is a threat to us—not picked out specific things like those airplanes on this given day, that battery at this given moment, because the whole system, again, has threatened us.

Unlike previous to DESERT FOX where we may have seen isolated incidents where maybe a single battery or an air defense sector or even a gunner that might have been a little trigger happy that day fired at us, this is obviously, and it's been declared to be, a coordinated, centralized effort, north and south, with their entire air defense system.

Q: General Zinni, regardless of how it might have happened, if the deaths today that occurred were inflicted by a U.S. bomb, are you worried that our Arab friends in the region will find it politically impossible to continue to host us?

A: I would want our friends in the region to know several things. One, that we deeply regret any loss of civilian lives or civilian casualties or injuries. Secondly, that we do everything humanly possible to prevent that. And thirdly, and most important, the ultimate reason and cause for these casualties is Saddam Hussein. His attacks against us and his history of disregard for the welfare of his own people, which manifests itself not only in the humanitarian side but in the direct attacks he's conducted, and the use of human shields and the location of military pieces of equipment in civilian areas—this has been, I think, well documented ever since DESERT STORM and even before.

Q: General, we've been talking about now...

Q: Is there still a no-drive zone in the south? And have you seen a movement of SAM sites into residential areas?

A: We have seen some SAM sites near residential areas and other civilian kinds of areas like commercial areas and that sort of thing. Is there still a no-drive zone in the south? Yes, there is. There is a no-drive zone and a no-drive sanction that is in place.

Q: Following up on that, can you give us a little more detail about what the target of today's strike was? And was it something that had been placed in a residential neighborhood?

A: There were several targets in the south and in the general region.

Surface-to-air...

Q: (inaudible)

A: Again, we need to know more about whether this is confirmed or when this situation is confirmed, as to where the civilian casualties are before we can make our assessment as to if it possibly was one of our missiles, which strike might have caused this. Obviously, direction, type of ordnance, range, all that has to be taken into consideration.

I will tell you in a general sense, in this area we struck communications facilities, radars, surface-to-air missile batteries.

Q: Can you specify at all what kinds of ordnance were used by the U.S. planes? AGM-130s...

A: AGM-130s, GBUs, HARMs.

Q: All three?

A: Yes.

Thank you very much.

1-19-99 Patriots to Deploy to Turkey

By Linda D. Kozaryn

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—The United States is sending a Patriot missile battery to Turkey as a precautionary measure against Iraqi threats made immediately after Operation Desert Fox in December.

Defense Secretary William S. Cohen signed orders Jan. 16 deploying units of the 69th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, based near Frankfurt, Germany. The Patriot anti-ballistic missile was used during the Gulf War to help defend Saudi Arabia and Israel against Iraqi Scud missile attacks. Its capabilities have been continually upgraded since the war. Army officials here said at least three Patriot launchers and about 150 soldiers will deploy to Turkey and become part of Operation Northern Watch, conducted from Incirlik Air Base, a Turkish facility near Adana. At present, 38 U.S. aircraft patrol the no-fly zone over northern Iraq, along with British and Turkish forces.

Defense officials here said the United States wants to be supportive of coalition partners involved in this operation. Although the Defense Department sees no immediate threat to Turkey, they said, Cohen approved a Turkish government request for the Patriots in light of heightened tensions with Iraq.

In the past few weeks, Iraqi forces have repeatedly challenged coalition air forces patrolling the no-fly zones over both northern and southern Iraq. Pentagon officials said they believe the Iraqis maintained some Scuds following the Gulf War. Some Scud models have ranges exceeding 600 miles.

1-12-99: Zinni Says Saddam Shaken, Desperate

By Linda D. Kozaryn
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—Desert Fox has left Saddam Hussein shaken and desperate, according to Marine Corps Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, who headed the December operation. The four-day air campaign did more damage and was far more effective than initially estimated, the U.S. Central Command chief said. “We’ve upped our estimate on the time it would take

Saddam to repair the damages from Desert Fox from one to two years,” Zinni said at the Pentagon Jan. 8.

Further analysis has shown that structural damage was severe; facilities are beyond repair in some cases. The strikes hit one-of-a-kind items available only outside Iraq—critical equipment necessary for Saddam’s missile development program. The bombs and missiles did not hit empty buildings as first reported, Zinni said. “In some cases, especially in the first night’s strikes, [Saddam] didn’t have the opportunity to disperse critical equipment within,” he reported.

Unconfirmed reports estimate Republican Guard casualties at 600 to 2,000, including senior leaders. “We’re trying to confirm those reports as to who they were and what positions they held,” Zinni said. The strikes damaged the guard’s infrastructure, command and control, yet they’re still being given internal security missions that they’ll have to execute under some tough conditions, he said.

“There are some brigades and divisions right now that are operating out of tents,” Zinni said. “They don’t have barracks to go back to. They don’t have a headquarters or [communications] equipment. They have communications problems because we hit communications nodes. To replace all that and re-establish that kind of capability within the Republican Guards - - critical to the security of the regime—will take quite awhile.”

Along with the physical destruction, Desert Fox reportedly has caused some instability within Iraq and unrest in the Iraqi army, Zinni said. “We’ve seen a number of unusual things internally that clearly demonstrate that [Saddam] was shaken and the regime was shaken,” the commander said. “We have seen executions in the south. One division, in particular, lost its commander and several staff members.” Allegedly, the executions resulted from a failure to obey orders, Zinni said.

Prior to Desert Fox, he said, Saddam divided Iraq into fourths and put ruthless people in charge, including those responsible for attacks on Iraq’s Kurds in the north and Shiite Muslims in the south. There appear to be two chains of command—the regular military leaders and those put in place by Saddam—and that’s creating resentment and problems of loyalty as troops wonder who they answer to, Zinni said. Saddam displayed his state of mind Jan. 5 in a televised Army Day speech that clearly reflected his isolation, Zinni said. The Iraqi dictator called on all Arabs to rise up against their leaders for “pandering to Western interests.”

“His attack on all the other leaders in the region showed a degree of desperation that we hadn’t seen before,” the general said. “To us that speech was shocking.” Other leaders in the region “bristled at this attack on them,” he added.

Signs of unrest and some loss of internal control are clear, but not their extent, Zinni said. And what might a desperate Saddam do under the circumstances? According to the general, the Iraqi leader is capable of anything.

“He’s capable of not only doing things irrationally, but of miscalculating,” Zinni said. “He’s made a profession out of miscalculation. He hopes for a propaganda victory. He obviously doesn’t value the lives of his own troops. He doesn’t care about his own people.” That track record and those attitudes make him dangerous, he said.

The United States has contingency plans should the Iraqi dictator move toward Kuwait, fire missiles at his neighbors, and other possible scenarios. “We have plans for everything,” Zinni said.

11 Jan 1999 U.S. Sends More Planes to Persian Gulf

By Linda D. Kozaryn

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON—The United States is sending more planes to the Persian Gulf in light of Saddam Hussein's persistent violations of the no-fly zones over Iraq. Marine Corps Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, Central Command chief, said he's asked for eight more F-16CJ fighters and four more aerial refueling tankers for Operation Southern Watch.

Since Dec. 23, when Hussein declared the no-fly zones invalid, there have been more than 40 violations, Zinni said Jan. 8 at the Pentagon. The majority occurred in the south, according to defense officials. Each violation involved one or more Iraqi aircraft entering the zones north of the 36th parallel or south of the 33rd parallel.

In some instances, Zinni explained, Iraqi planes race down, tuck their noses into the zone and retreat. In others, a number of Iraqi aircraft, working in cooperation with ground-based, surface-to-air missile systems, conduct tactical maneuvers against coalition aircraft.

"Clearly, [Hussein's] trying to lure us into a possible shoot-down situation, and we're taking every measure to prevent that," Zinni said. As a result of the recent intrusions, Central Command officials have adjusted their tactics, procedures and how they package forces going into the zone, he said.

The United Nations imposed no-fly and no-drive zones after the Gulf War to prevent Iraq from attacking his people, particularly minority groups such as the Kurds in the north and Shiite Muslims and Marsh Arabs in the south. The zones also are designed to prevent Saddam from attacking his neighbors. U.S. and coalition aircraft have been enforcing the northern zone since 1991 and the southern zone since 1992.

In the past seven to eight years, U.S. and coalition air forces have flown more than 140,000 sorties in the no-fly zones, which cover 60 percent of Iraqi air space, Zinni noted. "Any time we fly into Iraqi air space ... we treat it as flying into a potentially hazardous situation," he said. "Never do our pilots go in unprepared for any eventuality."

The Southern Watch commander expressed confidence in America's technical superiority and pilot skills. "Our pilots are smart enough not to fall for traps or to get themselves in some sort of maneuver position where they're vulnerable or follow a plane into a missile engagement zone," he said.

U.S. forces have fired on Iraqi aircraft and missile sites during five confrontations in the past few weeks. In an incident Jan. 11, two U.S. F-15Es dropped precision-guided bombs and an F-16CJ fired a ground-attack missile at an Iraqi missile site that had turned on its tracking radar against them in the northern zone.

Considering the robust defensive action U.S. forces take, Zinni said, Iraqi pilots do not appear enthusiastic about engaging coalition aircraft. "These planes do not want to come close where they can be engaged by [our] superior technology and pilot proficiency. They want to cheat and retreat."

The pilot of an Iraqi fighter jet that reportedly crashed when it ran out of fuel, for example, was probably “pressing that MiG-23 pedal to the metal so hard that he didn’t look to his gas gauge,” the general remarked.

Asked whether the United States is considering strikes on Iraqi airfields to stop the incursions, Zinni replied, the U.S. forces are “taking action based on what Saddam’s doing.”

“We have rules of engagement that allow us to react not only to a hostile act, but even to hostile intent,” he said. “If we get ‘illuminated’ [detected by enemy radar], if we see a plane coming at us and it’s clearly identified by our battle management birds as a fighter moving in, we take the shot. We’ve done that. We’ve been very proactive.”

Taking additional steps beyond that, however, calls for a policy decision by the president. “If that [decision] were made, we could execute that, but right now, given the situation that we have, we feel confident that we’ve made the adjustments to handle it.”

Saddam is capable of irrational military acts, Zinni told Pentagon reporters. He said contingency plans on the shelf could be executed if there are further Iraqi provocations, and, “We have plans for everything.”

01/07/1999: Strike Four: Iraq's At It Again

Linda D. Kozaryn
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – In the fourth strike against Iraqi targets in 11 days, U.S. air forces in the northern no-fly zone over Iraq fired upon an Iraqi mobile missile system.

Defense officials said a U.S. Air Force F-16CJ and an accompanying Marine Corps EA-6B picked up radar signals from a Roland mobile missile-system at about 3 a.m. EST Jan. 7. The F-16CJ launched a HARM high-speed, anti-radiation missile at the radar and then left the area.

“We do not have a picture of what happened to the Roland, but the radar stopped beaming at precisely the time the HARM was to impact the radar so we assume it was a hit,” said Pentagon Spokesman Ken Bacon. Photographs could not be taken because of cloud cover in the area, he added.

The same day, Bacon noted, two Iraqi planes violated the southern no-fly zones. “Two MiG-21s darted into the no-fly zone for a very brief period of time at a time when U.S. aircraft were not in the area,” he said. One stayed seven minutes, the other four.

Two days earlier, Jan 5, U.S. fighter jets fired on Iraqi MiG-25s in the southern no fly zone. U.S. aircraft fired on Iraqi surface-to-air missile sites in the southern zone on Dec. 28 and 30.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Army Gen. Hugh Shelton, appearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee Jan. 6, called these continuing violations “militarily insignificant.” Bacon supported Shelton’s assessment.

For the past two weeks, Bacon explained, Iraq has been making “timid, cheat-and-retreat” incursions into the restricted zones. “That’s basically the pattern we’re seeing day in and day out. There have been some longer violations. Typically, they take place when U.S. planes are not in the box.

“I don’t know if these are being done as a way to make Saddam’s pilots feel good that they’re able to tweak our nose or whether they’re doing it to give them practice flying over areas they haven’t been able to fly over since 1992,” Bacon remarked.

Asked how long the United States will put up with this constant testing, Bacon replied. “You can turn that question around and ask, ‘How long will Iraq be content to see its assets eliminated by our missiles because that’s exactly what’s happening.’”

The recent strikes demonstrate that the United States will continue to protect its forces and the no-fly zones by whatever means necessary, Bacon said.

“We’ve shown in December [during Operation Desert Fox] and before that we can strike with speed, force and surprise at a time of our choosing,” he said. “Should the circumstances arise, we can respond in a variety of ways.”

01/06/1999: U.S. Confronts Frustrated Hussein

By Linda D. Kozaryn

WASHINGTON—Saddam Hussein, in the aftermath of Operation Desert Fox, is venting his frustration by challenging coalition forces patrolling U.N.-mandated no-fly zones, Pentagon officials say.

“In the broad sense, it does appear that Saddam Hussein is frustrated and may be even desperate,” Pentagon spokesman Ken Bacon said Jan 5. “From everything we know, the raids caught him totally by surprise and were more damaging than we initially anticipated.”

The four-day mid-December air campaign apparently has caused instability within Iraq and unrest among the Iraqi military, Bacon said. Defense officials have gotten reports that the strikes degraded Iraq’s basic infrastructure, resulting in longer and more frequent brownouts.

“We see some anecdotal reports that popular confidence in his military and defense apparatus has been shaken because of his inability to protect the country,” Bacon said. There also have been reports of more politically motivated murders—“Assassination is one of Saddam’s management styles,” he noted.

Failing to rally support from his Arab neighbors, the Iraqi dictator is employing his only strategy—defiance, according to the defense spokesman. Within the past two weeks, Iraqi missile sites have fired at patrolling coalition aircraft and Iraqi aircraft have violated the no-fly zones with some regularity, Bacon said.

“We’re going through a period of challenge,” he remarked. “We’re responding to those challenges, and we’ll continue to respond to those challenges.”

An Iraqi missile site fired four surface-to-air missiles Dec. 28 at five patrolling U.S. Air Force fighters. The U.S. jets returned fire with three ground-attack missiles and six precision-guided bombs. On Dec. 30, an Iraqi air defense site fired six to eight anti-aircraft missiles at coalition aircraft; U.S. aircraft again retaliated with missiles and bombs. In both cases, U.S. forces returned safely to base.

After the strikes against the missile sites, Bacon said, Saddam stopped using his air defense sites, but became more aggressive with his airplanes. In two separate Jan. 5 incidents, Iraqi planes challenged U.S. fighters in the southern no-fly zone.

In the first incident, southwest of Baghdad at 2:15 a.m. Eastern Time, two Iraqi MiG-25 fighters illuminated two U.S. F-15s with their radars. The U.S. fighters responded by firing air-to-air missiles. According to Bacon, the Iraqis “beat a hasty retreat.” The second incident, 15 minutes later about 80 miles away,

involved two F-14s from the carrier USS Carl Vinson in the Gulf. The U.S. fighters saw two Iraqi MiG-25s in the no-fly zone and fired Phoenix air-to-air missiles. The Iraqis took evasive action and retreated. The U.S. fighters fired six missiles in all and returned safely to their bases, Bacon said. “Without getting into specific rules of engagement. Our planes are allowed to do what they need to do to protect themselves and to enforce the no-fly zone,” he said.

Asked by reporters why the U.S. missiles missed, Bacon explained that air-to-air combat isn’t easy. “It looks easy in the movies,” he said, “but it’s not easy in real life.” Iraqi planes, like

U.S. planes, have radar detectors that tell when they're being targeted and when a missile is homing in on them, Bacon noted. "As soon as they detect that, they immediately change course, and the best way to change course is to make a U-turn."

Including these two incidents, eight no-fly zone violations occurred Jan. 5 and involved up to 15 Iraqi planes, Bacon said. Periodic violations are not uncommon in the zones, which cover about 60 percent of Iraqi air space, he noted.

"Typically, they dart into the no-fly zone," Bacon said. "Sometimes they go for a minute or two; some go for as long as 10 or 20 minutes. Many of these violations, particularly the deeper ones, have been taking place at times when they know our planes are not in the air."

The United States intends to remain aggressive in protecting the no-fly zones, he told reporters. "What happened today is an example of that. We are willing to go after [Saddam's] planes when we encounter them or when they challenge our planes." Overall, Bacon said, U.S. policy to contain Saddam remains firm.

"We've shown that we're willing to use significant force quickly and by surprise at the time of our own choosing," he said. "That remains an option on the table."

Friday, January 8, 1999 - 10:00 a.m. Presenter: General Zinni on Operation DESERT FOX and Iraq

General Zinni on Operation DESERT FOX and Iraq

(Gen. Anthony C. Zinni, commander of the U.S. Central Command discussing bomb damage assessments from Operation DESERT FOX and the situation in Operation SOUTHERN WATCH.)

Mr. Bacon: We'd like to start right off with General Zinni because he has another appointment and has to leave here at 10:29, so he'll begin with some introductory remarks and take your questions, and we'll cut it off promptly just before 10:30.

General Zinni, welcome.

General Zinni: Good morning.

What I thought I'd do briefly is just an update on the results from DESERT FOX and additional information since the last time I talked to you, and describe a little bit about what we're seeing in the region in the aftermath, and then talk a little bit about the no-fly zone violations, and then get into your questions as quickly as possible.

We have upped our estimate on the time it would take Saddam to repair the damages from DESERT FOX from one to two years. The basis for this is as we've done more analysis we found that in some of the structures we struck, these were not empty buildings as some people reported. In some cases, especially in the first night's strikes, he didn't have the opportunity to disperse critical equipment within. Obviously in other buildings there was evidence of dispersal, and not all equipment but some was hit.

In this equipment now that we're seeing that was struck and severely damaged, we're seeing some unique pieces of equipment necessary for his missile development program. Things like test stands and other kinds of test facilities, special kinds of presses and equipment that he would have to go external to get and were one of a kind again.

In addition to that we're seeing some of the structural damage that was far more severe than obviously we initially saw from maybe a hole in the building, but then finally [we found] the penetration [was] much deeper, structural damage beyond repair to some of the critical facilities.

We have seen communications and other things that are not coming up that he's having problems with. So all these are indications that as we look deeper and we have more detailed reports on our intelligence and other means that verify this, we're seeing that the effectiveness was even greater than we first thought.

Having said all that, I want to emphasize we're still staying very much on the conservative side on all this.

I know there's been discussion of casualties. I don't have a figure for you. We have some bits and pieces of reports that we feel are solid, but nowhere in our mind paint the full picture. We

have reports that range from 600 to 2,000, for example, in the Republican Guard. I can't confirm the validity of those reports. I can't tell you whether it's more like 600 or more like 2,000. Again, we stay very conservative. We only look at those intel reports that we can confirm and validate.

We are looking at reports that certain senior leadership targets that were hit, that there were senior leadership members in there who were part of the casualty lists, especially in the special security organizations and in the Republican Guard. Again, we're still in an attempt to confirm those reports as to who they are, what positions they held, verify names that we're getting. I won't go into that in any more detail than that.

In the aftermath of DESERT FOX we've seen a number of unusual things internally that I think clearly demonstrate that he was shaken and the regime was shaken. We have seen executions in the south, one division, in particular, lost its commander and several others.

I mentioned before that he broke his country into four sectors, put some very ruthless people in charge. In the south, "Chemical" Ali [Ali Hasan Al-Majid] who is famous for putting the chemicals on the Kurds in the north at Halabja and also for ruthlessly punishing the Shias in the south. It looks like he may have been behind some of these executions, and there might be still some going on. Military ranks and civilians also.

We have seen and heard reports of problems elsewhere in the country. Again, I can't put a measure on this and tell you that they're significant, not significant, but there's a number of reports coming to this effect.

Probably the most remarkable thing in my mind was the Army Day speech by Saddam. I think that was clear evidence of his isolation. The language he used, his attack on all the other leaders in the region I think showed a degree of desperation that we hadn't seen before. To us, that speech was shocking. If there was any attributed propaganda victory afterwards, certainly it didn't work in terms of the other leaders in the region for him to react that way. And I think we're seeing from the AOR, the area of responsibility, media and the reaction of the leaders in the region that they bristle at this particular attack on them.

On the no-fly zone violations, we have seen since the 23rd of December, when Saddam has declared the no-fly zones invalid, over 40 violations. Now what we consider a violation is an individual act, not an individual airplane. Say, some of these were multiple airplane intrusions. They range from racing down and tucking their nose in and running back, to attempting multiple plane kinds of tactical maneuvers against our forces, trying to work in cooperation with surface-to-air missile systems on the ground.

We have made adjustments to all of this. Obviously we've made, and I won't go into detail for obvious reasons, but we've made adjustments to tactics, we've made adjustments to how we package our forces, the procedures we use. We have all the confidence in our superiority not only technically, but in our pilot skills and everything else.

Obviously any time we fly into Iraqi airspace, and this goes for the past seven to eight years, whether it's in the north or the south, we treat it as flying into a potentially hazardous situation. We have flown over 140,000 sorties in that time, both in the north and in the south, and never do our pilots go in unprepared for any eventuality.

We have focused our intelligence much more on the kinds of tactics we're seeing and approaches he's using. I think clearly he's trying to lure us into a possible shoot-down

situation, and we're taking every measure to prevent that and have made adjustments, as I said, to ensure that that wouldn't happen.

With that kind of brief opening statement, I'd be glad to take your questions.

Q: What about the loyalty of his troops? You say there have been these executions. Are they in response to any signs of refusal to obey orders? Is there any sign that the Republican Guards are being sent to quell some disturbance but refusing to go? Anything like that?

A: I think we're seeing, especially in the case of the executions in the one division in the south, the indications, the reports that we're getting, is that was as a result of not obeying orders. And it may have been because of this command structure that he overlaid on the existing military structure—these ruthless four that he's put in charge and the way he divided it up and superseded the military command structure. I think there's some confusion in the ranks, and there's some disgruntlement with how this is done and who they answer to.

I think obviously we have seen Republican Guards and others move around in the country which, by our judgment, looks like moves for internal security reasons also.

I can't, again, give you a feel for how serious this is, how extensive it is, but we are certainly seeing these kinds of signs that there are problems.

Q:...he did not follow to get that execution...

A: I do not. I do not know what order or the exact motivation or reason behind it.

Q: Can you provide us with your assessment of what you have heard from the cockpit of these aircraft as the U.S. chases them? Any sort of intelligence you can share with us on the attitudes of the pilots when they are being pursued by the Americans or the guy that crashed?

A: We are, without going into specifics which I can't do, we are not seeing a great deal of enthusiasm to engage directly. I think these are all attempts to lure us in, to certainly not get close. Obviously we fired missiles and we fired at extended ranges. Our pilots are smart enough not to fall for traps or get themselves in some sort of maneuver position where they're vulnerable or follow a plane into a missile engagement zone.

These planes do not want to come close where they can be engaged by, again, the superior technology and the pilot proficiency. It's obvious that they want to, I think the term used before was cheat and retreat. That's very clear. The guy that ran out of fuel, I think he was pressing that MIG-23, the pedal to the metal so hard, that he didn't look to his gas gauge and eventually landed short.

Q: General, when you say 600 to 2,000 casualties, are you talking dead or dead and injured?

A: Again, it's a mix. Some of the reporting we see from all kinds of sources, they say dead. In some we see just casualties. So I can't tell you what that is. In most of the reports, these are reporting dead.

Now we obviously have seen some unit reporting. We obviously have some indication, anecdotal reporting of funeral processions and things like that in the area. We have no way of... We look at exactly the hard figures we have, but we have no way of being able to estimate from that what the total figures might be—what we're not seeing—and to validate some of these reports that are coming from all sorts of sources to judge whether they're inflated or not.

So I can't give you an answer. They're mixed. Some say dead, some say dead and wounded.

Q: In terms of the execution, are we talking execution of regular army, air force...

A: Regular army.

Q: General, on the casualty issue, I wanted to get a sense, were deaths of Republican Guard units or soldiers, were those among your measures of success? The numbers of soldiers killed among the barracks and...

A: No. I think I told you before, we weren't measuring success or after a goal or a number. Obviously, we do the estimates on what might happen. That's situationally dependent. I mean if there's total surprise, if they're in the barracks. But our real target was after infrastructure. By that I mean command and control, headquarters, equipment, that sort of thing. So the casualties were not a direct objective of the attack.

Q: Since you're going to be subject to criticism by analysts who say, oh, 2,000, there's 60,000 Republican Guards possibly. How could you have degraded the Republican Guard unit if you only possibly killed a small number?

A: Well, my answer to that would be—I mean there are some brigades and divisions right now that are operating out of tents. They don't have barracks to go back to. They don't have a headquarters. They don't have the com equipment. We've seen derelict tanks and APCs and other things being pulled away. They have com problems because we hit communications nodes. They're still being given missions for internal security and other things that they have to execute under some very tough situations.

To replace all that and to reestablish that kind of capability within the Republican Guards critical to the security of the regime, you know, will take quite awhile. So I think they have been degraded. Again, what our mission was.

Q: General, can you say whether the U.S. military used any intelligence gathered through UNSCOM to select targets during the attack?

A: I have no knowledge of any special or, you know, I know the reports that are coming up, but I have no knowledge of any kind of special efforts or intelligence coming through there.

Obviously we're aware of what UNSCOM does, as is any other country in the UN Security Council. We see what UNSCOM does and where it goes and what the reports are, but nothing [in] the reports that I have [indicates] any knowledge of any deliberate spying or effort worked through UNSCOM.

Q: General, what's the basis of the reporting that some of the top leaders... Is it that they're not showing up at meetings? Is it that they're not showing up on television? How solid is this information?

A: We don't know. I mean we have seen those reports with obviously the evidence that there's some leaders that seem to be missing. I have no particular confirmation as to what this means, whether they have been excluded, purged, or off about some other business, or what might be going on.

But again, we're seeing a lot of these kinds of things happen, some of which we're unsure what they mean. But there's enough out there that's sort of circumstantial evidence and some hard

evidence like the executions, that there is a degree of internal control problems and unrest. And again, the speech on the 5th, and what he did was remarkable in our eyes.

Q: Did you have some information that specific units other than the ones in the south may have questioned loyalty as far as their views towards Saddam?

A: No.

Q: General, are you considering any more aggressive action or perhaps even preemptive action to stop or cut down on these numbers of violations of no-fly zones and the threatening of U.S. and British planes that are patrolling those no-fly zones?

A: I think it's obvious. The Chairman had said this in his testimony, we have a number of plans on the shelf which we can execute if that decision was made.

Q: What's your understanding of the situation with that division in the south? Is that an insurrection? Was that, were these people executed for incompetence? Was this in support of something with the Shias there?

A: I'll tell you. My best take on it is that they resented the orders they received, they resented who gave them the orders...

Q: What orders?

A: I'm not sure, as I said before, what specifically the reason was, but it looked like in effect there were two chains of command. One that reports to Chemical Ali, ruthless, directly back to Saddam, obviously for internal control. And it seemed to have conflicted with the normal army chain of command, so I think you have a problem with loyalty and confusion and probably to some degree a resentment, but I don't want to speculate beyond that.

Q: Do you think that was limited to a single commander or small group of commanders, or do you think it was widespread among the troops?

A: We're hearing things that it's beyond just the one incident, that there were others. But we don't have anything specific that I can give you, other units or other incidents beyond that.

We've also heard there have been some executions of civilians in the region, and obviously a series of executions have been reported going back even to November when Saddam's son was in the region and in charge of some of these with the security services.

Q: How many executions...

A: I don't have a specific number. And again, some of these aren't even, some of the reports aren't even mentioning numbers.

On the division, we heard it was the division commander and some of his staff, but I didn't get a specific number.

Q: You say Saddam is shaken by this, but would you be willing to draw the judgment that his hold on power has been a lesson that he is less secure in his control of the Iraqi regime than he was before these strikes?

A: I would be reluctant to make a judgment as to how much control he may have lost or how shaken he is. I would, I do believe personally that he is shaken. I don't think you would have heard the words in that speech;

I don't think you would have seen these actions that he's taken to put these ruthless guys in charge, to create an overlay command and control organization over the existing one if he trusted it. It's obvious that that organization was not done for any military purpose, certainly no reaction to DESERT FOX or anything that we've done.

So I think there are signs there that there is a degree of loss of control, and he is shaken. Now to what degree that is and how significant it is, I couldn't make that judgment.

Q: General, if he's as shaken and desperate as you think he is, what are your concerns that he might do something totally irrational militarily?

A: Well obviously he's capable of it. He's capable of not only doing things irrationally but of miscalculating. I think he's made a profession out of miscalculation. He hopes for the propaganda victory. He obviously doesn't value the lives of his own troops in what he does. He doesn't care about his own people. So someone with that attitude and that track record, that makes him dangerous.

We have tried to look at every possibility, any events, every eventuality as to what he might do militarily in reaction to us, and we have prepared, obviously, contingency reaction plans for that, should it happen. And these range from, I think, the things that you can speculate on, that he might make a move toward Kuwait, that he might fire a SCUD that he has concealed, the range of things we've heard out there.

Q: Is there any evidence that these executions were in any way in response to a coup attempt?

A: No.

Q: Can we return briefly to the empty buildings or the non-empty buildings?

A: Yes.

Q: As you've looked at the number of targets that you destroyed, you obviously had a calculation that some of them would be empty. Is there a way to quantify in percentages or something most of the buildings now that you thought might have been empty actually had stuff in them, they weren't as clever as we thought? How do we...

A: I can say that we had several buildings, especially the ones we hit on the first night, that didn't have the opportunity to disperse valuable pieces of machinery and equipment. Other buildings obviously hit later on or moved rapidly when they had the first indication, and again, I think I mentioned before, probably UNSCOM's departure might have been the trigger that did begin dispersal, some were in the process. Others hit later on that moved a good deal of equipment out, was dispersed out, and then so was not affected.

Q: There were quite a few of the targets that were still empty buildings.

A: If I had to give you a number I would say that there was something in all the buildings. Obviously they prioritized what they had to get out. I would say in half the buildings they either didn't get it out, or they didn't get enough out of what we would consider the critical pieces of equipment.

I think I mentioned before, you can look at this in whole numbers. I mean I can tell you we had 100 targets, and I can tell you, take the WMD, the command and control, the most significant targets. We struck and damaged significantly 85 percent of those. But what does that mean?

Within those target sets there were what we call target elements that are critical. You went after this building for a special reason. Maybe there was a test facility within the building. Maybe there was a wind tunnel. Maybe there was a special piece of machinery or equipment. To get that critical piece of equipment then made the effect greater in our mind. It was not only the damage to the building and the infrastructure and how long it would take to replace that. But now you've got a one and only one unique piece of equipment necessary for missile development. As we're beginning to see those effects come in, we've upped our estimate because of the success we're getting and the confirmation of those kinds of results.

Q: Are you giving, given the scenarios you just described of the way that the regime might react, are you giving any thought to augmenting your forces or moving them around?

A: Yes. I've made a request for additional F-16 CJs, eight of them, and additional tankers which obviously gives us the ability to stay up longer and react. So there's a request for additional F-16 CJs and for additional tankers that I have...

Q:...Would they go to the northern no-fly zone or...

A: To the south. To CENTCOM's AOR.

Q: General, there's an impeachment going on in Washington right now. General Shelton said this morning that the timing on the counterterrorist strike in August and Operation DESERT FOX was incredible, but the question is, during the '70s when this situation was somewhat similar, the Defense Secretary issued guidance to commanders to be sensitive about the chain of command.

My question to you is have you received any guidance related to the impeachment, and these plans that you have on the shelf, have they been affected in any way about your recommendations for whether they should be implemented during this...

A: The answer to both questions is no. I received no such guidance and it has not affected the planning or anything else. The planning is done at Central Command. I'm given a mission and we develop the plans.

Q: What kind of events inside Iraq would indicate to you that Saddam's hold on power is beginning to slip?

A: I think the kinds of things I'd look for—I would follow the special security services, the Special Republican Guards, the Republican Guards themselves, look at their activities. They're responsible for regime security and maintenance of regime control and power. What we see them do, where they go.

I would look to any signs of disloyalty or breaking ranks in the regular army in the military.

I would look for signs that key leaders that may not be supportive of Saddam's policy suddenly disappear from the scene, or we get reports of executions or jailings or whatever.

I think I would look for, in places where there's been traditional dissident activity in the south, in the north, that that might increase, that there might be a degree or encouragement, might be acts of sabotage. I think those are the kinds of things you could possibly see that show a greater degree of loss of control.

* Q: General, Senator McCain, a Vietnam era fighter pilot, suggested on the Hill the other day that perhaps you ought to take out some of these airfields where these planes are flying from that are violating the no-fly zone. What's your reaction to that?

* A: Well, the first point I would make is we are taking action based on what Saddam's doing. I just mentioned that we have asked for additional assets. I mentioned that we have made adjustments in our tactics, in our procedures, the way we package forces going in. It isn't that we have done nothing.

Obviously we have rules of engagement that allow us to react not only to a hostile act, but even hostile intent. If we get illuminated, if we see a plane coming at us, it's clearly identified as, by our battle management birds, that we have a fighter moving in. We take the shot, we've done that, so we've been very proactive.

To take the additional step to go beyond that obviously is a policy decision. If that were made, we could execute that, but right now, given the situation that we have, we feel confident that we've made the adjustments to handle it.

Q: General, the eight CJs you want to bring out, those are radar killing airplanes.

A: Right.

Q: Does that imply you expect the duration of these cat and mouse, in and out incursions to be fairly long term?

A: The reason is that as we fly into there we want to make sure we have a robust capability in this area and coverage. We always go in with those kinds of airplanes covering our packages. We want to do this now with more. The SAMs in the area are moving around. There's more surface-to-air missile activity. So prudence calls for us to provide additional capabilities to counter that with deep strike.

Q: How about more Rivet Joints to help pick out the electronics on the ground?

A: Well if you look at our tankers and additional tankers requested, this allows us to keep what we have up longer, and maintain a longer stretch on the intelligence and reconnaissance kinds of needs we have. So that's supportive of that kind of requirement. Rather than additional planes, the tankers give us the ability with what we have out there to maintain those longer.

Q: General Zinni, going back now to the end of DESERT FOX, can you just reconstruct for us what made you decide to cut it off at that 70-hour point? What did you see that made you say that's enough, that's sufficient? And why did you decide not to recommend to carry it on further?

A: We looked at the critical targets and the critical elements as we knew them. We had targets we needed to restrike right up to the last night. I really looked hard at the restrikes and the initial reports we had back. I felt at that point on the first cut we had achieved what we had set out to do. We had a degree of success that we could ascertain at that point that met our requirements. I didn't see the need to go on beyond that. Going on beyond that we would have put, you know, more bombs on targets we had already hit. We had known by then, obviously, that there was dispersal that had occurred, as I mentioned. There was more dispersal going on during the daylight hours. We were not in a position where we were going to get much more

effect unless we began to change the way we did it and add additional assets and really begin to change the mission. I thought I wanted to, obviously wanted to, stay within the parameters of the mission.

So when asked that night as to whether we needed to go beyond that, I felt that we didn't, given the mission we had, and the military tasks, and what we'd achieved.

Q: Did the United States have access to any of the real time intelligence information that would have been conveyed by UNSCOM eavesdropping equipment or surveillance cameras either during the strike or after the strike?

A: Not directly to me.

Q: Did you know where Saddam Hussein was at the time of the airstrike?

A: No.

Q:...an uprising in the southern part of Iraq. What would you do? What are your orders and what is your inclination?

A: Well, any action... I would infer from your question, would we support it or would we act on it? Obviously, I don't have the authority for that. That would have to be a presidential decision to take any action.

Q:...standing guidance?

A: We have the plans for everything, but no...

Q: Have the French...

Q: Can I follow up? Just very quickly, could I follow up on that? To reverse that question, if the Iraqis should launch a major offensive or action against the Shiites in the south, what are the rules of engagement there? What are...

A: Well the first thing, if it were major, that assumes he would have to bring additional forces in. He would be in violation of the no-drive zone. If they were air forces, he'd be in violation of the no-fly zone. So he would be in violation of sanctions enforcement of UN resolutions to begin with. That could be perceived even as a threat to Kuwait, you know, and we're obviously committed to the defense of Kuwait. So I mean the rationale, if I get your question, the rationale for taking action would be based on those.

Q: Have the French stopped flying missions in the southern no-fly zone?

And are they being denied access to the headquarters in Riyadh?

A: They have stopped flying Southern Watch, awaiting a political decision as to whether they continue. And based on that, since they've stopped flying, they are not obviously being pre-briefed, or there's no requirement for them to be involved in Southern Watch planning. So they're not.

Q: During DESERT FOX you did not target the regular army at all. In fact, you gave them propaganda leaflets saying we're only after the friends of the regime.

Does the regular army in your judgment have the military capability, should it have the motivation to do so, to take on the Republican Guards, to take on Saddam and actually topple him?

A: Obviously we were after two things. One was to keep the regular army out and the other was to minimize any civilian casualties which, by the way, was a measure of success, and we felt very confident in that we achieved that.

The regular army outnumbered the Republican Guards. They're not as well equipped, not as well trained, not as well manned. I think the Regular Army has a problem, too, not only of the quality of the Republican Guard, although smaller, it's also the pressure that's put on them. It's obviously, the Special Republican Guard, the security services, the welfare of their own families. There are many ways, many subliminal ways I think that threats are conveyed to anybody in the regular army that would mean to uprise.

Physically, in terms of raw numbers—tanks and all that—the capability is there. The ability to pull that all together and to have the qualitative edge and then to ensure loyalty throughout the ranks and not the pressures from threats to family members and other things that happen from secret police, Mukhabarat or others, that's a different question.

Q: General, what is your response to some of these reports from the UN relief agencies who say they have seen what looked like damage done to civilian facilities?

A: The UN asked immediately after DESERT FOX to go in and see any claimed collateral damage. They were denied by Saddam Hussein. They made their request, and initially they had started in at 24 hours. They were cut off. That request still stands. It has not been approved. I notice CNN has not been able to get in or see any of that, or anybody else that has coverage in the region. So he's made these claims, but it's been denied for media or for the UN.

These claims are not coming from eyes on the site. We've looked very hard to our intelligence to see if these claims are valid. We have not seen any of this.

Press: Thank you very much.

01/06/1999: Strikes Damaged More than Expected, Shelton Says

By Linda D. Kozaryn

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – U.S. strikes against Iraqi military targets last month during Operation Desert Fox did more damage than defense officials first thought.

Pentagon officials initially determined the raids had produced substantial damage. Since the air campaign ended Dec. 19, Army Gen. Hugh Shelton said, the military has received more data, much of it unconfirmed, from a variety of sources that improves the initial assessment.

“The regime apparently was surprised both in the timing of the attack and in the size and intensity,” the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said Jan. 5 during readiness hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee. “They lost the initiative, which we feel they are attempting to regain right now, both on the diplomatic front as well as in their violations of the no-fly zone.”

Operation Desert Fox involved more than 30,000 U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf and 10,000 more from outside Central Command. Air forces flew more than 600 sorties Dec. 16 to 19 during the air campaign. More than 40 ships performed strike and support roles, with 10 launching more than 300 cruise missiles. Central Command officials said the strikes hit 64 out of 66 targets with 85 percent effectiveness.

Shelton said the strikes have delayed Iraq’s ballistic missile program by one to two years. Critical production components have been destroyed, he said. Noting other successes, the general said some key command and control facilities were hit, and “highly visible symbols of the regime were destroyed.”

Estimates of casualties in special Republican Guard security units that guard suspected weapons of mass destruction programs now hover at 600, Shelton said. “Five of the Republican Guard headquarters were damaged. There are unconfirmed reports of up to 800 casualties among the Republican Guard units themselves.”

A large surface-to-air missile facility was destroyed and will take years to rebuild, he said. “That will impact on [Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein’s] air defense sustainability because that’s where he repaired all of his missiles and radars.”

The strikes also knocked out an oil refinery that supplies about 30 percent of Hussein’s illegal oil exports, Shelton said.

Defense officials believe collateral damage was kept to a minimum. “We all know the Iraqis like to exaggerate and falsify the collateral damage,” Shelton said. “They have not shown any significant collateral damage at this point. There have been very few reports of civilian casualties and none that have been demonstrated by the Iraqis.”

***U.S. Department of State - Daily Press Briefing MONDAY, JANUARY 4, 1999 Briefer:
JAMES P. RUBIN***

QUESTION: Does the US Government believe that there is a conformity on the part of Saddam's government with regard to weapons of mass destruction; or do we feel that the attacks on allied aircraft are a defiance and a basic subversion of keeping track of what he's doing now?

MR. RUBIN: I think in our view, the Iraqi actions in recent days are the actions of frustration. They're lashing out at fellow Arab countries for having or not having a meeting, further demonstrating their isolation.

They're trying to find ways to demonstrate that they were stung quite badly and punished quite badly by these missile attacks. So this is the pattern in which they at first show that they can still get their anti-aircraft missiles destroyed by using them and then they show that they can still get their anti-aircraft missiles destroyed by using them.

Then, they make certain declarations which are repeated by some and understood better by others. In our view this is a clear act of frustration by a regime that has been unable to achieve its objective of getting changes in the international community's position vis-à-vis Iraq.

All that's happened is that Iraq has left itself without anybody to defend itself and left it without any allies to support its position on UNSCOM, because there is no UNSCOM. No country—despite what I see written over and over again - no country in the Security Council has proposed changing the sanctions regime in the absence of a declaration of disarmament by UNSCOM.

So there isn't any country in the UN Security Council - and those of you who might be listening or write this subject I hope will take note - have proposed changing the sanctions regime. So there's no proposal to change the sanctions regime. His weapons of mass destruction have been set back significantly; in the case of missiles, by more than a year.

His prospect of having sanction's relief has been set back by the time it would take to get an UNSCOM back in have that tested and operating. So this situation leaves Saddam Hussein stung and punished; and this is what we've come to expect when that happens.

QUESTION: Is it the duty - is it the policy of the US and Britain to monitor the weapons of mass destruction progress on the ground and possibly go back by air and make these -

MR. RUBIN: We've made very clear we reserve the right to use military force if we think he is reconstituting his weapons of mass destruction. This is not the best way to disarm Iraq - through the military - but it's another way to do it if they won't cooperate with the UN Special Commission, which they will not do.

OPERATION DESERT FOX: BATTLE DAMAGE ASSESSMENT: TRANSCRIPT OF BRIEFING GIVEN BY AIR MARSHAL JOHN DAY AND ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY (HOME AND OVERSEAS), DR EDGAR BUCKLEY, LONDON, TUESDAY, 22 DECEMBER 1998

AIR MARSHAL DAY:

Our aim is to give you an insight into our overall assessment of the results which have been achieved jointly by British and United States forces during Operation Desert Fox. Throughout the planning and execution of this operation we have worked very closely with our American colleagues. It has been a truly combined operation and I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the professionalism of both British and American personnel involved, and in particular the courage displayed by all the air crew.

First, I would like to remind you why we carried out these attacks against Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. In simple terms it was a result of his decision to obstruct UNSCOM, the United Nations Security Commission, from carrying out its duties as set by the United Nations. The objectives which the military strikes were planned to achieve were to diminish Saddam Hussein's ability to threaten his neighbours and to delay Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programme, in particular the ability to develop and use chemical and biological weapons. Given these objectives, our target analysts examined a range of potential targets that could achieve these aims. They have also had to work within the requirement to minimise collateral damage to both civilian facilities and the Iraqi population.

DR BUCKLEY:

British and American planners have been studying intelligence reports of Iraq for a number of years. Based on this information they have compiled databases of potential targets in various categories. When the requirement came to prepare a specific possible attack on Iraq in response to Saddam Hussein's withdrawal of cooperation with UNSCOM in October, a plan was drawn up to include a specific selection of these targets designed to achieve the desired military effect. This plan was on the point of being put into operation on 14 November when Saddam Hussein capitulated and promised unconditional full cooperation with UNSCOM in future.

Following that crisis a new plan was drawn up, codenamed Operation Desert Fox, against the possibility that, as in the past, Saddam's word would prove worthless. British planners contributed targets to this overall plan and also consulted closely with their American counterparts on the selection of targets to be attacked by RAF Tornados. All targets in the plan were analysed carefully, both to achieve the desired military effect in the most accurate way, and to ensure that collateral damage, by which I mean damage to civilian objects and the Iraqi civilian population, was minimised. Also you will note that we did not attack economic targets, such as electrical power supplies, water supplies and lines of communications such as bridges and railways. These were not part of our military objectives in this campaign, as they would have harmed the Iraqi people.

So far as the United Kingdom was concerned, we then went through our normal process of consulting the government's law officers to ensure that they were satisfied that what was being planned was lawful and we then submitted our plans for approval to the Secretary of State for Defence and the Prime Minister. Once Ambassador Butler's report was delivered to the

Security Council, we were therefore in a position to proceed immediately with the use of force once the President and the Prime Minister decided that this was the only possible way forward.

AIR MARSHAL DAY:

Clearly we are very pleased with these results which represent our current assessment of the combined American and British attacks. Taken in isolation, the Royal Air Force's success rate matches these overall statistics.

What these statistics mean is that 15% of the weapons missed their intended target. This could be for a variety of reasons, for example, a technical failure or, in the case of manned bomber attacks, the wrong target being identified and hit. Target mis-identification has only happened in attacks on military complexes, so a military target has been struck but it was not the intended target. 11% of the attacks appear to have received only light damage. This means that we think that the target may still be operational. Subsequent more detailed battle damage assessment may however show that the damage was in fact severe enough to degrade or even destroy the target's operational capability.

I will now summarise what has been achieved as a result of the campaign. We have significantly damaged Saddam's ability to produce and repair ballistic missiles. Providing that sanctions remain in place it would take him a year or more to rebuild this capability. A key element of the threat which Saddam could pose to his neighbours, including his ability to deliver biological or chemical weapons by ballistic missile, has thus been seriously weakened.

We attacked the L29 unmanned aerial vehicle programme which he developed for the delivery of biological and chemical weapons. We have set back his biological and chemical weapons capability through attacks against production and research and development facilities, we have also attacked the Special Republican Guard and the Special Security Organisation units who concealed and controlled them.

The air defence systems of radars, control centres and communication facilities in southern Iraq has been severely damaged. Moreover, major damage inflicted upon his missile repair facilities has reduced his capability to maintain and upgrade air defence missile systems. Provided that sanctions remain in place, this would take years to reconstitute, unless he sacrifices air defence capability elsewhere in Iraq. This will make it even more difficult for Saddam to resist air attacks in future and so weakens his ability to threaten his neighbours.

We have struck hard against core and divisional headquarters of the Republican Guard, a key element of Saddam's regime which spear-headed the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. The headquarters that have been attacked are the locations where operations are planned and were key nodes of their communications network. Amongst other objectives, these strikes ensure that Saddam could not attack Kuwait whilst Operation Desert Fox was in progress.

His privileged Republican Guard force will now be in no doubt that we know their locations and that they continue to be vulnerable to the precision capability of the United States and the United Kingdom. We did not attack the poorly paid conscript regular army.

We have severely disrupted his senior level command and control network. These targets are particularly important because Saddam is afraid of a coup by his officers and makes all decisions himself. He therefore relies on an effective command and control system to pass his instructions to his commanders, and we assess that he will now be finding it far harder to

control his military and his internal security forces as a result of the damage which we have inflicted.

We also successfully attacked the oil refining facility that is the primary source of the illegal oil shipments down the Gulf which he uses to finance the development of his weapons of mass destruction and other military enhancements. However, this attack was conducted in such a way as to minimise the risk of damage to the environment through oil leaks.

As a consequence of our attacks on his military capability, and particularly on those forces closely associated with his weapons of mass destruction concealment programme, those close to Saddam will realise that we have the ability and the will to target the regime, as distinct from the Iraqi people. They now know that Saddam and his henchmen cannot shelter behind the Iraqi people. We deeply regret any loss of civilian life, but we believe that we have been successful in keeping civilian casualties, and collateral damage, to a minimum.

DoD News Briefing

Monday, December 21, 1998 - 4:15 p.m. (EST) Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen [Also participating in the briefing is General Henry H. Shelton, U. S. Army, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff]

Secretary Cohen: Good afternoon.

The United States has the best military in the world and our forces demonstrated this during Operation DESERT FOX this past week. Every day U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines along with members of the Coast Guard work together to protect our national interests around the world and our freedom and prosperity here at home.

The key to our strength is the men and women who serve us in uniform. One of my primary responsibilities as Secretary of Defense is to assure that we recruit and train and retain the best people we can possibly find.

Military training is difficult and extensive. It takes five to seven years to train an Air Force flight line maintenance supervisor. It takes 18 years to become a skipper of a destroyer and 28 years to groom an armored division commander. For this reason I've been working with President Clinton, Chairman Shelton, Vice Chairman Ralston and all the Service Chiefs, who are here with us today, and the Senior Enlisted Representatives to make sure that military pay and retirement systems adequately reward the experienced men and women in our military.

I'm pleased to announce a package of significant pay raises and retirement improvements for the nation's men and women in uniform. These are going to be part of President Clinton's fiscal year 2000 budget.

The Department's pay and retirement package has three main parts. First, across the board pay increases for all service members. Beginning January 1st in the year 2000, we will increase pay across the board by 4.4 percent, and by 3.9 percent annually in the fiscal years 2001 through 2005. This increase is the largest in basic military pay in nearly a generation. It is necessary to compensate our service members adequately and fairly.

Second, targeted pay raises and greater reward for performance. In addition to these across the board increases, we are proposing targeted raises for noncommissioned officers and mid-grade commissioned officers. This is going to enable us to do a better job in rewarding performance, compensating people for their skills, their education, their experience, and also to encourage them to continue their military service. These targeted raises are also going to help narrow the wage disparity with the private sector.

We're also reforming the pay table to make raises for promotion bigger than for those for longevity. Taken together, these improvements in the pay table are going to reward performance.

The maximum targeted pay increases are going to range from 1/2 of one percent to 5.5 percent. The targeted raises will come on top of the 4.4 percent that everyone will receive beginning January 1st the year 2000. The targeted increases will take place and take effect on July 1 in the year 2000.

Third, the improvement of the retirement system. The retirement system that applies to service members who entered after 1986 is a major source of dissatisfaction. They receive 40 percent of their basic pay when they retire after 20 years, while members who began their service prior to 1986 receive 50 percent. The change was made in the Cold War era following large pay raises. It was designed to encourage members to stay longer to become eligible for retirement.

Today in this uncertain time of high demand and smaller forces, the retirement change—popularly known as Redux—is undermining morale and it's hurting retention. Therefore, we are committed to returning the 20 year retirement to a 50 percent of base pay.

This is a good package. It addresses the real concerns that men and women in uniform have raised with me during my visits to ships and bases this year, and it also responds to market forces. It's going to help reward performance. These significant changes come into a broader context of a continuing effort to achieve adequate military compensation and benefits. That effort includes improved housing allowances, food allowances, cost of living, as well as targeted bonuses and special incentive pay to recruit and retain skilled men and women who protect our country.

We believe this package will be fair and effective. We need to compensate men and women in uniform properly in relation to their peers and in relation to the larger economy. The compensation system must help our services recruit and retain the high quality men and women that our defense requires.

The leadership of the Department of Defense and the military services are deeply committed to providing for the welfare of the men and women who serve this nation so well and for their families, and I intend to work with Congress to win approval of this proposal. The nation requires effort, dedication and sacrifice from our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. They are, in fact, the pride of our nation. They're working harder than ever to take care of us, and we have to act now to take better care of them.

It has been my privilege to work with the Chairman, who is with us today, along with, as I indicated, the Vice Chairman and the Service Chiefs, to work with President Clinton and the Department of OMB to put this package together. We think this is going to make a significant difference in the lives of the people who serve us.

General Shelton: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. And thank you also for your strong and unwavering support of our men and women in uniform.

I'd also like to thank the other members of the Joint Chiefs—General Ralston, General Reimer, Admiral Johnston, General Ryan, Vice Commandant Terry Dake, and also the Commandant, General Chuck Krulak, and also the Coast Guard Commandant, Admiral Jim Loy, and also their Senior Enlisted Advisors for helping make this very important announcement possible.

All told, the Joint Chiefs and their Senior Enlisted Advisors represent more than 300 years of combined military experience. I think that's one reason that the message we took to the President and to the Congress this past fall carried so much weight. These leaders have lived through the terrible years of the hollow force, and they're determined that they will never stand by and allow our superb military force to sink to that level again.

We are very pleased that the President understood our concerns and made this commitment to sustain the quality of our armed forces and to ensure that the men and women who have chosen

to serve this country will receive competitive pay and a retirement package that represents the very special demands of military life.

We appreciate that many members of Congress have expressed strong support for these initiatives, and we plan to work closely with them to ensure that we get the legislation required to fix the Redux retirement system and to implement the pay table reform, both outlined by Secretary Cohen.

Most of you watched closely this past week as we conducted military operations against Saddam Hussein's military forces and his weapons of mass destruction program. Inevitably during these operations attention is focused on the effectiveness of our aircraft, our precision guided munitions and our missiles. Our technology is impressive. But what sets the U.S. military apart and what makes our armed forces the envy of other nation in the world is the talent, the skill, the dedication -- in short the extraordinary quality of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and coast guardsmen.

Indeed, the men and women of our armed forces make their complex and dangerous missions look so effortless that we all risk the chance of taking this excellence for granted. We must not allow that to happen. The future of our military effectiveness is in our outstanding young second- and third-term noncommissioned officers and the superb junior and mid-grade officers who lead them.

Our action today will send a strong signal to our troops. It will tell them that we have heard their concerns about retirement, about pay, and about the pace of operations, and that we are taking decisive action to address their concerns because they deserve no less.

As I've said many times, people are more important than hardware. Our future readiness and our ability to meet America's defense requirements in the 21st century hang in the balance, and we must make the right decisions today.

In an hour I'll leave for Europe to visit our troops in Bosnia. Several other members of the Joint Chiefs will make similar trips during the coming days. Each of us will carry an important message—a message that our country appreciates the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, particularly during this very special time of the year. We'll also now be able to tell them of the initiatives that we're taking to ensure that they are appropriately compensated for their dedication and their efforts.

Again, adopting these compensation initiatives now is the right decision if we are to sustain the quality force that will enable us to safeguard our nation's vital interests and meet our global security requirements in the years ahead.

Now Secretary Cohen and I will be happy to take your questions.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you said that you're committed to returning 50 percent retirement, but is that reflected in your budget? Have you set the money aside to pay for that change?

Secretary Cohen: First of all, to make the change from the 40 to 50 percent will require a legislative change. But we have factored that into account. I believe that we'll be successful in changing the law, and we have taken that into account.

Q: That money is in the budget right now? You set aside the \$5.2 billion that will pay for that or ...

Secretary Cohen: We're not going to discuss numbers today for a very simple reason. We'd like to give the President an opportunity to present his budget publicly. But that will come in due course, and we'll have a rollout of the budget and we can discuss specific numbers.

Q: This is awfully good news for the people in uniform, but I'd like to go back to some other good news about the four-day operation over Iraq. I understand—tell me if I'm correct—that ...

Secretary Cohen: That may be the shortest time we've had to discuss some good news on this subject matter, before we get to the good news on the other, but ...

Q: It's good news there were no Americans killed, no Americans wounded. Were any aircraft even hit? Were any of our forces even hit or nicked in this operation? And how could it could be done in this fashion when there's no casualties?

Secretary Cohen: General Zinni was here to make a presentation earlier, and I believe he indicated we suffered no casualties. To my knowledge there was no wounding of any of our people. No one can really explain what Saddam has done or failed to do, and no one would try to determine what lurks in his mind or in the mission of his armed forces. We'd only be indulging in speculation.

It may be that they're not capable of adequately responding, didn't want to run the risk of having their systems targeted should they turn them on to try to fire upon our aircraft. A number of reasons could be in play, but we're only speculating.

Q: There was a deliberate plan and strategy by the U.S. military to avert damage to equipment or casualties of men, is that correct?

Secretary Cohen: It is always our intent when we carry out any military operation to do so with as little risk to our forces as possible, and with a minimum risk to innocent civilians on the part of the Iraqi people.

Q: The pay table reform and retirement reform as compared with the across the board pay raise. We were told a couple of hours ago by an official that about 70 percent of the dollar impact of this package over the FYDP is the across the board raise rather than the retuning. There are an awful lot of military manpower experts in this city up on the Hill, around here, who think that the across the board component, this 14 percent pay gap, has taken on a life of its own and there's not much behind it. There's not much comparable data. There's a CNA study that purportedly shows the size of retirement moves from the sixth most important reason for leaving to the fifth or something like that.

Was there any consideration given to trying to redefine for the troops the significance of Redux, the people at the 10-12 year point making the stay or go decision?

Secretary Cohen: I think we have been convinced, the Chiefs are convinced and virtually everyone we've talked to, that the retirement issue is an issue of major concern to our young people. We have a large majority of them that are going to be making a decision in the near future in terms of whether they're going to stay in. As General Shelton just pointed out, we have achieved a remarkable degree of success this past week in large part due to the high quality of the men and women who are in our service as well as the equipment which they have to operate. But we believe this is a key ingredient to encouraging them to stay.

It's something that is frequently mentioned to me in all of my travels. So the across the board pay plus the restructuring of that pay table has been important to them.

Q: Mr. Secretary, can you tell us anything more about how the targeted raises will work? For example, you mentioned already that people who get promoted would get more than just the annual increase. Would there also be special increases for particular specialty areas that the military is trying to hold onto? How will those kind of determinations be made?

Secretary Cohen: There will continue to be those sorts of incentives and bonuses, but they do not go into the retirement system as such, so they will continue, but these will be in addition to that. How that will be determined, of course, will be left up to one of the officials who briefed you earlier, to make a determination. I indicated it will go from one-half of one percent up to 5.5 percent, depending upon the level of expertise and the level of performance that's been achieved.

Q: Mr. Secretary, is this 3.9 percent each year in the out years, is that conditional? If wage growth in the private sector is 3.9 percent, you'll match it, but if it's 2 percent, wouldn't that be what the raises would be in the out years?

Secretary Cohen: We can only plan and budget according to a five - or six-year assessment. That's what our plans are at this point. Any changes that will be made would have to take into account what the economy is, but that's what our projections are.

Q: Mr. Secretary, how does this fit into our long term readiness goals? In other words, do we have any assurance that these benefits won't be lost again?

Secretary Cohen: I think what we're indicating is that we've been listening to the men and women who have been serving us and continue to do so in an extraordinary fashion. We are sending a very strong signal that we place a premium on their service. We want the best that we can attract. We're working in an environment in which it's very hard to compete against a robust economy such as we have. We want to send a signal to them that we are determined to make sure that we give them as much incentive to come in and to stay in the military as we possibly can.

So each Secretary, each Department head, will have to make a determination in future years, but if we're going to maintain the high quality that we have today, we're going to have to continue to be able to compete effectively with the private sector. And we can't just do it based on pay alone. I think the Chairman and others have mentioned this before. Men and women don't [don] the uniform for pay alone. It's important, but there are other gratifications and rewards that they derive from military service which will continue to be important factors.

We are also trying to deal with the other issues as far as the operational tempo and the personal tempo, the burdens that are placed upon them and their families. That is a management problem that we are dealing with. The Chairman can talk at length about the changes that have been made in trying to reduce training exercises, trying to reduce the paperwork, trying to manage better the deployment schedule so we give people more time home with their families. All of that is part of our effort to retain the best and brightest.

Q: General Shelton, do you worry about the impact of morale in giving a raise in mid year just to certain troops? Say you have a ship at sea and half the troops are going to get a pay raise and half are not during the summer months?

General Shelton: First of all, I think that as Secretary Cohen has explained, every troop would get a raise, it will be across the board. But there are certain areas that are targeted in the pay table reform to make it a system that is based on performance, recognized promotions, and things of this type.

For example, let me give you one concrete [example]. If you look today at our system, if you take one of our great staff sergeants that has eight years of service, you'll find that one of his subordinates who may be a sergeant, an E-5 pay grade, who has 14 years of service, makes as much or more than he does. So we're targeting that, and that's part of the retention concerns we have. We think it will assist us with retention.

Q: Secretary Cohen, if I could ask you a question sort of off the beaten path. A former colleague of yours, Senator George Mitchell, is being considered in a role by the White House to act in effect as a negotiator with the Senate. I'm wondering if you could offer your opinion in terms of his qualities, the qualities that Senator Mitchell might bring to bear in terms of negotiating and working with the Senate in a situation like this one.

Secretary Cohen: That really is off the path for this press conference, but let me say that I worked many years with George Mitchell in the Senate. He's one of the most skilled individuals that I ever had the pleasure of working with. He is a very skilled negotiator. I think that his service in helping to bring about a peace agreement, as such, in Northern Ireland is evidence of his skills. If he in fact is brought on board to bring those talents to bear, I think he'll be very effective. But beyond that, I endorse him. I've written a book with him. And so we have a close friendship. I have not had occasion to talk to him in the last couple of years, but we still remain friends.

Q: Mr. Secretary, in terms of the pay raise and your working on the 50 percent retirement, was this accomplished under the balanced budget agreement, that top line? Or is this additional authority, budget authority, that you got?

Secretary Cohen: I really don't want to talk about top lines or other ways in which this was achieved until we have a chance to roll the budget out. I'm satisfied that we will be able to accomplish the pay reform across the board, the pay raises, the retirement, and the restructuring of the system, and also continue our modernization goals, all within a comprehensive package which we will roll out in the coming weeks.

Q: What is the state of play with the budget negotiations with the White House for DoD? How close are you to the \$112 billion that the Chiefs said they need over the FYDP?

Secretary Cohen: Our negotiations have been completed, and I believe that we have achieved a satisfactory solution to the challenge.

Q: General Shelton, you back in December asked for a strong signal on the pay and retirement issue. In your view, is this the strong signal, or would you hope to get another signal next year on top of this? In some ways this looks like a lot less than meets the eye if the retirement program isn't funded, for example. The string of pay raises are less than, don't do much besides the targeted personnel, to close the pay gap. Is this the strong signal you're looking for?

General Shelton: We think this is a move definitely in the right direction. This levels off the decline and the gap, as it's been referred to. Certainly pay table reform gets our system so that it rewards quality, it rewards performance, and I think that's very important. Also the retirement starts to serve then again as an incentive vice as a disincentive for continued service.

So we think that that total package is a very good package and a view that's shared by the members of the Joint Chiefs that are here today.

Secretary Cohen: It's also important to point out that the 13 or 14 percent pay differential is not across the board. That those who are first entry level individuals coming in we are quite competitive. Where we find the disparity growing is in those specialties, the people who have 8, 10, 12 years of high training and expertise and that's where there's a growing disparity. That's why we've tried to target these pay increases as such to those specialties.

Q: One more on Iraq, if you will. I know you've talked about this a lot, but we've heard about targeting the security and the control apparatus for weapons of mass destruction, and we've heard about targeting the means of delivering them. But there do not seem to be any targets that were actually weapons of mass destruction, production facilities. That's probably because you don't where they are. Am I correct in thinking that?

Secretary Cohen: That's the reason why UNSCOM was important to be on the ground. We have consistently for the past several years indicated that UNSCOM must be allowed to carry out its mandate. They are the best means we have of determining on the ground whether or not such facilities are being used either for fertilizer production or for poison weapon production. When Saddam Hussein effectively barred them from carrying out their job, we had to take an alternative course of action, and that was to degrade as best we could his capacity to deliver them. So we did not try to specifically target either factories that might be producing petrochemicals for fertilizer or for drugs or other types of non-weaponized use.

So we're hoping that Saddam Hussein will see the wisdom of allowing the inspectors back to do their job because he'll never find relief from those sanctions until such time as he does so.

Press: Thank you very much.

DoD News Briefing. Monday, December 21, 1998 - 2:30 p.m. Presenter: Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen (General Anthony C. Zinni, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command also participated in this overview of Operation DESERT FOX.)

Secretary Cohen: Good afternoon. Operation DESERT FOX was a highly successful operation. U.S. and British forces degraded Iraq's capability to use weapons of mass destruction in two important ways.

First, we estimate that we delayed Iraq's development of ballistic missiles by at least a year. This is going to make it more difficult for Iraq to use deadly chemical and biological weapons against its neighbors.

Second, we diminished Iraq's overall capability to direct and protect its weapons of mass destruction program. And we also diminished Iraq's ability to attack its neighbors by severely damaging the Iraqi military command and control system.

Our forces did this without any allied casualties. Our success reflects the quality of the men and women in our force. From General Anthony Zinni, the Commander in Chief of the Central Command, to the youngest soldier, sailor, airman, and Marine in Operation DESERT FOX, our troops performed brilliantly. They worked as a team—a team that was dedicated to its mission, dedicated to supporting each other, and dedicated to fulfilling America's responsibilities in the world.

Later this afternoon I intend to make an announcement that will be of interest to all of our troops, not just those in DESERT FOX. But now I am pleased to be able to introduce General Zinni who planned and commanded Operation DESERT FOX.

Q: Mr. Secretary, can we just ask, have you frozen the buildup in the Gulf for the time being until after the New Year?

Secretary Cohen: It's a question we have under advisement right now. It's one of the issues that General Zinni and I will be talking [about] with the Chairman and others as we go through the day and tomorrow.

Q: And do you stand ready perhaps to launch more raids even during Ramadan if he threatens his neighbors?

Secretary Cohen: As I've indicated before, should he pose a threat to his neighbors, we're prepared to act.

General Zinni: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Good afternoon.

We have, as you know, completed Operation DESERT FOX, and I have reported to Secretary Cohen and General Shelton that I am satisfied that our objectives have been achieved.

Let me first say that I'm extremely proud, as you can imagine, of our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. They performed magnificently. I could not have asked for better. And I'm also very proud of our allies that stood by us, the British especially. Their airmen and seamen that were by our sides again performed magnificently.

As you know, we suffered no casualties. Even in peacetime, exercises of this scale can be dangerous and can be very, very trying. To do this without any casualties in the environment our forces faced was truly remarkable.

The operation involved over 30,000 troops, and 10,000 more outside of our area of responsibility who supported and alerted from bases virtually around the world. We flew over 600 sorties in four days. Over 300 of those were night strike sorties. Over 300 aircraft were involved in strike and support roles. Over 600 pieces of ordnance and 90 cruise missiles were delivered by these aircraft. Over 40 ships performed strike and support roles with ten of them launching over 300 TLAM missiles. Thousands of ground troops deployed to protect Kuwait and to respond to any counteraction. Hundreds of our Special Operations Forces troops also deployed to carry out their assigned missions.

Numerous U.S. and British service and joint headquarters provided superb command and control, support, and detailed planning that helped ensure the success of this mission. We also received support from our friends in the region for which I am very grateful.

Every conceivable effort was made to ensure the safety of our people and the preventing of civilian casualties while accomplishing this mission.

Before I respond to your questions, let me say something about battle damage assessment because I know that's been a topic up here. I'd like to make a few points and then refer to some of the graphics.

First of all, the battle damage assessment is still ongoing and will probably take a few more days before we fully can make an assessment as to what the results are, but generally, we are very pleased and feel we accomplished what we set out to do.

Second, I'd like to explain a little bit about what our analysts go through in making these battle damage assessments. In that business, they're encouraged to be as negative as possible, or to be in a position not to tell the boss what he wants to hear, but if anything, to be more conservative in their estimates. I think that's for obvious reasons. A decision whether to restrike, a decision to continue on a mission that's dependent upon the previous one, lives could be at stake, so it is up to them to ensure that we have a clear understanding of what we actually did on the ground and to make no assumptions. So BDA is by nature from the analysts conservative.

Third, there's a qualitative estimate to BDAs as well as a quantitative estimate. That qualitative estimate is determined by the intent that I give to a given target set. Let me give you an example.

If I say that we intend to disrupt his communications or his air defenses for a period of time, the level of effort or the number of targets destroyed may be much lower. And some sort of quantitative judgment may say by God, General, you didn't accomplish as much as you did in other target sets. But we achieved what I intended to do—disruption while we were conducting the attack or some sort of interference long enough for us to accomplish the mission.

Fourth, the other point I'd like to make is about individual targets versus the total target set. Certain targets are more important than others, and you might seek a degree of destruction or disruption beyond what you would on other lesser important targets. That means you might restrike, you might put [out] more ordnance. So in judging these things,

it's difficult to make a purely quantitative analysis and use a basis such as numbers of targets destroyed in determining success. It has to be measured against the intent and the commander's intent as to what he had attempted to achieve.

I'd like to go over a few of the photos we have out there to show you some examples of the results we've recently gotten in. This is Talil airfield. I think you can see clearly that the bunker complexes, the maintenance shelters were destroyed. The ability for the planes to come back and receive the degree of maintenance they need—the home is gone.

The next photo I'd like to show you is of the Ministry of Defense in downtown Baghdad. Again, I think you can clearly see where we have struck and the effects we've had.

Next is the Ba'ath headquarters. You can see the holes in the roof. Here again, [shows] our ability to render the building unusable. You might look at something like this and one of our analysts might say this is moderate or light damage, but I guarantee you, nobody's working this morning in Ba'ath Party headquarters.

Next are a couple of our communications targets. This is a jamming station in Tikrit. Again, here our intent was to disrupt the ability to command and control. And one of the repeater stations in Basrah in the south.

Finally, one of the division headquarters in Taji. This is Republican Guard.

I'd like to show you the results as we have them now. I emphasize again that the battle damage assessment is still ongoing, but for those who like numbers, we have compiled it to the minute. If I had to put a score sheet up, which I am reluctant to do—but I will because I know in some ways that's the way we get focused on BDA—we successfully hit 85 percent of our targets, as we know it now. And fully successful in terms that I'm completely satisfied that we had the results gained was 74 percent.

Now that doesn't mean we're going to find out more in terms of our assessment in intelligence that we've done greater damage. In some cases we might not ever know. We know that we were effective in that a piece of a communications system, an air defense system didn't come up and engage us. We may look at that through an aerial photograph and not see any visible damage, but one bomblet could have gone through the radar and rendered it inoperable. For some reason it didn't engage, and the disruption was effective—either through the lack of attempt to use it or through our efforts to temporarily disrupt it. So in some cases we may never know, but the end result was achieved.

With that, I'd be glad to take your questions.

Q: General, a two-part question if I may. One, what's the percentage cut between successful and fully successful? Would 73 percent have been successful or...

General Zinni: We didn't measure it in terms of target numbers. When I say 74 percent successful, I'm telling you that in 74 percent of those targets I am fully confident right now, today, that I achieved what I went out to do in the fullest sense. That doesn't mean there hasn't been partial success in others. That doesn't mean we will find out from further assessment that we met that fully successful. This is kind of a point in time.

Q: The second part of the question, there have been no statistics yet of damage to the Republican Guard, lead Guard. Reports coming out of Baghdad say 68 killed. Do you have any idea of how many were killed in the raids?

General Zinni: No, I do not have any numbers of casualties. We do know, however, Republican Guard infrastructure, barracks, command and control, we can tell from the likes of photos like we have here that we have significantly destroyed, disrupted those facilities.

Q: Have you put the...

Q:...Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz that the United States was targeting civilian targets such as schools, hospitals, private homes, government buildings, that sort of thing?

General Zinni: We absolutely do not target those types of things. We take every care to ensure that civilian casualties are prevented to the best of our ability [for] every target that we engaged, we were convinced that we did all the planning and all the technical work to ensure to the best of our abilities that there would be no collateral or civilian damage.

Q: Did you hit any civilian targets by accident?

General Zinni: Not that we know of.

Q: General, on the buildup. Have you put the buildup as of now, at least for Christmas, on hold? Will the carrier, will the ENTERPRISE move out of the Gulf, or will it remain over Christmas? Will you keep two carriers for the foreseeable future?

General Zinni: Right now as we speak, as the Secretary mentioned, we are making the assessment as to what we should leave in theater, what should come out, what adjustments we should make. I'm working with my service component commanders out there on these decisions, and I expect shortly to present a plan and a recommendation to the Secretary.

Q: And just a brief follow-up, could you give us any idea what this operation cost? Cruise missiles are very expensive.

General Zinni: I think it's too early for us to make that assessment. We'll begin that process, determine costs... As you can imagine, we've had other things on our mind right now, but we'll in the aftermath...

Q: Did you use over half a billion dollars worth of cruise missiles?

General Zinni: I really don't know. I couldn't make that call right now. I gave you the rough numbers as to what we used, and you can do the math, but right now we're not in the mode of counting dollars just yet.

Q:...that it won and that all the United States did was bomb empty buildings where they had already moved things out of.

General Zinni: I would just say to that that a lot of infrastructure was obviously destroyed. I would say to you that after eight years, you can just look at the Iraqi military and see the degradation, inability to modernize, the readiness rates. There are a lot of troops and a lot of headquarters that have no place to go home to and have lost a lot of the ability to command and control and a lot of equipment. I don't know how you measure that as a victory in any way. I think our friends in the region and others clearly look at what happened to Iraq and realize that Saddam suffered a defeat.

Q: General, a number of America's friends—Russia and France—are beginning to talk quietly about wanting to circumvent the sanctions against Iraq. Should they try to do that and send ships openly into Iraq, will American ships stop them? Shoot them? What is your policy going to be if some of our allies say we don't think the sanctions ought to be there and we're going to run them?

General Zinni: I don't want to get into a hypothetical situation. At this moment we're enforcing U.N. resolutions and U.N. sanctions.

Q: Can I follow up on that same issue of oil? You did strike an oil target. Was it just an oil loading station? I don't know. But the damage was fairly light. Would you consider striking more forcefully against their oil export infrastructure?

General Zinni: The oil facility we struck in the south was one that was used for illegal gas [and] oil smuggling. We intentionally did it in such a way to disrupt the flow, but not cause any environmental damage. We did not want to do what Saddam did. You're not going to see burning oil fields. You're not going to see oil spills into the water. We very selectively and very precisely went after a point in that target that accomplished our goal.

Q: General, can you tell us how long U.S. forces are going to have to contain Saddam, since this seems to be the emphasis on the policy now. Are U.S. forces pretty much a permanent presence in the Persian Gulf?

General Zinni: U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf, based on all those leaders I speak to, are a force of stability in the region. I don't think anyone has a crystal ball and can predict when Saddam will go away. He is still a threat. I think those in the region view him as a threat. And those in the region appreciate us being there, providing a counter and a deterrence to that threat. I can't predict how long that would be, but our vital interests, I think, require our presence and, with the support of our allies, our ability to deter Saddam.

Q: You thank our allies in the plural, but you only mentioned the British. Who else came to our assistance there?

General Zinni: Well, obviously, we couldn't be launching from bases out there and overflying certain countries, we couldn't be moving forces into the region without a whole series of allies that would be able to support us. I don't want to get into specifically where we base different types of capabilities because that would give to the enemy, I think, more information than I would care to. But obviously a number of countries have to be supportive in this effort for it to happen.

Q: General, when will you know if this mission has been effective, and how will you judge that effectiveness?

General Zinni: I would tell you right now that I'm convinced that it was effective, and I'm convinced that it achieved our objectives.

I think from here on out what we'll find out is we will add more support for that judgment. But again, in my view as the commander and with the mission I was given and the measures of effectiveness that I determined would achieve that mission, I'm satisfied we were successful.

Q: What is your batting average with the say previous strikes—DESERT STORM, Korea, World War II? Any idea?

General Zinni: [Based on] our initial look, if I think I understand your question, about ordnance effect and on target, we are very, very pleased. They've exceeded all previous ones that I know about. This is a first, quick, rough look. But in terms of equipment and technology performance, we're very happy.

Q: This would be the most accurate air war the U.S. has ever conducted?

General Zinni: I would like to see more analysis before I make that statement, but off the top of my head, I think we've achieved results that maybe exceed what has happened before. Overall, there might be specific systems that...

Q: General, there are still a lot of questions about the timing of the attack vis-a-vis the submission of Richard Butler's report to the United Nations. Can you flesh out a little bit your thinking on why the need to strike so quickly?

General Zinni: I think it was clear that if he did not comply, if Saddam did not comply—and it was clear non-compliance, and I think the report of Richard Butler and the removal of his UNSCOM team could not have been more clear—that there were no more options. In November, I think the right decision was made when reluctantly we had to pull back, but his hands were up, he said he would comply. I think the President went the last mile.

After Butler's report was done and UNSCOM was no longer able to do its mission and left, then I think an immediate response was called for.

Q: What did you prevent by striking so quickly? Did you prevent a widespread dispersal of forces and potential chemical/biological equipment?

General Zinni: I think from a military perspective that's exactly right. We prevented his ability to prepare, to set SAM ambushes, to disperse his forces, to do a number of things that would have made our mission more difficult. Obviously, I think, the resolve that was shown on a political level to react as we said we would was another factor.

Q: Secretary Cohen has said that he believes the missile program's been set back about a year. Can you tell us your assessment of how far, how much, how long it would take him to rebuild the command and control or reestablish the Republican Guard barracks that you have wiped out?

Secondly, if he tries to do that, since you've now linked those things to his ability to protect and deliver WMD, will you strike again if you see that he is trying to rebuild those?

General Zinni: First of all, I think the decision to conduct any other operations or strike again would be the President's, obviously. We are prepared, if necessary, to do that. I can't make a judgment on how long it would take him to reestablish those capabilities. I think with the sanctions on and what we've seen in his ability to reconstitute forces and modernize, it's going to be extremely difficult. Those estimates of a year to me seem probably right, although I have no way of measuring exactly how long it would take.

Q: Have you seen any signs that Saddam's grip of power has been weakened at all? Any military units of his not answering the telephone when they're called? Things like that?

General Zinni: I would just say I think all of you know that he divided up the country into four sectors. The people he put in charge, the mission he gave them would tell you that was not done. Since he didn't react to us at all for some military reason, if I were to make a judgment, I would say that was for internal control, and I would point to that one very open and obvious move on his part as maybe an indication he lacks confidence in his own ability to continue to ruthlessly rule.

Q: General, did the Iraqis at any time strike back, except for using AAA? And is there anything going on in the south of Iraq right now in the way of troop movements by the Iraqis? We've heard some reports.

General Zinni: To answer the second part of your question first, I have not seen any reports of troop movements in the south. There have been some minor movements that basically look like, again, their counterinsurgency, what they've been doing, those types of operations. The only thing we received, that we confirmed, was heavy anti-aircraft fire. We had some reports of SAM firings, I think one or two. As we further investigated those, we couldn't confirm those, and I would say I'd discount those.

Q: Just to follow, is he rebuilding anything that you've hit so far that you know about?

General Zinni: No. I don't know of anything that [he] is rebuilding or significantly attempting to reestablish.

Q: A question about the Republican Guard. How many divisions of the six did you all target? And how do you translate attacking the infrastructure into their combat effectiveness vis-a-vis Kuwait?

General Zinni: Well, I would say that first of all, understand the role of the Republican Guard. They are obviously the elite forces. They normally lead the attacks or certainly "bolster," and I would put that in quotes, the regular army who may have to be encouraged to attack by being directly behind them. They are the most significant, most loyal, most ruthless of his forces.

In terms of did our bombing do damage? I think equipment loss, I think headquarters loss, command and control loss. It's pretty tough if you're a troop in the field. You've got no place to go home to at night, and you see the level of damage that you see in these photos. That has to be fairly demoralizing.

I think you know, we put leaflets on the regular army telling them they were not the target. As long as they stayed put, they wouldn't be the target. I think clearly they understand the elite status of the Republican Guard—extra pay, extra care—used to enforce discipline on the regular army, and I think seeing the effect on the Republican Guard might be even encouraging to the regular army.

Q: You don't have any figures on casualties to the Republican Guard...

Q:...before the bombs fell? Did most of those troops evacuate before the bombs fell?

Q:...but Tariq Aziz gave the following figures for the total of Republican Guards and Special Republican Guards. Thirty-eight martyred, as he said, and 100 wounded. Is there any way that those you think are accurate?

General Zinni: I have no way of telling.

Q: Didn't you, though, intend to kill thousands of those Republican Guard troops?

General Zinni: Our intention was to attack the infrastructure of the Republican Guard. There was dispersal immediately before. We did see some. I can't tell you how much we saw. We are not in the business of body counting. We have not gone about that or made any attempt to make that part of the figures here. I feel [about] the kinds of things we went after, equipment and infrastructure, we were highly successful.

Q: You were talking about overflights of other countries' territories. Was that for logistical purposes—tankers, that sort of thing? Or was that territory required to increase the numbers of avenues of approach for things like missiles?

General Zinni: I think, obviously, it's both. We have to have an enroute infrastructure to get to the theater of operations. We require enroute basing, overflight, refueling, positioning of our forces if it's a staged deployment. Obviously in the region it's desirable to have multiple operating bases. In the region you need overflight rights not only for aircraft but missiles. Support structure needs to be in place, and our own infrastructure. I don't want to get into specifics again, but this involved quite a number of countries that that support was made...

Q:...any countries where we have strike aircraft based that those countries did not grant permission for actual strikes to be launched from their territory?

General Zinni: I don't want to get into who told us what we could do and where we could strike from for several reasons. And one might be to disclose where we operate from and what kinds of aircraft we operate out of those bases.

Q: Can you go back to the whole issue of equipment in a little more detail? And talk about where, how many tanks, APCs you destroyed. Did you actually destroy also missile inventories, artillery, bombs? What ordnance and delivery systems did you really hit?

General Zinni: Obviously, I think you know we went after missile production and missile repair facilities. We went after surface-to-air missile sites. In terms of getting down to individual pieces of equipment, my being able to tell you how many APCs or tanks or FROG missiles or whatever, we don't have that yet. That's part of the sort of more granular assessment that we will have to do. We may never know exactly.

Q: Certainly. But if UNSCOM has said that there's unaccounted inventories of missiles, artillery shells, bombs that they believe are filled with possibly chemical and biological material, did you hit any weapons depots or weapons sites where you believe there was chemical and biological material?

General Zinni: None that we know of. But again, I think you point out the reason why it was important to keep UNSCOM in operation and with full access. The only way we know is through UNSCOM.

Q: General, didn't you in fact...

Q: You said that seeing the effects on the Republican Guard might be even encouraging to the regular army.

General Zinni: Yes.

Q: Did you have that in mind when you went after the Republican Guards? Can you elaborate a little bit on what you're hoping the regular army might do?

General Zinni: Clearly, our mission was as has been stated—to degrade his WMD capability and diminish his ability to threaten his friends. Part of that meant the targeting of the Republican Guard.

There are a number of regular army divisions in the south that could react very quickly toward the Kuwaiti border. Our intent, our clear intent, was to prevent them from reacting. That comes under the diminished ability to threaten his neighbors.

If motivation to do that might have come from the Republican Guard, by doing that simultaneously it again falls to that second part of our mission, the diminishment.

Q: For how many hours were the Iraqis dispersing before the first missiles struck?

General Zinni: I don't have the exact figures. A few hours before. I think once they saw the UNSCOM team coming out they were beginning to react.

Q: That was the trigger for the dispersal, you figure?

General Zinni: I believe that probably was.

Q: General, can you expand a little bit more on your thoughts of why there was an utter lack of resistance from the Iraqis?

And a sort of unrelated question, why did you name this operation after a German general?

General Zinni: To answer the second one first, we didn't name it after a German general. The name was chosen probably because we intended to use surprise and immediate reaction, to be a little bit foxy, if you will. And it was no intent to use Rommel as an example for this. I don't approve those names, the Secretary does. We did recommend the name... (Laughter)

Q: Getting back to the first question...

General Zinni: I'll be much more careful... (Laughter)

Q: Getting back to the first question. Did this seem to be a deliberate strategy for them to just hunker down and take the blow? Can you explain that a little bit?

General Zinni: No. As a matter of fact, I've been asked before what surprised me the most in these four days, and I will tell you it was the complete lack of resistance in any form.

I would hesitate to make a judgment why other than to say I think that the Iraqi military is fully aware what could happen if they reacted in any way. Obviously if you turn on a radar or react in any way, we're prepared to handle that.

Q: General, President Clinton and Secretary Albright said they'd redouble their efforts to help the Iraqi opposition. Do you still see the opposition as not viable?

General Zinni: I think there are two elements that to me are encouraging. One is that we obviously are supporting and maintaining the territorial integrity of Iraq. I think that's key in anything we do. I think the very careful way we're going about it now to vet these groups and make sure they meet the criteria, to me, I definitely would support that approach. I had concern initially because there are lots of groups out there, some not viable. But I think if we take this care and these announced policy parts to this, I think it's the correct course.

Q: You mentioned a couple of minutes ago counterinsurgency activity in the south related to the question about supporting opposition. What sort of activity are you seeing down there in terms of uprisings? How significant is it? What do you see in the way of putting these down? Also in the area of Baghdad, the suburbs of Baghdad, I'm hearing.

General Zinni: In terms of the latter, I have no knowledge of anything in the area of Baghdad. We've heard rumors and reports, but nothing I would or could confirm.

In terms of the south, there's been ongoing counterinsurgency operations against the marsh Arabs, the Shiites. And there are units dedicated to this. They've been continuing. We believe during the four days of the strike—I think there was mention of some movement down there. In our determination, that movement was continuation or specifically geared to counter anything that might be brewing. We have no specific information of anything major occurring other than

the normal counterinsurgency operations that occur down there. And I hate to even use the word normal, because they're pretty brutal.

Q: Did you see Shiite activity step up during the course of the strikes? Did you see disturbances increase during the strikes? Do you think they're looking to the United States for backing at this stage?

General Zinni: We didn't see anything. There were some reports actually in the open media that I saw of that, but we saw nothing specifically, and nothing more than the normal.

Q: One last question, and then I'll shut up for the day and take a number. But is not an attack of this...

Mr. Bacon: his number. (Laughter)

Q: Is not a strike or strikes of this type an act of war? And even though it's not declared, are we not in effect at war with Iraq? And as such, do we then need presidential green lights to go ahead? Can't all advice on tactical and strategic missiles simply come from this building in a wartime situation?

General Zinni: First of all, I would say what we did was an enforcement of a U.N. resolution that the Iraqi leadership, Saddam Hussein, was in violation of, and we felt that we are legally justified in taking that action.

In terms of decisions to act, that rests solely with the President, and that's where I felt these instructions came from.

Q: It's not an act of war then?

General Zinni: I will defer to the lawyers, and I will defer to others.

I will tell you we were enforcing a U.N. resolution as we know it.

Q: Can you help us define what the triggers would be for a restrike of Iraq? The rules of the game have changed now that UNSCOM is no longer there. What is it that you will look at, and what is it that you would define as grounds to hit again?

General Zinni: I can only speak from a military point of view. My only immediate restrike that under the rules of engagement I would be authorized to do is if he takes some action toward our forces that are enforcing the sanctions: the no fly zones, the maritime intercept operations, those forces. Within the rules of engagement that I have, and my forces have, we can react. Beyond that or above that, obviously that's not my decision.

Q: You mentioned...

Q: Can you tell us about how many B-1 missions, their effectiveness, and the overall ratio of guided bombs to dumb bombs that you estimate you used?

General Zinni: I would have to get you the direct statistics. I was very pleased with the performance of the B-1. We gave them specific targets that we felt they were best suited for. We're very happy with their performance that we received. I think you saw a photo of one set of barracks that they attacked in the past. If not, we'll make sure we get that for you.

Q: Wasn't the number of precision weapons and the percentage of those unprecedented in this operation?

General Zinni: I'm not sure of that, Jamie. I would have to go back and check.

Q: With the exception of the B-1, it's almost exclusively precision weapons—either satellite or laser guided bombs?

General Zinni: There was a large number of PGMs. I would have to go back. I don't have right with me the exact numbers, but I think we have a packet afterwards that we can provide...

Q: Aside from the B-1s? Did any new system or new tactics make its combat debut in this operation? Did you use any new weapons that haven't been used in combat before?

General Zinni: Not off the top of my head that I know of. I think everything else had been used before.

Q: General, why four days? Why not longer?

General Zinni: We weren't hung up on time or days. I think obviously you understand we were, there's a sensitivity to Ramadan, but that wasn't the judgment. At the end of the third day and going into the fourth day, I was asked if I felt our objectives were achieved or could be achieved. I felt I needed the fourth night. Part way through that I was asked again, and informed the Chairman that I was satisfied that we had achieved the objectives as I saw them. I saw no need to go into the fifth day.

I was not in any way hindered from asking for a fifth day or going into a fifth day. We had planned this operation so that we could not only respond to different counteractions that might happen, but that we could sustain it if need be. So there was no magic to the fourth day.

Q: Do you see this as something that will be happening once a year, eight months from now? We're talking about how we've set programs back about a year.

General Zinni: Again, I'm not prescient enough to comment on what might happen. I think Saddam might have learned from this, and if he's smart, he wouldn't want to see a repeat.

Q: General Shelton said he wasn't targeting Saddam. Can you explain why you don't target Saddam in an operation like this? And I thought since the Gulf War you had the kind of bombs that could penetrate into bunkers and so forth and get him if you knew where he was at. Can you address that?

General Zinni: The answer to your first question is obviously, we don't target individual leaders. Secondly, one of our target sets is command and control. Obviously if he happened to be in a command and control facility that we were targeting, fine. Could we go get bunkers if we knew where they were or they were part of the command and control structure? Do we have the ability? Certainly. We have the technology to do that. But we were not targeting Saddam directly or specifically or individually.

Q: There's a report that his sister's house was struck. Is that accurate?

General Zinni: We didn't target his sister's house, so I have no way of knowing...

Q: Given the fact that intelligence is always an iffy business perhaps at best, why did you take dual use facilities off the table in Iraq, but yet you had previously already struck a dual use facility in the Sudan. What's the difference between the two cases?

General Zinni: I think in this case when we looked at facilities that we would strike, a number of factors came into play: obviously, things like collateral damage, our ability to get to these

facilities, how much we knew about them. I think also in terms of what the dual use might be, and how assured we were that the second part of the dual use was in play.

You can make the case that almost any kind of, maybe a milk factory, again, could be a chemical factory or whatever. So I think we tried to be very selective. We tried to make the point on this, we tried to hit targets that we were very certain of.

In terms of the facility in Khartoum that we struck, again, I think we've been through this a number of times. Clearly we felt there was a connection, there was clear evidence, and in that case despite what might have been dual use, there was more than convincing evidence that it was used for the production of at least the precursor of chemical weapons.

Q: Can you tell us a little more, are there more details...

Q: General, following up on the BDA for a second. In terms of Tomahawks. They used basically a figure of 85 percent in the past in terms of success rate. How did this stack up, one?

And secondly, when you look at your chart here, IADS and surface-to-air missiles, it looks like the most number of misses. I was wondering why, if you could tell us if that's true for both...

General Zinni: On the first question, we far exceeded the 85 percent. We were very pleased. I won't give you an exact figure, and obviously we're still doing analysis. But we were extremely pleased on the TLAM performance and the low percentage of failures that we might have had.

In terms of the IADS, I would go back again and say you have to go back to what our objective was. In terms of IADS and SAMs, it was to disrupt. And when you say disrupt, it means we don't want him to be able to communicate, to use the integrated system, to connect the radar with the missile, to be able to fire accurately. The level of effort, the ordnance we need, then is a lot lower.

So if we're able to take a shot and it puts his head down, knock out one repeater out of four or five, you achieve disruption for the time you need. So you'll see a low level here, and it will seem inconsistent with me saying we achieved our results, but I would say that successfully, we had no SAMs fired for whatever reason, and we were able to get to our targets with a high degree of success and lack of interruption.

Q: (inaudible)

General Zinni: No, you don't have to have complete destruction on every target.

Q:...disruption.

General Zinni: It could be, as I mentioned before, you might pick one specific target in a set and say I have to have destruction in that. The rest may be just a level of interruption. Or you might just need that level of interruption across the board. So when you look quantitatively, it will seem that it isn't as successful, but yet it achieves that commander's stated intent.

Q: Did you destroy any SCUDs at all? And did you use the GBU-28, the 5,000 pound bomb at all?

General Zinni: The answer to the second one is no. And the SCUDs, I have no knowledge that we have destroyed any SCUDs.

Q: You mentioned that the Special Forces were involved. Now that operations are over can you give us some idea of what they may be doing and tell us were any U.S. troops on the ground in Iraq over the past week?

General Zinni: There are a number of things that Special Operations Forces do. Obviously, I'm not going to get into all of them. I will give you some examples, though. They do work with our allies in the region. They provide a degree of connectivity, liaison connection with U.S. forces and coalition forces. I think all of you know we've had an ongoing INTRINSIC ACTION in Kuwait. They provide our coalition support teams, and they have a number of other missions that they support.

Also SOF, as part of that, has PSYOPS—psychological operations. You know we dropped leaflets, three million in fact. Part of their responsibility is the development of those themes to be recommended, and then obviously the production and distribution of those.

Q: Earlier this year you talked about if you ever were to strike Iraq you would strike those tools that kept Saddam in power. To what extent have you diminished his power base?

General Zinni: First of all, I want to be clear that in this operation we had the degrade/diminish tasking. That's what we went after.

For me to determine whether we achieved, as a side effect, diminishment of those things he holds dear or regime stability or whatever, that wasn't an objective. I hope we contributed to it. And we may measure that we have and see indications of that in the future. I don't have any specifically that I could determine, but that wasn't an objective of this operation.

Q: Do you think it shows that?

General Zinni: I'm satisfied that the objectives of this operation were what they should have been.

Q: General, one of the criticisms that came out of the Gulf War was the lack of timely support from the intelligence community in providing imagery and dissemination. Can you contrast this operation with that in terms of the performance of the CIA and the National Reconnaissance Office?

General Zinni: I think I had tremendous intelligence support, and I think I can say that in several respects. One is the integration of all the intelligence effort. All the agencies were truly one in this operation. I felt that all my intelligence needs and requirements, my essential elements of information that I needed were serviced extremely well. The BDA that we've talked so much about has been rapid; it's been responsive; it's been well analyzed. I have seen no seams in the intelligence community in terms of differences of opinion. Maybe where we see things a little bit differently, they've worked very hard to understand why. The cooperation has been superb, and as a commander I could not have asked for better.

I think the ongoing intelligence effort we have out there over Iraq obviously has been very significant, so this day-to-day gathering of intelligence from all our sources has paid off in this targeting.

Q: General, the CARL VINSON now has arrived at the very end. Did they take any part in the strikes or...

General Zinni: Yes.

Q:... or were they too late?

General Zinni: No. They flew on the last night, and also two of their surface ships fired.

Q: Can you give us any details about your airstrikes, your air deployment of the mission there. We haven't been able to get much.

General Zinni: In what terms?

Q: Well, where you flew, what targets you hit, how often did you go to Baghdad, did you just go into the south?

General Zinni: I'd rather not get into what targets we put specific assets against or how we would do it, and where we might go in the future and what assets we might use in the future because again, that's contingency planning that we have ongoing.

Q: General, the threat of...

Q: General, there was dispersal ahead of time. In fact if you were watching your TVs at home, you had the sense before the missiles even struck that everybody knew about it.

Did you intend for there to be some early warning so there would be less loss of life as you went about your primary mission?

General Zinni: We did not intend any early warning, but by the same token, we obviously selected and planned our targets carefully to minimize as much as possible any collateral or civilian damage or casualties.

Q: Or were you surprised that there seemed to be news reports of this about to happen before you actually gave the orders for missiles to be fired?

General Zinni: No. Like I said before, I think when UNSCOM left, speculation, based on that alone, could have generated that reaction.

Q: When did you determine for this mission that the B-2 was not needed?

General Zinni: The B-2, like other assets, is in our planning and there's an appropriate time, a place and target, and that's where it stands. I don't want to go any further because again I'm into contingency planning and assets on particular kinds of targets.

Q: One of the ways Iraq can threaten its neighbors and also put down insurrections is a sizeable amount of helicopter gunships. I know you targeted those a little bit. How much success did you have?

General Zinni: We feel we had a great deal of success. We actually found some of the places where they were hiding the helicopters, and we were able to target those, we feel, successfully also.

Q: What degree of degradation would you say?

General Zinni: It's still ongoing. We still have a few more assessments to come in on several of the helicopter targets that we hit. Again, not only airfields, but several places where they were attempting to hide them.

Q: There are very specific terrorist threats floating around out there, targeting sites in your area of responsibility. How concerned are you about that, and is there anything that's being done in an effort to prevent this from happening?

General Zinni: I'm very concerned about that. I think, as you know, there have been some very recent and specific terrorist threats. Osama bin Laden and others. And we take those extremely serious.

All our force protection measures are in place. We feel confident that we have all the measures we need and the appropriate ones in place. But I will say this. There's no way to guarantee 100 percent. In order for us to do our mission and our job out there, our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines take a degree of risk day-to-day, and there's no way of avoiding some of that. All we can do is minimize it, use our intelligence, react to it, and protect ourselves as best we can. But again, to their credit, they've been absolutely magnificent and this hasn't affected their performance one iota.

Q: How proactive can you be in an effort to deal with that beforehand?

General Zinni: Again, I think proactivity is really dependent upon intelligence, and we feel we can react with the appropriate intelligence. I think you've seen recently what has happened to Osama bin Laden's infrastructure based on intelligence, law enforcement, military and all the pieces working together.

I'm encouraged by that, but by no means do we deceive ourselves that this isn't a real threat, and there's still a formidable threat out there. Especially in our region.

Q: Any message for Osama bin Laden?

General Zinni: No, I think if truly he is, as he professes to be, a man of religion, he ought to study his religion very closely, because the things he's doing are not in keeping with the tenets of Islam as I know them.

Q: General, there was a little bit of U.S. military history made in this operation in that apparently for the first time ever a U.S. female pilot dropped bombs during this campaign. What do you make of that military milestone? Is it just a sign of the times?

General Zinni: My answer would be so what? We don't even count... Somebody asked me today how many female pilots or navigators. I have no idea. I can't find anybody that counts. So if you want a sign of the times, there it is.

Press: Thank you.

December 21, 1998 STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

In consultation with my Secretary of Defense William Cohen, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I have decided to make significant improvements in pay and other compensation for our men and women in uniform. The Defense budget I will submit to Congress for next year will include a pay raise of 4.4% for 2000, a restructuring of pay to reward performance as well as length of service, and an increase in retirement benefits.

These improvements will enhance the quality of life for our men and women in uniform, will encourage long-term service by the most talented servicemen and women, and will increase the Armed Forces military readiness to engage fully, at any time, in order to protect the security and interests of the United States. The sacrifices of our men and women in the Armed Forces are most vivid during the holidays while those of us at home are celebrating a time of peace with loved ones and family.

As events in the Gulf showed us only days ago, our servicemen and women are asked by their nation to travel far from home and to put their lives on the line to defend our interests. I am proud of the men and women of our military, and I am pleased that they will receive the pay and retirement increases they richly deserve. Coupled with recent quality of life initiatives in housing, child care and other areas, these improvements will continue to enhance the quality of life for American servicemen and women.

Background Briefing Monday, December 21, 1998, 1:30 p.m. Senior Defense Department Official

Speaker: Well, more will come in. I'm sorry for all the confusion about the timing, but I want to stress that this is a background briefing by a Senior Defense Official because despite his youthful appearance, he certainly is a senior defense official. Everything we give you here is embargoed until 4:15 this afternoon when the Secretary and the Chairman will make a complete announcement of this -- a formal announcement. This is a chance for him to walk you through the basics of the program and then for you to ask question. Do you have handouts or will they come later?

We will also get you prepared for delivery copies of the Secretary's remarks and the Chairman's remarks. It's all yours.

Senior Defense Department Official: Thanks.

As Ken Bacon said, very shortly, they'll have the handout of the embargoed document. Just a few brief comments and then specifics.

The Secretary, the Chairman, the other members of the Joint Chiefs have been working on a pay compensation package for several months now. They have worked it. It, I think, reflects the issues that they each have encountered in terms of their discussions with troops in the field. But I think it is a very significant package. There are really three pieces to it. And let me say that as we worked together, this is really a collaboration between the Secretary and the Joint Chiefs, between the Joint Staff and OSD.

There are three key pieces to the proposal that the Secretary will be announcing at 4:15. One is across the board pay increases beginning with a 4.4% raise for military personnel in Fiscal Year 2000. For planning purposes, we have a 3.9% pay raise each year in the rest of the FYDP. So that would be 4.4 in '00 and then 3.9 in the out years.

Q Not total, 3.9 in each year—

A Say that again?

Q I'm sorry.

A 4.4 in '00, 3.9, 3.9 is the planning number. Obviously, next year, we'll be here and we'll be assessing where the index is and things like that.

Q (Inaudible)

A '00.

Q Through '05?

A Through '05. So the first big piece is the across the board increases. Those will immediately put more dollars into every service member's pocket. We think it will also have a direct impact on retirement pay, which is based on basic pay.

Clearly, we are maximizing all of our specialty pays. We are maximizing all of our bonuses. I think we'll have a major package of specialty pays that will roll out with the rest of the budget. But what we really thought we needed to do was deal with basic pay itself. So the 4.4% is the first step.

The second step is the pay table reform. These are additional increases that will kick in in '00. The pay table reform will have a starting date of July 1, 2000. It is primarily focused for noncommissioned officers and mid-grade officers. Each of our service members makes valuable contributions, but the noncommissioned officers and the mid-grade commissioned officers, as well as the warrant officers, are the individuals who have acquired leadership skills, the technical skills that are extremely valuable to the military and I might also say very much in demand in the private sector. We make a significant investment of tax payer dollars to train and educate these individuals to acquire those skills. And frankly, it's critical to the Department of Defense to maintain that investment. So by adding pay increases directed at selected ranks and years of service, we will improve the incentive to serve a full military career.

How do we come through? One, we're really trying to target, again, NCO's, mid-career officers to compensate them for their experience, for the education they have acquired, for the technical and leadership skills that they have acquired. And additionally, the pay table reform is designed also to reward those who are fast promoters.

Now in the past, pay table reform, while it's been proposed many times, hasn't worked because the reformers have always tried to do it as a zero sum. The pay raise of 4.4 and [in] the out years goes to everybody across the board. And then the pay table reform, which is another investment, again, is targeted. So the across the board raises and the pay raises are really not in competition with each other.

The third piece that is in the Secretary's package is to improve retirement pay. As you know, there are three formulas out there depending upon when an individual enlisted or was commissioned. Two-thirds of the force is now—came on active duty after August of 1986. They are now making the stay in or get out decisions. The retirement proposal is to essentially change the multiplier to 50% at 20 years. There will be some other initiatives that will go with it in terms of—to have a COLA that is comparable to the one that is used in other programs of the federal government, particularly FERS. But we think that restoring to 50% plus the across the board pay increase plus the pay reform increase will also enhance the 50% retirement pay because the base on which that pay is calculated will be increased.

So those are the three key positions. The across the board increases for military personnel apply also to the DoD civilians. But those are the three key pieces: the across the board raise, the pay reform and then the retirement reform. These will be detailed in the Secretary's statement. We'll also be passing out copies of the new pay table, the proposed pay table as well as the percentage changes against the Fiscal '99 budget. But we're happy to answer your questions. I'd ask my two colleagues from the Joint Staff and from OSD to join me in answering the questions as well.

Q How much is this going to cost?

A That's—

Q How's it going to be paid for?

A I'm really not here to give a budget briefing right now other than to say the package is more than \$30 billion in the FYDP. It is significant.

I would just as soon defer other budget related questions to the presentation of the budget. But it is significant dollars.

Q \$30 billion over the six years. Do you expect to ask for that in extra money or do you expect to take it out of other areas to pay for it?

A I don't want to give a budget brief today. These will be fully funded.

Q (Inaudible) it grows over the six years.

A Sure, it does.

Q Is it zero this year and—

A Not zero, no. It's significant.

Q You can't be more specific about what it would be on a yearly basis?

A Trying to give a personnel brief and not a budget brief.

Q But it's going to rise—

A Say that again.

Q Within your own budget or are you going to get extra money?

A These initiatives—

Q Do they want it out of your hide or do get it from somebody else?

The Joint Chiefs have already said they want \$17 to \$20 billion to improve readiness and buy new weapons. Is this going to be above that, so you may ask for as much as \$47 billion and what else?

A I can say these are fully funded in the budget.

Q But you won't say if it's all extra money or whether some of it would come out of other programs. By fully funded, you don't mean it would be money on top of your current spending. Is that what you're saying? Like saving money on oil or saving money on—

A Right. Those are, yeah, again, I'm not here to give a budget brief.

Q What I'm saying is, by fully funded, you're not necessarily saying that's it's all extra money. That it may come from other sources.

A I'm saying that these are fully funded in the budget.

Q Can we talk about the targeted raises some?

A Sure.

Q How much are they, where do they go?

A They're going to vary anywhere from a half a percent up to extra 5.5% above the 4.4 pay raise that takes effect 1 January 2000. And the way that—we'll provide copies at the end that show where the cells are. The pay table reform effects every single cell on the pay table regarding length of service or grade. But the range will be from a half percent above 4.4 to 5.5% above 4.4.

Q The biggest raise is going to the mid-grade. So the top is getting some just to prevent decompressions?

A Correct. Also, looking at the goal, making sure that promotion is rewarded over length of service, but that we still provide uniform and meaningful longevity increases. So we're, in some cases, trying to flatten out longevity to be consistent, but then reward promotion at the promotion points.

Q So for purposes of understanding it, is it a chart because the differences are also by years of service and not just by—

A As soon as they have the package ready to distribute—

Q So people of a different pay grade may be getting different amounts of raise depending on their years of service?

A That's correct.

Q Percentage wise, not just dollar wise, percentage wise.

A Percentage wise equates to dollars. What we will provide you will be a chart that shows each individual element of the pay table, you know, with rank being on one side and years of service across the bottom. And if you cross those to a particular point, it will show you a percentage. And that is the percentage above the 1999 pay levels. We'll also provide you a copy of what the pay table looks like with dollars in it.

Q Do you have this with just some compound interest. If a person makes 4.4% more in the first year and then 3.9% of whatever it is the next five years, how much more will they be making at the end of the six years? What percentage more will they be making in the beginning, 20% more?

A Across the board increases impact everyone. And as those raises are calculated, they are just essentially calculated against the pay table.

Q I understand. How much more would a—

A Rather than getting in—I think what's going to be easier, we're going to give you this in two seconds. And I am chagrined that my logistics is not supporting us up here and that you don't have copies so that you could be asking detailed questions.

Q I'd like to ask you a question that I've been asking, I guess, for a couple of months. And that's the President, before the troops in Korea and before that to another audience, said that we're going to give you pay raises that will substantially close this gap with private sector wages, which, when this whole thing began, it looked like the services were saying that gap was 13.5%. As I understand it, these pay raises won't close that gap at all for those that are just getting 4.4 because that just keeps up with wage growth in the private sector. The pay gap would stay at about 13.4 is you continue to use ECI. Can you put that in perspective and can you reconcile that with the President's rhetoric that these pay raises are going to substantially close this 13.4% gap?

A I think we really focused on how to better compensate the force, how to reward the force for the acquisition of skills, for training, for the experience that is critical to retention. And so, I think those were the key elements that went into the pay reform. You know, I think that with so many things, you need to look at this as a cumulative and as a comprehensive package, so it's not just simply working a package against any particular percentage, but rather, it's a cumulative package designed to work a number of key issues.

I think perhaps it's useful to look back at the seventh Quadrennial Defense of military compensation. Which first formally and exhaustively went through the debate of why pay reform was in the long term best interest. The officer pay scales were the most out-of-balance, if you will, where over the course of a career, the pay events, promotion or a longevity increase, if you separated out the two kinds of events, 37% of the added dollars occurred by virtue of promotion and the remainder by virtue of longevity. Pay table reform essentially says, we're going to -- it's not exactly reversing it, but you can think of it in turning that around so that the preponderance of dollars added are based upon merit, performance, promotion versus simply being in the service for longer periods of time. And so, the revisions then to the pay cells with the half percent to the 5.5% changes are—occur across that band, if you will, of expected promotion points for both officers and non-commissioned officers.

Q What's happened to the pay gap? How will the Defense Department view the pay gap once these pay raises are in?

A I think, again, we've tried to put together a total package, a comprehensive approach, looking at pay reform, across the board raises and retirement. Again, I'm not sure that there's ever any single statistical measure that you should look at. Instead, you should look at a combination of things. Including, obviously, the commercial economy, but also the benefits package, retention rates. So I think that there's a whole formula of issues that you need to be looking at rather than just simply one measurement.

Q I'm sorry, I came in late. But are civilians involved in this in the same [way] as the uniformed personnel or is this just regarding uniformed personnel? DoD civilians?

A DoD civilians get the 4.4% as well.

Q What about the other—

A Pay reform is a uniquely military issue.

Q How about the 3.9% follow up raises? Do the civilians get that, too, or just the first year?

A Yes.

Q How many civilians, I'm sorry, will this effect in a round figure.

A Six to 700,000. I can get you the precise figure.

Q Does retirement effect them in the same way?

A They're in a different system.

Q Is there really a pay gap when benefits are brought in?

A We keep wanting to find the single statistical measure and I think you have to look—

Q Why not?

A Because in so many things, you've got to look at a combination of factors. You've got to look at retention issues. You've got to look at allowances and other benefits that are available. So I think you've got to look at things comprehensively and not just simply as isolated single issues.

Q Are services still allowed to do things such as the pilot bonuses?

A Yes, they are.

Q None of this affects—

A Special pay and bonus pays will continue to be used aggressively.

Q You mentioned bonuses earlier. Will this include any bonuses for pilots in the individual services?

A There already is a bonus for pilots. There are also other specialty pays that the services have requested that will be part of the budget. But again, plan to address those when the budget itself is rolled out.

Q Would that be part of this?

A Separate to this. Again—

Can I go to Pat and then come back to you, Tom?

Q Two things. The mathematics of this, pay table reform is something you do once and once you adjust the relative relationship of all the cells, from there on in the out years, every—so this is a one time—

A That's correct.

Q Secondly, the general gave us a very interesting example of how talking about relative budget shares is talking about policy. Promotion is more important than mere tenure. All right. Now, without asking you to give us a budget briefing, can you give us a sense as between... across the board, the pay table reform and the retirement stuff, relatively speaking, what's the budget share that each of those components has and does that change over the six years?

A I'd say about 65 to 70% are the across the board increases and about 30% is the pay reform and the retirement reform.

Q Can you separate out the last two, ballpark?

A Not at this point.

Tom, I'm sorry, I haven't called on you.

Q Did you say the number of people who would receive the additional above the 4.4, do you have ballpark estimate of the 1.4 million?

A They won't all get it at once, but in the life of a military career, the bulk of them are likely to be impacted by the pay reform.

Q How about on July 1, how many people are going to get a targeted raise, I think is the question here?

A Why don't we give you that number. Let's get you an exact number on that one.

Q When's the effective date of the Redux stuff? The retirement, the effective date of the change?

A The effective date is, nobody can retire under Redux until 2006.

Q You have disability retirees now.

A There are some disability retire now, under Redux, that is correct.

Q So, are the dates important for those who are getting disability retirements?

A Regarding only the COLA percentage on their annual adjustments, that is true.

Q So what's the date you're asking for is what I'm asking. What date do you want it to become effective.

A I think that remains to be seen as far as when the effective date will actually be once the legislation is crafted.

Q You seem to be walking on eggshells here with regard to the budget dollars. I know the services said this is a priority. They wanted the Redux retirement first, the Joint Chiefs said, then they wanted the pay raise adjustment second. But I don't think they envisioned they'd have to take it out of hide when they said that in September. Nevertheless, has it come back to them that hey, it's your priority, you're taking a lot of this out of hide? Is that, in effect, what's occurred and that's why you're sensitive?

A No. It's just that there's been a full budget process. There will be a budget that will be rolled out the end of January. I think that the Secretary and the Chairman really wanted to communicate to the force this week in terms of what they could be thinking about.

Q Follow up on the words just out of your mouth. You've used specialty bonuses and so on in the past. You really are trying to send a message, aren't you, to everybody in very blunt terms or broad-based terms that it can't be missed that you don't have to sort of analyze the pay table to see. Is that the intent?

A I think what we want to do is to re-establish the fact that our military members have lots of choice. They're very competitive with this kind of economy. They have education; they have training; they have leadership skills. And so, we want to make sure that they know that they're going to be compensated for acquiring those skills and also that the Secretary is very interested in making sure that we have the right incentives for the retention of these key people. I think we're trying to send a clear message that the Chairman and the Secretary have heard many of the issues raised by the people in the field. In fact, they have spent a tremendous amount of their time these last several months really focusing on how do we compensate the force given the key skills that they have, given their importance to our national defense.

Q Was all of this—has there been any consideration given to what kind of effect this might make on retention and recruiting?

A We think this will have a very positive and significant impact on retention as well as productivity.

Q Any idea on the percentage that might be reduced from the people leaving the service?

A We think it will have a major impact on retention. We'll have some statistical measurements that we can provide later on. We've had some independent analyses done of this that we would be willing to share.

Let me make a suggestion. Once the actual pay tables are available, that these two officials may be available to do some one-on-ones.

Q I wondered if you knew what the reaction—have you spoken with people on the Hill? And are they are going to receive it positively, do you think, or do you expect stiff resistance to the kind of changes particularly in the retirement system...

A I think we've not formally provided them with data. We've obviously been talking back and forth. I think the pay reform will be treated very positively. I think that the retirement reform will also be treated fairly and positively.

Q Thank, you, sir.

***21 Dec 1998: Once Should be Enough, Says Desert Fox Commander By Linda D. Kozaryn
American Forces Press Service***

WASHINGTON – If he's smart, Saddam Hussein won't want a repeat of Operation Desert Fox, Marine Corps Gen. Anthony C. Zinni said here Dec. 21. But, if the Iraqi dictator hasn't yet learned his lesson, U.S. forces will be standing by ready to act, the general said.

Zinni, who heads U.S. Central Command, planned and led the four-day air campaign against Iraqi military targets Dec. 16 to 19. Addressing reporters at the Pentagon, the Desert Fox commander declared the mission effectively achieved U.S. objectives.

Although all the results were not yet in, Zinni said, further analysis may prove the mission to be the most accurate U.S. air campaign ever conducted. Specialists are still doing battle damage assessments, he said, but preliminary results indicated the strikes hit 85 percent of the targets. Of those, Zinni continued, military officials considered 74 percent fully successful in meeting the intended objective, which could range from temporarily disrupting a command and control function to completely destroying a facility.

The strikes hit airfields, bunker complexes, maintenance facilities, Republican Guard barracks and headquarters, radio jamming centers and ballistic missile facilities. Despite Iraqi claims that the United States struck empty buildings, Zinni said, Saddam Hussein clearly suffered a defeat.

Throughout the operation, CENTCOM planners made every effort to avoid civilian casualties, the general said. They did, however, specifically target Republican Guard facilities. These elite troops, the most ruthless of Hussein's forces, normally lead Iraqi attacks and enforce discipline among the regular army, Zinni said.

No Iraqi military casualty statistics were available, Zinni said, but military officials were certain Republican Guard infrastructure – barracks, command and control facilities - - had been significantly destroyed or disrupted.

Overall, Operation Desert Fox involved more than 30,000 U.S. troops in the Gulf, and 10,000 more from outside Central Command. "We flew over 600 sorties in four days," Zinni said. "Over 300 of those were night-strike sorties."

More than 300 aircraft involved in strike and support roles delivered over 600 pieces of ordnance and 90 cruise missiles, he continued. Over 40 ships performed strike and support roles, with 10 launching over 300 missiles.

"Thousands of ground troops deployed to protect Kuwait and to respond to any counter action," the commander added. "Hundreds of our special operations forces also deployed to carry out their assigned missions."

American and British service members performed "magnificently," Zinni said. "I could not have asked for better." The fact that there were no casualties was particularly noteworthy, he added. "Even in peacetime, exercises of this scale can be dangerous. To do this without any casualties in the environment our forces faced, was truly remarkable."

Military planners are now working out what aspects of the force will remain in the Gulf to enforce the U.S. containment strategy, Zinni said. How long they'll stay remains undetermined. The U.S. presence is "a force for stability in the region," the commander said. "I

don't think anyone has a crystal ball and can predict when Saddam will go away. He is still a threat and [regional allies] appreciate us being there providing a deterrent to that threat. Our vital interests require our presence."

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright Interview on NBC's "Meet the Press" with Tim Russert December 20, 1998, Washington, D.C. As released by the Office of the Spokesman U.S. Department of State

MR. RUSSERT: Joining us for the very latest on Iraq, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Madame Secretary, welcome.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Good morning.

MR. RUSSERT: The operation is over. Did everyone return home safely?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Yes, everybody is home safe; and I think we owe a great debt of thanks for Americans in uniform for what they did there.

MR. RUSSERT: Does Saddam Hussein still have biological and chemical weapons?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, let me say that as a result of this mission that took 70 hours, Saddam Hussein is weaker. All the targets and things that he cares about most have been destroyed—many of them.

The region is safer because we have managed, I think, to degrade his ability to threaten his neighbors. The box he is in is stronger because of the credibility of our use of force. We have done this all with a minimum of criticism in the international community. So I think that we have accomplished what we needed to.

But obviously it is very hard to say that everything that he has in the weapons of mass destruction has been destroyed. His capability of threatening his neighbors and delivering them has been severely degrading.

MR. RUSSERT: When you say degraded, what does that mean? It means he still has them; he still has biological and chemical weapons.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, it's hard for us to say that everything is gone. But let me just go through some of the things that happened.

There were 100 targets that were hit over four nights. There were 650 strike sorties; there were 400 cruise missiles delivered. The destruction was heavy and devastating, as I said, to most of the targets that he holds the most dear. So there were nine missile R&D facilities hit; 18 out of 19 of his weapons of mass destruction security aspects—that's the Republican Guard and his special concealment units—were destroyed; 20 out of 21 command and control areas, 20 were damaged severely or destroyed; and eight palaces.

So when he claims he's victorious, that is sheer propaganda.

MR. RUSSERT: But he has the capacity to rebuild very, very quickly. And if he, in fact, rebuilds all those sites six months from now up and running, what do we do?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, we're back; and we have said very clearly that we reserve the right to use force again. I think we've proven our ability to deliver a very tough blow.

MR. RUSSERT: The UN weapons inspectors were removed from Iraq. Saddam says they will never be allowed back in. That's a real blow to us.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, the truth, Tim, is that they have not been able to do their job effectively for the last eight months. They did a tremendous job before; and as we said, many times they were able to destroy more weapons than the Gulf War. But they have not been able to do their job effectively.

The truth is that if there is no way for the international community to monitor what he's doing through UNSCOM, then the sanctions will remain in place. Saddam has to take some

affirmative actions in order to let UNSCOM and the IAEA—the International Atomic Energy Agency people—back in.

MR. RUSSERT: But not having the inspectors on the ground is a real loss. Last year, President Clinton was on this program and we talked about this. Let me show the tape to you and our viewers and get your reaction to it.

(Video clip is shown.)

MR. RUSSERT: So the inspectors were able to destroy these weapons. We have lost them, so all we have left is bombing and bombing is not nearly as successful as the weapons inspectors on the ground.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: That is true—when they can operate and do their jobs well. But we have to remember that for the last eight months, they have not been able to do their job and we do have other means for monitoring and determining what they have. Obviously, on-the-ground inspectors that are doing their jobs is the best. But if we can't do that, then we have other means for monitoring; and as I said, we reserve the right to use force again.

MR. RUSSERT: Scott Ritter, one of those former inspectors, said that this was a total set-up; that it was a deliberate attempt to provoke and elicit Iraqi defiance; and that the United States was a party to writing the United Nations report all as, in effect, a ploy to begin the bombing.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: That's just wrong. I can tell you that Chairman Butler is a very independent actor. We knew ahead of time, obviously, because he stated, that these inspections were going to take place at a particular time. He had intrusive inspections.

Frankly, I thought that Saddam Hussein would comply. He had an easy way of complying and then going to the comprehensive review. To say that it was a set-up is just dead wrong. What happened here was that Butler acted independently and we were prepared to take action if, in fact, as Butler said, he was not able to do his work. But absolutely no set-up.

MR. RUSSERT: There was a lot of discussion in this country about end-game. What did we really want to achieve. Jack Kemp, the Republican candidate for Vice President in 1996 had this to say: "What specific purpose is the bombing meant to achieve—to get the inspectors back in Iraq; to topple Saddam Hussein; to inflict punishment? Or does it have no more purpose beyond venting frustration from years of failed policy?"

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, let me say that obviously there is no silver bullet for dealing with Saddam Hussein or it all would have been taken care of a long time ago.

We have been able to maintain the toughest sanctions regime in the history of those kinds of regimes. But this mission was designed in order to degrade Saddam's weapons of mass destruction programs and those associated delivery systems and his ability to threaten his neighbors. That has been a successfully accomplished mission. In the longer term, we have made very clear that we would like to see a different regime—a regime that respects the international community, but most of all, reflects what the Iraqi people want. That is what we're going to be working towards by more active support of the various opposition groups.

MR. RUSSERT: Can the economic sanctions against Iraq ever be lifted as long as Saddam Hussein is in power?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, if Saddam Hussein were to abide by the Security Council resolutions; but I think that is very unlikely. Saddam Hussein has that option—he has had that option all along. He said at the end of the Gulf War that he would disarm. He has not done that. He needs to follow through on his international obligations.

MR. RUSSERT: But if he did that—if he did it—he obeyed all the UN regulations and resolutions, he could stay in power?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, yes, if he did. But I think I've used this term often—it is hypothetical and simply I don't see it in the works.

MR. RUSSERT: Nearly a quarter of a million Iraqi children have died because of lack of food and medicine. Does the United States bear any responsibility for that by enforcing the sanctions?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: No, Saddam Hussein bears full responsibility for that. It is actually the United States that was the author of the oil-for-food program which permits Saddam to sell oil for food. If we had not done that, and if the sanctions weren't in place, then he would be selling oil for tanks. So it is the United States and our allies that have made sure that the people of Iraq have food.

Let me just make something very clear, Tim. The embargo and the sanctions have never prohibited food and medicines from going to the Iraqi people.

MR. RUSSERT: The Republican National Committee circulated a box chart from The Washington Times the other day. It lists five different examples that every time the President was in political trouble—impeachment, his finger-wagging declaration that he did not have sex with Monica Lewinsky, when the judge in the Paula Jones case made public some documents, the Paula Jones case was filed—five different times he used or threatened to use military action. They're obviously trying to make a correlation between use or misuse of American foreign policy to distract attention from the President's problems. How do you respond to that?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I respond to the fact that it is completely wrong. I am President Clinton's chief diplomat and foreign policy spokesperson, and I have been involved in every one of the decisions during—I don't know what it says in that box—but in every foreign policy decision that we have made; and they have had their own clock. They have to do with the process of diplomatic negotiation, reacting to activities that are against US national security interest.

But during this period, I think people have to remember that the President has been involved in getting the peace in Northern Ireland. We have improved our relations with China. We have dealt deliberately with what's been happening in Bosnia and Kosovo. We have moved smartly on the Wye process. The President has been involved in all of that, and the timing has been dictated by the internal clock of foreign policy and by nothing else.

MR. RUSSERT: Last January the President had a Cabinet meeting, brought in all his secretaries. You came out and talked to the press and said the President said the allegations against him are untrue and he'll be fine. The President has now been impeached and the allegations were true. Were you misled or misused by the President; and has that affected your ability to do your job?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I have spoken on this before; and I said, yes, I was misled, and the President apologized. But I can assure you that in no way has this affected my ability to do the job or, more importantly, the President's clout and credibility internationally. I have spoken to over 30 foreign leaders—either foreign ministers or heads of state. All of them have been supportive of this last action. In fact, many of them thought it was necessary, and they have made very clear that it is Saddam Hussein who is to blame. They have made very clear their confidence in the President of the United States, and have shown this through their support. So this has not affected the way that I or the President can do our jobs.

MR. RUSSERT: Finally, will the impeachment and a Senate trial affect American foreign policy?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: The answer to that is no; because the President is

doing his job, I am doing my job, the other part of the national security team are all on the job. We are determined to protect and defend US national interest.

MR. RUSSERT: Madame Secretary, thank you for joining us, and I hope you have a great holiday.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Thank you; you, too, Tim.

ASSESSMENT OF OPERATION DESERT FOX AND FORWARD STRATEGY PRIME MINISTER, MR TONY BLAIR, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE, LONDON, SUNDAY, 20 DECEMBER 1998 PRIME MINISTER:

As I told you last night, operation 'Desert Fox' has been concluded successfully. I want once again to pay tribute to the bravery and professionalism of our forces, we salute them, their families and their country can be very proud of them indeed. Later today I will be speaking directly to some of those who have been involved.

Let me first explain why we had to act. Saddam Hussein has proved time and again the danger he poses to his people, his neighbours and to the international community, his entire record is one of brutality and aggression: his bloody take-over in 1979, the long years of internal repression, executions and torture, his futile 8-year war on Iran which left over a million dead, his equally futile attack on Kuwait and the murderous repression of the Kurds, the Marsh Arabs and the Shia Muslims in the south.

At the end of the Gulf War, we discovered the full and shocking extent of his arsenal and his weapons of mass destruction. The Security Council demanded the destruction of the latter and he agreed. Since then, he has broken that agreement again and again. Despite UNSCOM's early successes, it became clear, as you know, that they could not do their job. In the last eighteen months, he has provoked a series of crises to try to get sanctions lifted without full compliance. The international community is unanimous that this is unacceptable and that he must comply.

In November, following his latest provocation, we and the United States drew back from attack at the last moment in the face of a further promise of co-operation. He has since broken this, as the UNSCOM report graphically testified. We had warned that he would be struck if he failed to deliver on his pledge to allow the inspectors to do their job. He failed to deliver on his pledge, we have delivered on ours. We have struck and struck quickly to avoid giving him time to repair his defences and to ensure that action was completed as far as possible before the holy period of Ramadan to which we have been acutely sensitive.

Our military objectives were clear: to degrade the ability of Saddam Hussein to build and use weapons of mass destruction, including command-and-control delivery systems and to diminish the threat Saddam Hussein poses to his neighbours by weakening his military capability. Our campaign was therefore precisely aimed at specific military targets, sites relevant to weapons of mass destruction, command-and-control facilities throughout Iraq, the nerve centres of his military and internal repression operations, missile production facilities, intelligence capabilities and the Republican Guard and Special Republican Guard.

The background is a huge Iraqi conventional capability with more than a million men under arms, a sophisticated air defence system, highly sophisticated and multi-layered command-and-control systems and biological, chemical, ballistic missiles and unmanned drone programmes. The campaign itself involved over 400 cruise missiles - more than were launched in the Gulf War - and over 200 aircraft strikes. Nearly 100 sites were attacked including 30 weapons-of-mass destruction targets, 27 air defence targets, 20 command, control and communications targets, 10 Republican Guard targets and 6 airfield targets containing air defence missiles and command-and-control facilities.

We have severely damaged Saddam's ability to produce and repair ballistic missiles. We have severely set back his chemical, biological and unmanned drone programmes, his air defence radars, control centres and communication facilities in southern Iraq have been severely damaged and will take years to replace. This both makes Saddam more vulnerable to air attacks in future and of course weakens his ability to threaten his neighbours. We have disrupted his senior central command and control network, vital to a highly-centralised repressive regime like that of Iraq, and shown the people of Iraq that we can strike hard against his privileged Republican Guard, key props for the regime and its military capability.

Parts of his programme would take years to reconstitute even without sanctions and would absorb the bulk of his resources and efforts for all of that time. In all this, we have been extremely careful to avoid damage to civilian infrastructure except in one case directly related to sanctions-breaking and we have gone, as you know, to great lengths to avoid civilian casualties. We did not target Iraq's conscript army but only vital facilities close to the heart of Saddam's regime. In sum, we have achieved what we set out to do.

Some say that if you cannot get rid of Saddam Hussein there is no point in action and no point in trying to contain him. It is what I call an 'if you can't remove him, do nothing' fallacy. I do not accept that for instance we could only guarantee to bring him down by a land war in Iraq with literally hundreds of thousands of allied troops engaged. But just because we can't get in the cage and strike him down it doesn't mean we should leave the cage untouched and the bars too fragile to hold him. What we have done is put him back securely and firmly in the cage. He is weaker and therefore the region is stronger and all this has been achieved without a single UK or US serviceman or servicewoman's life lost. We have reduced the danger Saddam poses consistent with common sense and a proportionate use of force. Had we simply allowed the inspection regime to be reduced to impotence and done nothing, then he would have known that we were not serious, he would have felt unrestrained and able to work his will on the outside world again.

I recognise of course that not everyone around the world has welcomed this action but I believe that at heart most people understand its necessity. Quite apart from its substantial military effect, it sends a very clear message indeed to Saddam Hussein that we will not sit by; it also sends a message to others in this dangerous world that the patience of the international community cannot be tried indefinitely and that when it is right and when the will of the international community is at stake we will act to enforce it because the first stirrings of a new global reality are upon us. Those who abuse force to wage war must be confronted by those willing to use force to maintain peace, otherwise the simple truth is that war becomes more likely. We cannot do everything, that is true, but what we can do reasonably we should do.

From the outset, while setting clear military objectives we of course have been working with allies on the day after. We need a future strategy that is based on containment and stability for the region. First and foremost, we must maintain the threat of force which Saddam now knows to be credible. Our forces will remain ready to strike if necessary if he again poses a threat to his neighbours or develops weapons of mass destruction. As part of this strategy of containment, I can announce today that the aircraft carrier HMS 'Invincible' will be moving to the Gulf and will be there in January after Ramadan has ended.

We will intensify our surveillance and indeed are better able to carry it out as a result of the air strikes of the past few days, we will know what is happening and whether Saddam is yet again

getting in a position to threaten others. If he does, he knows what to expect, he knows that we know where his forces are and where his programmes are being developed. Secondly, we will be acting to ensure that implementation of sanctions is as rigorous as we can make it, for example through reinforced operations in the Gulf to intercept suspect traffic. We need, radically in my view, to improve sanctions-enforcement.

Third, we are launching an intensive diplomatic process with other members of the Security Council, with the countries of the region, with our European partners to forge a new strategy for stability in relations between the international community and Iraq. I have been in touch with many of our European Union partners in the last few days, in particular with France; I am pleased to say there is much common ground in understanding that Saddam's ambitions have to be contained for the future. Finally, we will be discussing with partners ways in which an effective inspection and monitoring regime central to the disarmament task mandated by the Security Council can be resumed.

But let us be realistic: what we could not of course accept is UNSCOM returning in circumstances where the previous cat-and-mouse game simply resumed and we found ourselves with the same recurring crises. We would need a new and better regime and Iraq will therefore have to demonstrate in practical ways a completely different order of readiness to fulfil its obligations in future if the UNSCOM route is to have any part to play.

A further vital element in all this is the future welfare of the Iraqi people. Our quarrel, as I have constantly said over the past few days, is not with them but with the regime that dominates and represses them. I hope it is by now clear that Saddam can buy as much food and medicines as he wants through oil sales to help his people but we would like to see a more effective arrangement if we can, in particular one less susceptible to poor performance by the Iraqi authorities or manipulation by Saddam for his own ends.

Finally, we will continue to engage with the Iraqi opposition to help them develop their vision of a better Iraq. Our overall diplomatic aim is to achieve a broad consensus in the Security Council and elsewhere on how to deal effectively with Iraq in the future, stopping Saddam Hussein from threatening his neighbours but not penalising the people of Iraq who are his main victims. I would much rather we had not had to act as we have done but I have no doubt at all that it was the right course and a just cause. Saddam is weaker now than he was before we started, that is the truth; his neighbours, the region and therefore the world are safer as a result.

***'LAUNCHING A FORWARD STRATEGY OF CONTAINMENT FOR SADDAM' EDITED
TRANSCRIPT OF AN INTERVIEW GIVEN BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, MR
ROBIN COOK, FOR GMTV, LONDON, SUNDAY, 20 DECEMBER 1998***

INTERVIEWER:

Is the world a safer place? I asked the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, to assess the impact of the military campaign and to explain what happens next.

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

We are quite clear that the military campaign will have been effective in setting back Saddam's programmes for weapons of terror by several years and by sharply removing his capacity to threaten his neighbours with a military machine that keeps him in power. It is very important when we have come to an end of the military campaign that we should then launch a diplomatic campaign.

We will be putting forward a strategy of containment for Saddam. First of all, we will be making it perfectly clear that a credible threat will remain and that if Saddam attempts to return to developing a capacity to threaten his region and the world with chemical and biological weapons, then there will be the military power to stop him. We will be making sure there is effective monitoring to ensure that we know what he is up to and that he is not going to be able to develop those weapons without our being warned of it. He is not going to be allowed to do this in secret as he has been trying to do.

But there is a wider objective and that is to make sure that the Saddam regime remains isolated in the world. We can build up contact and dialogue with those in Iraq who would wish to oppose him. Our objective will be to make sure that we have built up as broad as possible a consensus in the international community against Saddam and have made sure that Saddam himself remains as isolated as possible both in the world and also within Iraq itself.

INTERVIEWER:

But does it shock you that there are still people on the international stage, even within governments, who are still prepared to see Saddam as somebody they can do business with?

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

I could not have been Foreign Secretary for almost two years and still be shocked at the reaction of governments, no. I understand that some governments approach this from an entirely different perspective. The task for us now after the military action is to build as much of a consensus as we can against Saddam Hussein.

Some of the governments who have had their reserves about military action are also quite clear about the nature of Saddam Hussein and I would, yes, be shocked if we cannot build a broad coalition and consensus of containment of Saddam to make sure that he is not going to develop a credible weapons capacity and threaten the world or a military machine once again to threaten his neighbours. I think we can do that. I am quite clear that that there is an opening for us to build a consensus of the international community which keeps Saddam isolated.

INTERVIEWER:

But let us look at some of the fault-lines in that diplomatic strategy. Within Europe, there are a number of governments who believe you are just too close to the United States in this matter.

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

In Europe, we have had enormous support. Many of the ministers of Europe and the governments of Europe have come out not only in agreement with the analysis I have given of the threat which Saddam poses but also specifically in support of the military action. Capital after capital in Europe has made it plain that the reason why this military action had to be taken is the action of Saddam Hussein.

We had particularly strong support, for instance, from the new government in Germany and I will be meeting the foreign minister of Germany in London tomorrow when we will be discussing this very problem. So I don't see a problem in Europe in building a consensus around the kind of strategy that I have outlined.

INTERVIEWER:

Europe may be manageable but there is a much bigger challenge in the United Nations - Russia and China out-and-out opposed.

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

First of all, in the Security Council we had overwhelming support and in any free vote of the Security Council we would have won by an overwhelming majority. You are right that Russia and China resisted the military action but I think also there will be a willingness in Russia - and already it has been clear from our conversations with them - to look at how we build a consensus for the future and it is very important that we achieve that.

We want Russia to be with us, we don't want this in any way to become a basis of division with Russia and indeed Russia itself understands there are a whole number of areas where it is in Russia's own interest to have a positive relationship with Europe and with the United States.

I think together we can find common ground in which you can make sure that Saddam is contained. In the last analysis, Moscow is not acting as an apologist for Saddam, they know his regime and they know also it is in their interest to make sure he doesn't get chemical and biological weapons because they are an awful lot nearer to them than we are.

INTERVIEWER:

But that diplomatic strategy cannot work unless Russia and China are on-side.

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

I wouldn't make that a condition and say that we cannot succeed in a consensus against Saddam which does not embrace Russia and China; but I want them to be part of that consensus and we are going to be working to make them part of that.

INTERVIEWER:

The Muslim World is less supportive than it was in 1990/91. How do you reassure them that Saddam is the enemy?

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

The statements from the Arab and Islamic World have overwhelmingly been statements of very measured restraint. We have of course spoken intensively to so many of the governments in the Arab World about what we are doing and there is a very strong degree of understanding among the governments because they know that Saddam's weapons of terror, if they were ever used, would be used against them. Let us not turn this into a confrontation between the West and the Arab World. If you look at those who have been victims of Saddam's aggression and Saddam's genocide, the people he kills are Muslims. He himself has killed tens of thousands of Muslims in Iran and the Kurdish areas; he took away 600 people from Kuwait and they have never been heard of again. There are many people around the region who understand only too well that Saddam has oppressed Muslim people.

There is of course one issue which I think it is very important that we get across throughout the Arab World and that is the extent to which we have sought in all we do to try and actually help the plight of the Iraqi people. Britain, for instance, doubled the oil-for-food programme so that Saddam could pay for food and medicines and there are no sanctions against food and medicines for Iraq. If the Iraqi people go short of these things, it is because of Saddam, not because of sanctions, and in the course of the military action we have taken the greatest possible care to make sure we target only military installations, not the civilian infrastructure. I will want to work with the Arab World and with the Islamic leaders to see if there are ways in which we can try and make our humanitarian effort more effective so that we can actually defeat Saddam's attempt to obstruct our work to get aid through to the people of his country.

INTERVIEWER:

But doesn't your stated desire to see the back of Saddam once and for all make that diplomatic strategy much more difficult?

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

No, not at all. There is nobody who would be keener to get rid of Saddam than the Iraqi people; they may not have a free press or free television which can show them what Saddam does but they know it. There cannot be a village anywhere in Iraq in which people did not disappear under Saddam's reign of brutality and they would be very pleased if they could get rid of Saddam. We have got to be very careful about how we approach this and we cannot invite his people to rise up against Saddam because we know the terrible consequences for them were they to fail. But we will want to maintain dialogue with the opposition groups and the people of Iraq themselves are not in any way going to feel that it is an anti-Islamic claim that we should try and get rid of Saddam. The whole world would be a better place and the Islamic World would be a safer place.

INTERVIEWER:

Should the diplomatic strategy fail, then the tools of war will be rolled out again?

FOREIGN SECRETARY: We will be maintaining a credible threat against Saddam. We don't want to have to use that threat in the future. I very much hope that our diplomatic strategy will build a consensus which will be effective against Saddam and remember, he will only confront the United Nations if he feels he can split world opinion. But we are not going to let Saddam continue to develop weapons of mass destruction or get them back to the point where he was in a short period, of being able to deploy them. If we were to allow him to do that, we would not be leaving peace undisturbed, we would be making it certain that he himself would break the

peace by using those weapons. Remember, until sanctions came along Saddam was in power for only 12 years and in those 12 years for 9 of them he was at war with one or other of his neighbours. If sanctions had not been there, he would have been at war with one of them in the recent years.

INTERVIEWER:

Finally, do you entertain any real hopes for a peaceful New Year?

FOREIGN SECRETARY:

I think that as we approach the end of this year we can look back and see that there are ways in which we have improved the chances of a peaceful world and we ourselves have been continuing to make very good progress and particularly strong progress in the last few days. We have managed to get some momentum back into the peace process in the Middle East; there has been some extension of democracy in some countries that have managed to make that progress.

Nigeria is a very good example where we can look forward to a democratic state in place of a military state with a lot of repression. But we are going to have to remain very much on our guard and work very hard at those remaining areas of insecurity because what we have learned in this much smaller world that we inhabit, where the mobility of weapons is so much faster than before, is that instability in one part of the world can be insecurity for ourselves and that is why I am very pleased that we are ending this year with a very firm assertion of the importance of the United Nations and the Security Council resolutions. If we can build on that we can make further progress next year.

Saturday, December 19, 1998 - 6:55 p.m. (EST) Presenter: Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen

Secretary Cohen: Good evening.

On Wednesday when U.S. and British forces launched strikes against Iraq, I stated that we were pursuing clear military goals. And as President Clinton has announced, we've achieved those goals. We've degraded Saddam Hussein's ability to deliver chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

We've diminished his ability to wage war against his neighbors. Our forces attacked about 100 targets over four nights, following a plan that was developed and had been developed and refined over the past year. We concentrated on military targets and we worked very hard to keep civilian casualties as low as possible.

Our goal was to weaken Iraq's military power, not to hurt Iraq's people. Since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990, the United States and other countries have enforced the U.N. Security Council resolutions to contain Iraq from attacking its neighbors and from using weapons of mass destruction. That containment policy continues. We will maintain a strong, ready force in the Gulf to respond to any contingency. We will ensure that economic sanctions on Iraq stay in effect until Iraq complies with the Security Council resolutions and mandates. Saddam Hussein chose confrontation over cooperation. There's no pleasure to be had when a brutal dictator chooses to pit his people against the entire international community. Our quarrel is not with the Iraqi people. The United States has led in supporting the oil for food program which ensures that the money from the sale of Iraq's oil goes for food and other humanitarian needs and not for weapons or palaces.

We've taken great care to minimize casualties among innocent civilians in our strikes. I find no joy in watching a people in a land so long and rich in history endure deprivation from sanctions or suffering from attacks. To the extent that there are civilian casualties, only Saddam and his brutally destructive regime are to blame.

We gave our forces a very difficult job to do... to execute. And they performed it with great speed and also with great skill. There were no U.S. or British casualties, but as we all know, our armed forces put themselves in harm's way every single day. And I would like to remember this evening that two days into her current six month deployment, the USS ENTERPRISE sustained casualties when two aircraft collided during their carrier qualifications. That night, Lieutenant Commander Kurt Barich, Lieutenant Commander Meredith Loughran, Lieutenant Brendan Duffy and Lieutenant Charles Woodard gave their lives in defense of their country. And our condolences and sympathies continue to go to their families and their loved ones. All Americans should be proud of the soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who executed Operation DESERT FOX.

On Monday, Gen. Anthony Zinni, who planned and prepared and commanded this operation with great skill, is going to be here to brief you on the details of DESERT FOX. He and all of our troops deserve our thanks for a job extremely well done.

Mr. Chairman.

Gen. Shelton: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Good evening.

As the President said just a short time ago, Operation DESERT FOX has ended. U.S. and British military forces under Gen. Tony Zinni, the commander of U.S. Central Command, have been highly successful in achieving the objectives of Operation DESERT FOX. The military objectives of this operation as outlined earlier by the President were clearly spelled out and approved by President Clinton. As the President's principal military advisor, I am confident that the carefully planned and superbly executed combat operations of the past four days have degraded Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction programs, his ability to deliver weapons and his ability to militarily threaten the security of this strategically important Persian Gulf region. Gen. Zinni made the same assessment.

The forces participating in Operation DESERT FOX clearly demonstrated their skill, their professionalism and their dedication. This was truly a team effort. Soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines of our total force, active, reserve and National Guard, together with our great British allies all contributed to the success achieved during the operation. It was one team and one fight.

Throughout the operation, we have talked about the professionalism, the skill and the courage of the United States Air Force, Navy and Marine [Corps], along with our British aircraft pilots and their crews, and this was as it should be. However, they were on the tip of a spear, the tip of the well-oiled machine that it takes to carry out a complex operation of this magnitude, carried out exclusively at night... and make it look easy. For example, Air Force and Air National Guard crews of the U.S. Transportation Command [flying] C-17 Globemasters, C-141 Starlifters and C-5 Galaxies know how critical their contributions are to the overall operation. So do the crews of the aerial refueling aircraft, without whose support these strikes, indeed, even getting the equipment to the fight, would not have been possible. In fact, I think their motto should probably be "try fighting without us". And the list goes on and on.

When it comes to our maritime, the focus has been largely on the aircraft carrier battle group ENTERPRISE, The Big E. This was particularly appropriate on the first night when it was the ENTERPRISE's Navy and Marine Corps aircraft that carried out the strike sorties. But as the sailors know very well, their success would not be possible without the great work of support ships that bring everything from beans to bullets to those ships at sea, as well as to our soldiers and Marines and airmen ashore.

During the course of DESERT FOX, American and British war planes flew more than 650 strike and strike support sorties. Our ships launched more than 325 Tomahawk cruise missiles and U.S. Air Force B-52s launched more than 90 cruise missiles. In all, we attacked almost 100 targets, all related to our overall mission objectives.

Finally, I want to say a few words to the families of all of our servicemen and women and particularly to those loved ones who are serving in the Gulf or getting ready to go out as part of our crisis response force. I know it's been difficult, especially during this holiday season, to watch your husband, wife, son or daughter, mom or dad pick up that ruck sack one more time to answer our nation's call. America is very proud of you all.

Now that Operation DESERT FOX is over, we will carefully evaluate the forces we need to keep in place in the region to keep an eye on Saddam. Make no mistake about it, we will maintain a significant capability there to defend our national interests and the security of the region as we have for many years.

Once again, on behalf of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and all Americans, I want to offer congratulations to Gen. Tony Zinni and to each member of the Central Command for a job extremely well done. Thank you.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you have said that these raids have degraded Saddam's ability to deliver weapons of mass destruction, but apparently, they haven't done much to harm his ability to make such weapons. How would you answer that criticism? And how did you decide ahead of time that 70 hours would accomplish your goals?

A: Let me answer the second part first. This has been the plan from the very beginning. This is essentially the same plan we had in preparation and were prepared to execute last February. It is the same plan we prepared to execute in November. So that has been the plan from the beginning to achieve the goals that we set for ourselves.

With respect to the manufacture of chemical and biological agents, as I've indicated time and time again, our goal was to diminish his capacity to deliver such chemicals or biological or even nuclear weapons and to strike those facilities we could identify that possibly solely produced them. But we were always conscious of the fact that you could have a facility inside of a hospital or a fertilizer plant, a dual use facility, and we took that into account in seeking to balance the need to reduce his capacity to pose a threat to the region and at the same time, not engaging in the wholesale destruction of the Iraqi people.

Q: Do you plan to try to convince the U.N. to send the UNSCOM inspectors back in or is that now a dead issue after the air strikes?

A: It's not at all a dead issue. As a matter of fact, Saddam Hussein will have the burden of demonstrating in some affirmative fashion that he is prepared to allow the inspectors to come back in to be effective.

We are not going to simply go through the motions once again where he is able to obstruct their ability to carry out their mission. And so, he must demonstrate a willingness to allow the inspectors to come back and to complete their job. And barring that, we intend to maintain the containment policy which continues to keep the sanctions in place. We'll continue our military as we have been, in place and ready to take action, if it becomes necessary.

Q: If the UNSCOM inspectors are not allowed back in, will there be further air strikes?

A: We are prepared to carry out such air strikes, but we intend to maintain the containment policy and also to make sure that he doesn't threaten the region again. So we'll have our own intelligence observations and make the kind of determination that would lead us to the obvious conclusions.

Q: You use the [word] diminish to describe—

A: Degrade.

Q: "Diminish" to describe the damage done to the conventional capability. What is diminish in your words versus destroy, eliminate?

A: It's less than what he had before and we think significantly less than what was available before in terms of his capacity to move against his neighbors. We've looked at his Republican Elite Guard, so to speak. We have damaged in substantial fashion, their facilities, some of their

housing. We have destroyed his missile production capability, at least, in the factory that we targeted. So there is a significant degradation in our judgment of that.

Q: ...like, Republican Guard tanks that survived the Gulf War?

A: He still has armor and that could pose a threat to the region, but that's the reason we have our own forces there.

Q: Do you intend to keep the crisis response force flowing to the Gulf or have you put that on hold?

A: I think we are in consultation with Gen. Zinni about the need to do that right now. And we'll act upon his recommendation. If he thinks it's still necessary to do that, we will continue it. If he believes he has satisfactory forces in place, then we will take that into account and make a decision.

Q: On UNSCOM, if I might, have you decided what you will require from Saddam by way of an earnest [gesture] of his good faith, should he welcome UNSCOM back in?

A: I think that will remain to be determined. I think we'll have to give that some great thought given his past behavior.

Q: How would you characterize, based on the battle damage assessment that you've seen so far... how would you characterize the overall success rate of these four days of strikes? Did you accomplish absolutely everything you wanted? Did you come close? How would you characterize it?

A: We've tried to indicate on several occasions in the past few days, it's too early to make such a definitive assessment. We are satisfied that the mission has been successfully accomplished. No mission can be 100% perfect. We've understood that. Everyone understands that. We think that under the circumstances, that we were quite successful and we're satisfied with that.

Q: Mr. Secretary, is it a victory for Saddam that the inspectors are now out and they have said they're not coming back? Hasn't he won a victory there?

A: Not at all. To have inspectors on the ground who are in effect, there in appearance only, and have been precluded from carrying out their mandate, means that you give the appearance of compliance while carrying on your weapons of mass destruction program. I think that is not acceptable and frankly, the action we took because he refused to let them do their job... we had to do ours. And I would say this is not—we did not seek a military option. It was a last resort only. We came to the last resort.

Q: Isn't he better off without them there?

A: I don't think he's better off without them there, given the fact that there has been some significant damage done to his infrastructure. And he is not going to be able to reconstitute easily or quickly because we intend to keep the sanctions in place.

Q: About five hours ago or so, the assessment wasn't nearly done and planes were in the air. How can you possibly have assessed what those planes did?

A: I leave that to Gen. Zinni, who has made that judgment and to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Q: Secretary Cohen, regarding the inspectors, in addition to the UNSCOM inspectors, who call themselves in effect, the IA—International Atomic Energy Agency Inspectors, have also been required to leave Iraq and it's believed by some they also may not be able to return. And those inspectors were widely considered effective. I mean, is that a price you're going to have to pay, now having done what you've done?

A: Saddam will have to make a determination as to whether or not he's prepared to fully cooperate with those inspectors as well. To the extent that they remain outside of Iraq, there will be no chance of closing any files in the future. And so, the sanctions, again, will continue to remain in place. So he does not benefit from keeping them out, and he does not benefit from keeping the UNSCOM team out either.

Q: He benefits in terms of an ease[ing] in developing a nuclear program.

A: Well, we are going to continue to watch him very closely. We have— we will make every effort to compensate for the lack of those inspectors. But by the same token, he is going to be precluded from getting relief from the sanctions and that is very important to him. He wanted to get the inspectors out and get relief from the sanctions. He may have gotten the inspectors out at least temporarily. He will not get relief from the sanctions.

Q: Do you think it's just a matter of time before the United States will have to conduct another such operation against Iraq?

A: Wouldn't want to speculate on that. We're prepared to conduct future military operations, but that will depend upon Saddam's actions. Q: Gen. Shelton, were today's strikes the proving—the point that allows you to say enough, we've accomplished our goals? Were they key today, to your judgment?

Gen. Shelton: We certainly wanted to carry out today's strikes because they were key to the objectives that we set out for the strike. But the majority today were directed against Republican Guard units, which were restrikes of the same units, different types of units within the same. But as you know, if you look at a Republican Guard division, it's spread out over a great distance. It has a lot of stuff. And so these strikes went against them.

Q: Did you go for armor and people and soldiers today?

A: We went after command and control.

Q: How many divisions of the Republican Guard were targeted overall through the whole thing?

A: Four.

Q: Given the fact that it became obvious after the first night that the Republican Guard and the Special Republican Guard were being targeted, how successful can you be? I mean, didn't they essentially run for the hills, even though there aren't a lot of hills there?

A: On a lot of the targets that we went after, that related to command and control, both the Special Republican Guards and the Republican Guards were hit very early in terms of their command and control with Tomahawks.

Q: So you basically are trying to create an office, so when they come back to the office, there's nothing left. There's no telephones, no communication, but you may not have killed many people in those strikes because—

A: There were quite a few the first night that were housing, barracks and headquarters.

Q: ...in the barracks... (inaudible)

A: By design to hit those first.

Q: General, what are you going to do with the Special Forces in Kuwait -- leave them there?

A: We've had a Special Forces element in Kuwait for quite some time and there's no plan right now to bring them out. As you know, they maintain some C-SAR capability for Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. And they have a couple of other missions.

Q: Why the emphasis on the Ba'ath party headquarters, which you struck repeatedly? Is there a subbasement there? I mean, is there something other than the political message it sends?

A: As well as... are being tied into the management for the apparatus for controlling the weapons of mass destruction program, which they are tied into.

Q: Were you, in a sense, sending a direct message because that was a site where U.N. inspectors had been denied access. Is that the reason that building was put on the target list?

A: That was already on the target, even before they denied the access, as part of an overall plan of things that if, in fact, they did not... you know, we've been looking at this plan back before—on November the 15th when the President decided not to go. And then recently when they did not allow access, we made the decision to leave [it] on the target list.

Q: Is there any reason to believe that Saddam Hussein's hold on power is less secure today than it was four days ago?

A: There has been - as you asked today I believe—early today about a potential uprising. I don't know how serious that is. We certainly struck at a lot of his security apparatus, things that are key to controlling his weapons of mass destruction. But they also are key to his own protection and security. It's kind of a dual mission that they have. And so, how effective that is we'll find out over the long term, I think.

Q: Do you know more about these activities in the South than you did before? You said earlier, that... A: No.

Q: But you do have indications that there's some chaos or activity down there—

A: We've always known that, in that particular region, that that's been where a lot of the concern was. And we know that he moved some units in that area, which appear to be, as a result... are trying to make sure you didn't have an uprising. But to what extent, we're not sure right

now.

Q: Getting some reports that there are some roads which have been closed down, some communications have been shut down and it may be relatively well organized. Do you have reason to believe that? A: I have not gotten that indication right now.

Q: Did you have—were there any missions - were there any sorties to try and attack or target buildings where you thought Saddam Hussein might be? Do you have any missions targeting...

A: We went after command and control and security type, command and control security related to WMD—all related to WMD. But some also related to how Saddam maneuvers his

forces and things of this type. So they're kind of dual use facilities, his own command and control of forces as well as the apparatus that oversees the WMD program. Q: Did you try to—

A: No. We don't know where Saddam is and there was no intent to go specifically for him.

Q: How many of his so-called palaces were hit? Or did you hit any?

A: About eight. Seven or eight.

Press: Thank you.

December 19, 1998 REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT ON IRAQ The Roosevelt Room 6:00 P.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: On Wednesday, I ordered our Armed Forces to strike military and strategic targets in Iraq. They were joined by British forces. That operation is now complete, in accordance with our 70-hour plan. My national security team has just briefed me on the results. They are preliminary, but let me say just a few words about why we acted, what we have achieved, and where we want to go.

We began with this basic proposition: Saddam Hussein must not be allowed to develop nuclear arms, poison gas, biological weapons, or the means to deliver them. He has used such weapons before against soldiers and civilians, including his own people. We have no doubt that if left unchecked he would do so again.

Saddam must not be prepared to defy the will—be permitted—excuse me—to defy the will of the international community. Without a firm response he would have been emboldened to do that again and again. For seven and a half years now, the United Nations weapons inspectors have done a truly remarkable job, in forcing Saddam to disclose and destroy weapons and missiles he insisted he did not have. But over the past year, Saddam has repeatedly sought to cripple the inspections system. Each time, through intensive diplomatic efforts backed by the threat of military action, Saddam has backed down. When he did so last month, I made it absolutely clear that if he did not give UNSCOM full cooperation this time, we would act swiftly and without further delay.

For three weeks, the inspectors tested Saddam's commitment to cooperate. They repeatedly ran into roadblocks and restrictions, some of them new. As their Chairman, Richard Butler, concluded in his report to the United Nations on Tuesday, the inspectors no longer were able to do their job. So far as I was concerned, Saddam's days of cheat and retreat were over. Our objectives in this military action were clear: to degrade Saddam's weapons of mass destruction program and related delivery systems, as well as his capacity to attack his neighbors. It will take some time to make a detailed assessment of our operation, but based on the briefing I've just received, I am confident we have achieved our mission. We have inflicted significant damage on Saddam's weapons of mass destruction programs, on the command structures that direct and protect that capability, and on his military and security infrastructure. In a short while, Secretary Cohen and General Shelton will give you a more detailed analysis from the Pentagon.

So long as Saddam remains in power he will remain a threat to his people, his region and the world. With our allies, we must pursue a strategy to contain him and to constrain his weapons of mass destruction program, while working toward the day Iraq has a government willing to live at peace with its people and with its neighbors. Let me describe the elements of that strategy going forward. First, we will maintain a strong military presence in the area, and we will remain ready to use it if Saddam tries to rebuild his weapons of mass destruction, strikes out at his neighbors, challenges allied aircraft, or moves against the Kurds. We also will continue to enforce no-fly zones in the North, and from the southern suburbs of Baghdad to the

Kuwaiti border. Second, we will sustain what have been among the most extensive sanctions in U.N. history. To date, they have cost Saddam more than \$120 billion, resources that otherwise would have gone toward rebuilding his military. At the same time, we will support a continuation of the oil-for-food program, which generates more than \$10 billion a year for food, medicine and other critical humanitarian supplies for the Iraqi people. We will insist that Iraq's oil be used for food, not tanks.

Third, we would welcome the return of UNSCOM and the International Atomic Energy Agency back into Iraq to pursue their mandate from the United Nations—provided that Iraq first takes concrete, affirmative and demonstrable actions to show that it will fully cooperate with the inspectors. But if UNSCOM is not allowed to resume its work on a regular basis, we will remain vigilant and prepared to use force if we see that Iraq is rebuilding its weapons programs.

Now, over the long-term the best way to end the threat that Saddam poses to his own people in the region is for Iraq to have a different government. We will intensify our engagement with the Iraqi opposition groups, prudently and effectively. We will work with Radio Free Iraq, to help news and information flow freely to the country. And we will stand ready to help a new leadership in Baghdad that abides by its international commitments and respects the rights of its own people. We hope it will return Iraq to its rightful place in the community of nations.

Let me say in closing again how terribly proud I am of our men and women in uniform. Once again, they have done a difficult job with skill, dedication and determination. I also want to say that I am very proud of our national security team. I want to thank Secretary Cohen and General Shelton; I want to thank Secretary Albright and Sandy Berger. The Vice President and I have relied on them very heavily—they have performed with extraordinary ability and restraint, as well as effectiveness. I am very, very grateful for the way this operation was planned and executed.

But again, foremost, I want to give my thanks to our men and women in uniform. We are waiting for the last planes to come home, and praying that we'll be able to tell you tomorrow that every last one of them has returned home safely.

Thank you very much.

DoD News Briefing Saturday, December 19, 1998 - 2:00 p.m. Presenter: Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen Operation DESERT FOX [Also participating in the briefing was Gen. Hugh Shelton, Chairman, JCS; Rear Admiral Thomas R. Wilson, J-2]

Secretary Cohen: Good afternoon.

As you know, the United States and British strikes against Iraq are continuing.

From the beginning of this operation we've been careful to set realistic goals. We've also been careful not to either overstate or exaggerate the results as our intelligence analysts study the very preliminary data. However, I want to stress that this military action is substantial. It is inflicting significant damage on the seven target categories that we have selected. These are as follows:

Iraq's air defense system.

The command and control system that Saddam Hussein uses to direct his military and to repress his people.

The security forces and facilities to protect and hide his efforts to develop or maintain the deadly chemical and biological weapons. These are the forces that have worked to prevent the United Nations inspectors from doing their jobs.

The industrial base that Saddam Hussein uses to sustain and deliver his deadly weapons.

His military infrastructure, including the elite Republican Guard forces that pose the biggest threat to his neighbors and protect his weapons of mass destruction programs.

The airfields and refinery that produces oil products that Iraq smuggles in violation of economic sanctions.

I'd like to focus on two areas where our strikes have substantially degraded Saddam Hussein's warfighting capability. The first is Iraq's ability to deliver deadly weapons. We estimate that Saddam's missile program has been set back by at least a year. I'd like to offer just another word pertaining to descriptions of damage done. When we talk about moderate damage inflicted, I think it has to be kept in mind in terms of its comparison. When the Federal Building in Oklahoma City was bombed, the initial photographs, satellite photography that had taken place, described that damage as being moderate. I think we all understand how much damage was in fact done to that building, even though it was described as moderate at that time. The elimination of the ability to deliver these deadly weapons is one of the jobs that Saddam's security forces prevented the UN inspectors from performing. So the second area where the damage has been substantial is the command and control system. This network of communications, intelligence, propaganda and security service headquarters has been significantly damaged.

Saddam may rebuild and attempt to rebuild some of this military infrastructure in the future, just as he has replaced many facilities including lavish palaces after DESERT STORM. But we have diminished his ability to threaten his neighbors with both conventional and non-conventional weapons.

In closing, I want to again call attention to the superior performance of both the United States and British forces. This action demonstrates the quality of the men and women we have in the

military. They are well trained. They are well equipped. They are well led and we owe them a great deal of gratitude.

Mr. Chairman?

General Shelton: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

As the Secretary noted, we are very pleased with the results of the operation thus far. In the primary areas of concern, facilities that support Saddam's weapons of mass destruction capabilities, his command and control, and the security forces associated with these weapons, we have had significant success in our air strikes. However, it does appear that we've got to do a better job of translating the arcane science of battle damage assessment into plain English, so that you can all relay the information more effectively to the public. So the burden is on us. The burden is to make a complex subject more understandable.

On the plus side, as you will see in just a few minutes when Admiral Wilson briefs, I believe the numbers themselves are clearer today because we've had additional time to conduct our assessments. Let me take just a moment here to give you a flavor of what we call battle damage assessment. This first photograph is of the electronics plant. Here you can see three different impacts. The one on the left, our analysts assess as moderately damaged. The one here on the bottom, we assessed as destroyed, and I think you can see why. Basically it's been rubble. The last one, on the upper right, you can see the crater near the corner of this building...our analysts assessed this impact as having produced light damage.

But to put this in perspective, I'll show you some other facilities where we saw explosions outside of buildings that were much smaller than the explosions caused by this weapon.

I'm sure you recognize these as our two embassies—the one in Tanzania and the one in Kenya. As you can see when you have a chance to get a different angle or a ground view, your sense of damage can be quite different.

Our analysts classified this damage as light to moderate when all they had was overhead imagery to go by.

Again, here's the Taji missile repair facility. It contains a series of buildings, but we only went after selected targets within the compound based on intelligence as to which ones had elements that were critical to the process.

This one was assessed as moderate damage, as was this one. This one was assessed as severe damage, and so on.

My point is, none of these buildings within this compound were assessed as destroyed, not even one. Our analysts are appropriately very conservative in their initial assessments, as I think you would agree in this particular facility. But in my view, this facility will not be useable for Saddam's efforts to maintain or improve his missile capabilities in the years ahead.

I'd also like to point out, as you can see, many of the buildings in this facility appear to be undamaged, and the reason for that is because they were not targeted. We only went after specific buildings within the compound. Again, ones that were related to our mission objectives. I'll leave the rest of the details to Admiral Wilson. To sum up, I am very pleased with the results of our strikes. The plan is being executed with precision and success. Before

we take your questions, let me update you for just a second on the status of our operation right now.

As you know, U.S. and British forces are again striking targets in Iraq, as we speak. To update last night's actions, all of our pilots and our air crews returned safely from yesterday's air strikes. We conducted approximately 150 combat and combat support sorties last night over Iraq, as well as some additional Tomahawk and air-launched cruise missile attacks.

While the Iraqis have not aggressively employed their substantial surface-to-air missile systems, we have encountered heavy anti-aircraft fire.

Finally, I'd like to say again, that we can all be proud of the way our men and women in uniform have carried out their assigned mission. They are superb professionals, as are those that are right now in the Crisis Response Force that are starting to deploy, even as the holidays approach. And I might add, as are all the members of our armed forces. My thanks go out to them and their families. Thank you. Q: General, can I ask, you told us before that I believe 70 targets had been hit. How many targets have now been hit? And Mr. Secretary, are we nearing the end of these raids? General Shelton: We're up in the 90s right now in targets, number of targets struck.

Q: And Mr. Secretary, are we drawing close to the end of this? Secretary Cohen: The operation is going to continue until the President decides that it has been completed, so it's still underway. Q: It would be very helpful, certainly to me and maybe some of my colleagues and it might ease some of this confusion if you could give us, and you did in a sense, gave us the number of missiles, in that they were more than were fired during the Persian Gulf War, but if you can give us a percentage as it's analyzed, of the successful strikes. And also the percentage of the manned air crews with the smart bombs, dumb bombs, versus a percentage, so we can get a batting average here of how well we're really doing.

I mean this is helpful, but it doesn't tell us the full story. General Shelton: All of that will come out as part of the post analysis that we're doing. Right now I know the numbers of missiles fired I know the numbers of sorties, but in terms of specific ones that have gone against each target, that will require a lot more detail than I can give you right now, and we will provide that later on. Q: Can you give us then, sir, if you would, the number of missiles to date including last night's raid, that have been fired? We understand that missiles were fired both from, as you say, aircraft and ships. Do they include the new carrier battle group that's in the Persian Gulf? General Shelton: The new carrier battle group in the Persian Gulf is zone capable. It's combat ready. It's perfectly capable of participating in the strike, but because it's an ongoing operation, I will not comment on whether or not it has been employed as of this point. In terms of the exact numbers of missiles, as I've said, once the operation has been... we've achieved our objectives, then we'll share that information.

Q: A ball park, sir, if you would. Just ball park. Are we talking 300 versus 100 air-launched the other day? Is that figure acceptable to you? Three hundred plus TLAMS plus 100 plus CALCMs?

General Shelton: Let's say you're in the ball park. Q: Was there any specific item that has been targeted in this operation that you believe has stopped Saddam Hussein from actually attacking his neighbors? Was he very close to using these unmanned vehicles supposedly to spew some chemical weaponry anywhere? Secretary Cohen: That's always been one of our concerns. To

the extent that he would have so-called UAVs or take aircraft that could be loaded with a chemical and then launched on an unmanned basis into one of his neighboring countries has always been a concern to us. Q: But was he very close to doing that? How far along in development was he?

Secretary Cohen: That's an intelligence matter. We were concerned about it.

Q: Can you tell us, are you doing any restrikes?

General Shelton: Yes, we have done some restrikes. Q: Secretary Cohen, there are reports from the Middle East saying that the UK and the U.S. are very close to the cessation of the bombing. Have you achieved your objective from this bombing? Are you stopping soon? Secretary Cohen: As I think I indicated, the mission is ongoing and it will stop when the President orders it to stop.

Q:...that you have achieved your objectives?

Secretary Cohen: We will continue to apprise the President on a regular basis where we are in carrying out the mission. Q:...broadcast that they will not have the weapons inspectors back, that this military action has moved the situation on. So what is your reaction to their declaration?

Secretary Cohen: The one thing that was left out of their equation is that the sanctions will remain in place. They will remain in place until such time as Iraq agrees to fully comply with the Security Council resolutions. So that will require inspectors to return and to complete their job. Otherwise the sanctions have to remain in place. Q: Secretary Cohen, you seem to be a bit on the defensive today about the portrayal of the results of the bombing campaign so far. Are you presenting a more rosy picture today because in order to call a halt to the campaign you have to be able to say you met your objectives? Secretary Cohen: Not at all, Jamie. What we have always been concerned about is that our objectives be realistic, and that our success be as direct and open as possible. No exaggerations. By the same token, we don't want to see any understatement of what we've been able to achieve. Some have characterized moderate damage as somehow being less than successful.

What we've tried to point out is, when we make these preliminary assessments, what looks either to be light or moderate, cannot be calibrated in terms of a normal understanding. It can be and will be shown, I believe, to be much more severe.

The reason I mentioned the Oklahoma City bombing was that the satellite photography initially said that was moderate. That building was functionally destroyed. When we look at these types of targets and you see a hole in the roof, that doesn't necessarily describe what has taken place under that roof.

So we will have refinements of the collection of the photographs coming in the next few days and perhaps even few weeks. It will become clearer. What we do not want to have is a misperception that somehow this has been understated or overstated. We want to give as direct and as accurate a portrayal as possible.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you said we have diminished his ability to threaten his neighbors. That was always the stated goal. Is there a target document or something somewhere which says we must diminish it by such and such a percent, or by so many years of retarding...

Secretary Cohen: We don't talk in terms of percentage or years. We look at the targets that those facilities, that compose, and do pose, a threat to the region. We act accordingly. But we don't do it in terms of...

Q:...vague formulation and deliberately thrown in... I'm not asking you to get more specific, but is there somewhere an understanding of what these vague terms mean operationally? To diminish, to degrade. What does this mean?

Secretary Cohen: As I indicated yesterday, this is a very large country with facilities spread throughout a country the size of the State of California. We have selected those targets which pose the greatest risk to the region, both from a chemical and biological and, indeed, even potentially nuclear capability, and the means to deliver them. We believe that we have inflicted substantial damage upon his capability to do so.

Q: Mr. Secretary, can you give us an assessment of the damage to the security forces, particularly as regards their ability to conceal weapons of mass destruction and protect Saddam Hussein himself? Secretary Cohen: I think it's too early for us to make that assessment.

We don't have sufficient information at this time.

Q: Mr. Secretary, what...

Q:...southern Iraq...

Q: Once the airstrikes end, Mr. Secretary, the inevitable question will arise, what next? You, the President, and today Prime Minister Tony Blair talked about this policy of containment. Just how do you envision this policy of containment being enforced, and to what extent will that involve the U.S. military?

Secretary Cohen: The policy of containment will continue the same way it has continued in the past. The policy of containment has been successful. He has been contained from moving in the north or the south.

He has been contained in terms of rebuilding his military capability to the best that we can determine, to the level it was prior to the Persian Gulf War.

What we intend to do is to make sure that that containment policy stays in place and that he comply with those Security Council resolutions. We will keep our forces in place as they've been in place for a number of years now. We will be at the ready should he try to reconstitute those facilities or pose a threat to the region. We'll be prepared to act again in the future.

Q:...without inspectors inside Iraq, will the U.S. military role be increased? Will additional forces or activity on the part of the U.S. military be required?

Secretary Cohen: We will have sufficient forces in place to take whatever action will be necessary.

Q: Mr. Secretary, you offered one qualitative measure, one on the missile R&D program. Do you have any other qualitative measures from this campaign, how far you've pushed back him rebuilding command and control, air defense, chem/bio production? Any other qualitative measures?

Secretary Cohen: I think it's too early to tell at this point. We've tried to show through some of these photographs the facilities that have been substantially diminished and degraded and in some cases destroyed in order to indicate that it may take a year or longer to rebuild them. That would pertain also to his missile production facility and several others.

Q: Is what we've achieved here, with all due respect, simply halting Saddam for a year?

Secretary Cohen: A year or more[is what]it would take to rebuild any of these facilities. And I wouldn't want to minimize the impact of the containment policy. It will be much more difficult for him with the containment policy still in place to rebuild any sooner, and it may take him much longer.

Q: Mr. Secretary, are you even going after his chem and bio research, development and production facilities? The industrial base you talk about, you've still got the delivery means... You talked about sustaining, for mainly delivery means. Are you going after the R&D and the manufacturing...

Secretary Cohen: I thought we'd indicated consistently in the past that it's very difficult to try to target biological facilities, manufacturing facilities, since it could take place in a room the size of this one right here under the roof of any building. What we have tried to focus upon are the means to deliver them to the extent that we have specific information on facilities that are dedicated solely to that objective. We tried to take that into account. Q: UNSCOM did destroy those which were, did destroy the facilities which were solely dedicated to the military effort, but they chose not to destroy those buildings which had a civilian purpose, as statuary medicines, a pharmaceutical plant, a brewery, and so on, on the grounds that they were dual purpose. Why are you destroying them? Secretary Cohen: I don't believe UNSCOM ever took the position that they destroyed all of the facilities that were capable of manufacturing chemical weapons.

Q: The ones that were dedicated solely to the manufacture of chemical weapons.

Secretary Cohen: I don't even believe they were in a position to make that determination in a country the size of Iraq. You may be right on that; I don't believe that to be the case.

Q: My question is, are you going after dual purpose facilities which could be converted to the manufacture of chemical or biological weapons?

If not, why not?

Secretary Cohen: I indicated yesterday that we did not target those facilities that are dual use capable because of the concern that we have for the amount of damage to innocent civilians.

Q: Mr. Secretary if you target them at night, why would they have anybody there?

Secretary Cohen: People don't have to be in the facility in order to do damage to the area itself. We took that into account. We were not going to engage in acts which could result in many, many deaths to innocent people.

Q:...Republican Guard...

Q: There are reports coming out of southern Iraq of uprisings, disturbances, roads being blocked, possible Shiite uprisings down there, possible involvement of military forces down there. Can you tell us what you know about that?

Secretary Cohen: I don't have any information to that effect.

Q: General?

General Shelton: I don't have any additional information. I've heard only what I've seen in the press.

Q: The Commander in Chief has...

Q: Can you characterize the degree of success and the focus perhaps in the third night of strikes on the Republican Guard? Secretary Cohen: We have targeted the facilities that are either occupied or utilized by the Republican Guard forces. We'll have to make an assessment after this campaign is over to determine the extent of damage.

Q: Is it substantial...

Secretary Cohen: You're going to get a briefing on this. If you look at some of the facilities, you'll see it's substantial.

Q: The Commander in Chief has been impeached. How does, what's your reaction to that? I understand you're going to be over at the White House a little bit later. What's your feeling?

Secretary Cohen: Well, he's the Commander in Chief, and we're going to continue to act accordingly. We're going to carry out this mission and he is going to make the determination as to when it's complete, and he will continue to function as Commander in Chief. Q: What do you make of the lack of Iraqi military response so far? Secretary Cohen: We can't make any characterization of it. They may be pursuing a policy of just riding it out and hoping that they can change public opinion. But I would point out that many countries have expressed not only the support for the United States and Great Britain having to carry this out, but have placed the blame squarely upon the shoulders of Saddam Hussein. President Chirac spoke on this issue yesterday, indicating that Saddam Hussein has brought this upon himself. Q: Mr. Secretary, yesterday you used the word satisfied, which is not a particularly strong word, maybe not in line with some of the... Secretary Cohen: The Chairman said "pleased". (Laughter)

Q: Would you like to change your characterization? Secretary Cohen: By saying that I am satisfied we have carried out a sound military operation, I think that would indicate the degree of, I don't want to use the word pleasure. This is not a pleasant affair at all. This is very serious business. So when I say satisfied, I think they have achieved the goals that have been set out for them. I am satisfied that we have the finest military in the world. I'm satisfied they've done a very professional job. And I think it's important not to engage in words that might be misinterpreted. I think satisfied reflects...

Q: Do you have any plans to use ground troops? And if you don't, what are the circumstances which, if you try to use them? Secretary Cohen: I'll let the Chairman comment on that. General Shelton: We, of course, have ground troops as a part of this operation. They're on the ground in Kuwait right now, designed to help defend our GCC partners, specifically Kuwait, a threat against Kuwait. That's as far as I'll go with that. We in fact have them on the ground, they're in place, they're prepared.

Q:...civilian...

Q: You said that the object of these raids is not to destabilize, not to destabilize Saddam Hussein's regime, and yet these strikes against the Republican Guard are likely to result in that. Do you still say it's not an object of the raids, and do you expect or hope that it will destabilize?

Secretary Cohen: I've indicated the goal was to degrade his military capacity or capability of threatening his neighbors conventionally or with weapons of mass destruction. To the extent that we attack those forces who are in charge and help him either conceal, move, transport, and maintain these weapons of mass destruction programs, and that can have the consequence of degrading his forces and his stability, but our objective is to go after the capability itself. That could be the consequence.

Q: Do you expect that it will do that?

Secretary Cohen: That remains to be seen.

Q: Mr. Secretary...

Q: So why is it not your objective? Why is it not your objective?

Q: Will we see you tomorrow, Mr. Secretary?

Admiral Wilson: Good afternoon, again.

I'm going to show a little more gun camera footage, once again from the F-14s and F-18s off of the ENTERPRISE. I'll probably just start off by saying these also are in southern Iraq, but yesterday they were down in the Basrah area. We have one here from Al Kut, and another from An Nasiriyah.

After that I'm going to talk a little bit more about battle damage assessment and how we do it and talk just a little bit [about] the Chairman's pictures. Then we'll show a few more as well as some more numbers from updates from yesterday.

So without further ado, let's roll the camera footage.

Q: Which night is this?

Admiral Wilson: I think this was on night two. This is Al Kut. F-14 GBU-12 laser guided 1000 pound bombs against the barracks and brigade headquarters of Republican Guard units in the Al Kut area. Second view.

Q: Those are the same barracks?

Admiral Wilson: Multiple aim points in the same barracks, that's correct.

Q: Two?

Admiral Wilson: Probably more. We just showed two here. This is An Nasiriyah, a military cable repeater station, which is an important part of the integrated air defense and command and control network.

This is an F/A-18 also firing a GBU-12.

Q: How many of these targets were struck in the Persian Gulf War? Are these...

Admiral Wilson: We certainly struck the same areas and some of the same facilities and kinds of facilities during the Persian Gulf War. In some cases we would have facilities that are repaired, some new facilities, and things like that. I really haven't gone back and examined the entire target base now compared to what it was during the Gulf War. Q: How many Republican Guard facilities have you hit overall? Admiral Wilson: They're on one of these charts, and we'll come up with them here in just a second.

You can also probably tell by the different size charts that we're stretching out our ability to...

Q: Colors. (Laughter)

Admiral Wilson: We wanted to try and color code them for you so you can see the more important severe and moderate damage. But the SAMs and integrated air defense system battle damage assessment continues. Once again, I really would like to strongly emphasize that these are supporting targets. There really is no long term need to hit SAMs or integrated air defense for the sake of hitting integrated air defense systems. These systems are important to suppress, degrade, or in some cases destroy to support the strike. We have a lot of assessment ongoing. These are mobile targets. They get up and move sometimes every 12-24 hours. It's a little bit of a pea in the shell game. But the main thing about the SAMs and integrated air defense system is that to date, fortunately, and gladly, we have been able to fly in the system and not been successfully engaged by any of the Iraq air defense systems.

Q: Any painting...

Admiral Wilson: We've had some radar emissions, but no reports of significant lockups or engagements that cause great concern. Q: Have there been any HARM shoots against any Iraqi... Admiral Wilson: I've not been briefed of any HARM shoots. I don't want to say there hasn't been any. I'm not aware of any.

Q: But no SAM launches?

Admiral Wilson: I don't think there have been any strategic SAM launches, SA-2s or SA-3s or SA-6s. I feel relatively certain that there have been what we call manned portable air defense systems, MANPAD launches, and perhaps some smaller mobile tactical SAMs, particularly in some of these areas in close to key targets where they have a concentration of air defense.

You saw on television all the air defense systems, and the AAA, and I think it's more than likely that there were SAMs launched in those areas.

Q: Can you quantify that at all? A few? A lot?

Admiral Wilson: There was a lot of AAA for sure. I don't have a number. I cannot quantify the number of possible SAM launches. In fact it's really my assessment and my educated guess that that's occurred. I can't actually say for sure that it has.

Q: But no aircraft has been hit?

Admiral Wilson: No aircraft has been hit to my knowledge...

Q: By AAA or...

Admiral Wilson: By anything that I know of.

Q: None lost for sure, right?

Admiral Wilson: As of the time I came down here none were lost, and we certainly hope to stay that way.

Q: Iraq has been claiming that cruises have been shot down. Is there any evidence of that?

Admiral Wilson: No evidence of that.

Let me finish this briefing and then we'll get into questions, okay?

Thanks very much.

Command and control. We have updated this number here. You see additional command and control facilities were attacked. We have done a very good job against this target set and you can see it's been significantly impacted.

Secretary Cohen indicated what those were. Leadership, command and control locations, military command and control, the intelligence services, and some of the propaganda and transmitting facilities.

Next slide, please.

This was a target that was hit very heavily on the first night, as you recall, the WMD security. We have continued the battle damage assessment work which is even now still in what I would call preliminary stages. Because, frankly, the operation is not even over, and we're still doing battle damage assessment.

You can see we have gotten more information on these targets and upgraded in some cases the level of damage to moderate or severe, depending upon the kind of information that we got. It says assessment in progress, that's because maybe some of these have finished phase one or even into phase two BDA. It hardly ever finishes, because we go back for weeks and months in a third phase assessment to try to get all the details about weapons impacts, locations, performance, things like that.

Q: Are you talking about the Republican Guard? Admiral Wilson: These are more the Special Republican Guards, the Director of General Security, the Special Security organization. Those are the kind of targets. Certainly the Republican Guards can be involved in that, but it's the SRG which we believe certainly is more involved in that mission of thwarting UNSCOM.

Q: Any casualty estimates yet for the Special Republican Guard? Admiral Wilson: I don't have any casualty estimates at this point in terms of personnel casualties.

This is the target set which is obviously important. I had very little battle damage assessment to report on the WMD industry and production facilities yesterday. We're still early in phase one. We continue to make the assessments. But I think you'll see by some imagery we'll show you now and probably later today or tomorrow or this week, that we've had some very significant successes, particularly, as Secretary Cohen indicated, against the missile systems and the R&D systems that will support the delivery of weapons of mass destruction in the future. The future programs.

Next slide, please.

Republican Guard data to date—nine RGFC facilities have been hit. Actually it is really the Republican Guard. I don't think we've actually hit regular army facilities. These are primarily

going after corps and divisional headquarters as well as some of the barracks areas. I'll show you some imagery on that in just a few minutes.

Most of them are down in the south.

Airfields. We hit a total of six airfields concentrating as I said yesterday on the helicopters, attack helicopters and the UAV program. We have had very good success on these. We've destroyed hangars where the maintenance and even conversion of these assets can happen.

The helicopters disbursed on the first night. We located those again, flew additional TLAMs in last night and destroyed additional attack helicopters up in the area of K-2, it's an Iraqi helicopter base up near Tikrit.

Q: Is that a restrike?

Admiral Wilson: That was a restrike. Actually it wasn't really a restrike, it was a withhold and then strike where you know there are targets. This is a good example of trying to use the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance resources to be very proactive and provide timely support for the strike operations. Finally, we did have this one economic target, the POL facility down at Basrah. We still haven't gotten real good imagery of it. The damage assessment is light. We've been through that physical damage bit just a little bit, but we targeted some bundles of piping and we're continuing the assessments of that particular target.

Q: Can you respond to a question the regime, the military units not obeying orders...

Admiral Wilson: I have seen none.

Q: Can you define...

Admiral Wilson: Let me go on, and I want to do a little bit more on this battle damage assessment business.

I've been doing this a long time, about 30 years in naval and joint intelligence. I've seen a lot of strikes carried out over the years. We've gotten certainly more precision in our inventory. We do a lot of very detailed work by doctrine and by tactics, techniques and procedures in this battle damage assessment. We are still in phase one, which is physical damage assessments, which you can observe through imagery or visual observations. We go into phase two in which we try to get more information, different sources to confirm, different look angles to see if things appear differently on the next day with different light conditions. So this is a very deliberate process. We certainly don't want to fool ourselves about how much damage we've done, so we're conservative. Then we usually learn more in phase two. Sometimes the damage assessments get worse. Most often with precision ordnance we find they get better as indicated in the briefing this morning.

Phase three, functional damage assessments, are something that take longer because we really are trying to make a detailed estimate about the function of a system or a facility or something larger than just a single aim point.

This is the picture the Chairman showed you. Generally speaking when a quarter of a building, 25 percent of a building is destroyed or damaged, we call that moderate damage, 15-45 percent. Less than 15 percent is light damage. Zero, of course, is if you miss it. Then it goes on up to

severe damage, 45-75. And essentially destroyed is when more than 75 percent of the building is essentially damaged. In this case, this is severe bordering on destroyed. Essentially half of this building here was dropped, and probably the other half is not functionally useable because of the fragmentation damage and things like that.

In this case, 25 percent of this building is destroyed. Certainly further into the building, or farther into the building I should say, we would have a lot more damage. Then the Chairman already talked about how things look differently from overhead versus if you're standing in the crater and looking into the building.

The other thing we'll need to do, and this is the Al Karamah electronics plant. It supports Iraq's ballistic missile program, the short range, but also a lot of technology which is applicable to a long range program in the future. We will ultimately do a functional damage assessment of this facility, and then a functional damage assessment of the overall impact on ballistic missile development. We're not at that point yet.

Q: How long will it be before that's done?

Admiral Wilson: Probably weeks. Days to weeks certainly. I also would make the point as the Chairman did, we don't aim at every building in a facility. These weapons are very precise, and they're also relatively expensive. We try to make every one of them count, so we aim for key parts of the facility that we think are the most important to break the production link or the R&D link or whatever, and that's what we've done here. I won't go into a lot of detail about exactly which those are.

Q: Admiral, a two-part question if I may, please. First, have you determined that he has any operational SCUDs and have you tried to take them out?

Secondly, what do you use for your imagery? We assume satellites, but are you using U-2s and other types of recce aircraft including low flying recce aircraft?

Admiral Wilson: We're using all sources of imagery. This is what we call imagery derived product here. Both U-2s, tactical recce, I'm sure in the south where we're flying. Those are all sources. We have always believed that he may have a few SCUDs hidden. We have seen no indication of him trying to use them. We certainly would try to take them out if he did.

This is the picture of the Taji missile repair facility. The Chairman obviously did a splendid job of describing the functional kill here. This is a repair facility for SA-2s, SA-3s, the radars that support those missile systems, and has a lot of the technology which is applicable to a ballistic missile program, and we believe it will be a long time before the Taji repair facility is operational again, if they choose to rebuild it, even though we probably have no building which meets the destroyed description in terms of physical damage assessment.

Next chart.

This is an interesting photo for a couple of reasons. This is probably the first damage done by B-1s in a combat situation against a Republican Guard barracks in the Al Kut area. These were not precision guided ordnance. It was the old way, although it's hard to beat a lot of bombs, sometimes. This pilot walked a stick of bombs across this barracks facility in the, I think it's the Al Nidah Division, but I need to check for sure on that.

Interesting because you can get the four physical damage descriptions on the same photograph. Light damage to this barracks here, at least from the top. We don't see the structure collapsed

or falling down or any of those kinds of things. This is moderate damage on this one right here. The end of it is pretty well destroyed. Frankly, I would probably kick that up into the severe. This is certainly severe, a bomb hit right in it and cut the barracks building in half. This one here is completely destroyed.

Which brings me to another point. We assess that the overall damage to this particular section of barracks is severe damage, but I really don't think they're very usable right now for housing or troop support.

Q: Were they manned at the time?

Admiral Wilson: We don't know for sure.

Q:...surprise in this particular hit?

Admiral Wilson: I think this strike was conducted about as quickly as could be ever done in the scenarios we've faced in Iraq in the last few years.

Q: Was this the first night?

Admiral Wilson: That was not the first night.

Q:...the first night then, is that correct?

Admiral Wilson: I said that was not the first night.

Q: What bombs were the B-1s dropping?

Admiral Wilson: I don't know for sure.

Q: Five hundred pounds?

Admiral Wilson: Five hundred pound bombs...

Q: Were they used...

Admiral Wilson: I don't know how many.

Q: Were they used again last night? They were used the night before... Admiral Wilson: I'm also, at this point I would like to stay away from operational matters. I'm the J-2 doing a lot of intelligence work, doing a lot of battle damage assessment. I want to leave the operational details for the J-3 to discuss because he really does have the detailed knowledge about those.

Q: How many troops are normally in those barracks? Admiral Wilson: I think it's around 80 per building? Forty to 60 per building.

Q: How many buildings there?

Admiral Wilson: There were probably a dozen or more there. Then there are other parts of the facility.

Q: How big is the area?

Admiral Wilson: I don't have the answer to that question right now, and I'm ready to move on to the Secretariat here. This is downtown Baghdad. This is an example of precision strike, and hopefully some precision intelligence. We believe that this section of the building housed an important command and control capability, and we were concerned about collateral damage over here—a girls school. This building was attacked in downtown Baghdad by Tomahawk

land attack missiles. You can see they impacted at these three points here in the wing that we targeted of this building. Did what is described as moderate damage. May in fact, when we get done, be severe. But it is a good example of both the precision that we use in trying to target these facilities as well as the care that we go in trying to prevent collateral damage.

Next chart, please.

Q: What is that building? What does Secretariat presidential mean? Admiral Wilson: It's like the working office of the leadership in the regime. One of their working offices.

Q: Was there any collateral damage?

Admiral Wilson: I don't know of any collateral damage. We didn't see any collateral damage in the imagery analysis.

Q: When was...

Admiral Wilson: That was hit on night one.

The final photograph I have today is another of the WMD targets that was successfully struck. This is a graphite building here and a final assembly building, I think. Right, Steve? This supports the liquid engine production for their ballistic missile program, both the short range systems and potentially for the future.

We targeted these two buildings and another test launch stand which is off of this frame of imagery. It was also destroyed. These two buildings are certainly considered to be at least severely, moderately to severely, damaged in terms of a physical damage description, but I believe that they're, in terms of functionality, they're not capable of performing their mission.

Q: Where is that?

Admiral Wilson: That is in—They're all pretty much in central Iraq.

Q: Which missiles?

Admiral Wilson: That was a TLAM target. That's at a facility called Al Rafah, Iraq. It is right in, southwest, or south of Baghdad, just south of Baghdad. It's an industrial complex.

Q: Does he use liquid engines for his newer type SCUDs and longer range?

Or is he still using solids?

Admiral Wilson: Certainly SCUDs are a liquid engine. Most countries in the world which are developing SCUDs or SCUD-like technology including, for example, the Nodongs produced by North Korea, are liquid engine technology, and we think that is the part of his program, Saddam's, that was the furthest developed.

Q: Are you ready for questions?

Admiral Wilson: I'm done. (Laughter)

Q: What more today can you tell us about what American aircraft, where they're operating and what missions they're going... Admiral Wilson: I'd like to refer that to the J-3. Q: What signs do you have of movement by the Republican Guard? And specifically, by encouraging revolt, does that force Saddam Hussein to concentrate his forces and make them better targets for us? Admiral Wilson: For the most part, the movement by the Republican Guard appears to be defensive dispersal, first in garrison. Following that, out of garrison and even into urban areas.

Urban areas are a good spot to disperse because we certainly have collateral damage on our minds as we conduct strikes. We don't want to have collateral damage against Iraqi civilians. And it, of course, makes them more available to suppress any rebellions which could occur, although I don't have evidence that that is occurring.

Q: When you talk about missile production, you keep saying short range which are around, but potentially longer range.

Admiral Wilson: Right.

Q: Let's say these attacks weren't going on and they wanted to convert these to longer range missiles. How long would it take them to actually do that?

Admiral Wilson: It would probably be a couple of years that they would be able to move into a successful, longer range program, and the targets that we struck, we believe, will have delayed that progress by at least a year or more, based on the early assessments, and we will continue to make those functional battle damage assessments about that program. Q: ...prolonged the couple of years that it would have taken them anyway.

Admiral Wilson: At least a year.

Q: Regarding the numbers that you went through earlier and the way that they changed, to give an example, the SAM sites. Yesterday there were eight that were undamaged, today there were zero. Did those numbers change because of restrikes or because of reanalysis of the results of the strikes?

Admiral Wilson: Some of both. You saw some more totals on there. So it's some of both. And trying to balance the checkbook—exactly how many of which, I really don't know.

Q: Yesterday I think there was a sheet specifically relating to weapons of mass destruction sites. Was there no—when you were doing the presentation did I miss something or...

Admiral Wilson: The categories were the same, with weapons of mass destruction/industry and weapons of mass destruction/security.

Q: Did the Russian military go on alert as reported yesterday? Strategic Rocket Forces? Any indications...

Admiral Wilson: I don't have any indications about that, no. Q: Were they doing any long range rocket work at this facility? Or to the best of your knowledge were they doing work there that they were allowed to do under the Gulf War cease-fire accord? And this was purely preemptive?

Admiral Wilson: I believe the answer is both. They were doing work on a short range system and they had designs to develop the R&D and the capability to rapidly produce good long range missiles in the future. So in that case it was somewhat preemptive.

Q: Having designs is one thing and doing it is something else. Admiral Wilson: And doing the computer modeling, the electronics development, the liquid engine propulsion development and refinement, the bending of the steel and metal—I believe the techniques and the capability to make longer range missiles and to improve their skills in that regard was clearly underway in these facilities, yes.

Q: Another missile, maybe it was a different part of that same Taji missile facility, you have the fabrication thing, you have final assembly. You showed us a computer center that didn't look like it had been - it might have been hit a little bit, but not much. Did you go back and get that? Is that where they have supercomputers?

Admiral Wilson: I don't recall specific phase two work being done on that facility. I did have a picture of a facility called Ibn al Haytham, and we had two destroyed buildings that you'll recall on that, and another large building that was intact. We got another angle view of that yesterday in phase two that showed essentially the side blown out of that, the other side blown out that had been in shadows.

Q: Have you seen a quiet posture on the part of those forces that have been leafletted? Has that effort continued? And have they maintained a...

Admiral Wilson: We have not seen any aggressive behavior by the forces that were leafletted.

Q: Doesn't... Setting something back one year doesn't to me at least sound like a whole lot. Maybe that's because I have the wrong expectations. Is that sort of the best you could hope for in the total...

Admiral Wilson: I think that reflects our—this is—I would like to emphasize once again, we are in the preliminary stages of battle damage assessment. The operation is still ongoing. We haven't gotten deeply into functional assessments. But based on the trends of the analysis, the precision that we see, the targets that are being hit, we believe that we'll set back the future development by at least a year and probably more, and we need to do additional analysis before we discuss that further with you.

Thank you very much.

Press: Thank you, sir.

December 19, 1998 RADIO ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT TO THE NATION 10:06 A.M. EST THE WHITE HOUSE Office of the Press Secretary. The Oval Office 10:06 A.M. EST

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. As I speak to you America's men and women in uniform, and our British allies, are fighting for security, peace and freedom in the Persian Gulf. They're doing an outstanding job, showing bravery and skill, making our country proud. Our thoughts and prayers are with them. Putting our troops in harm's way is the hardest decision any President faces. I believe our action in Iraq clearly is in America's interest. Never again can we allow Saddam Hussein to develop nuclear weapons, poison gas, biological weapons, or missiles to deliver them. He has used such terrible weapons before against soldiers, against his neighbors, against civilians. And if left unchecked, he'll use them again.

For seven and a half years, United Nations weapons inspectors did a truly remarkable job in forcing Saddam to disclose and destroy weapons he insisted he did not have. But over the past year Saddam repeatedly has blocked their efforts. Each time with intensive diplomacy backed by the threat of force, we compelled him to back down.

Last month, when he agreed to fully cooperate, I cancelled an American military action. But I, along with Prime Minister Tony Blair of Great Britain, made it absolutely clear that if he did not fully cooperate we would have no choice but to act without further negotiation or warning.

For three weeks, the U.N. inspectors tested Saddam's commitment. He failed the test, hindering and preventing inspections, withholding and destroying documents. As their Chairman concluded, the inspectors can no longer do their vital job. Under these circumstances, had we failed to respond it would have given Saddam a green light to rebuild his arsenal and threaten his neighbors.

I acted quickly because, as my military advisors stressed, the longer we waited, the more time Saddam would have to disperse his forces and protect his arsenal. Our mission is clear: to degrade Saddam's capacity to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction, and threaten the region. Based on reports from the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the CIA Director, I believe the mission is going well. Now, where do we go from here? Our long-term strategy is clear. First, we stand ready to use force again if Saddam takes threatening action such as seeking to reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction, menacing his neighbors or his own Kurdish citizens, or challenging allied aircraft.

Second, so long as Iraq fails to live up to its obligations, we'll work with the international community to keep the sanctions in place. They have cost Saddam more than \$120 billion—resources he would have devoted to rebuilding his weaponry. At the same time, we will continue to support the ongoing program to provide humanitarian supplies to the people of Iraq, so that Saddam uses his oil to buy food and medicine, not tanks and missiles. Finally, we'll strengthen our engagement with Iraqis who want a new government, one that will respect its citizens and live in peace with its neighbors. We must not harbor illusions, however, that change will come easily or quickly. But we should go forward, and we will, with determination, working with opposition groups, strengthening the global consensus for bringing Iraq a government worthy of its people.

As our forces carry out their missions, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines, in the Gulf and all around the world, who work every day to

defend our freedom, promote stability and democracy, and bring hope. To those forces now engaged in the battle against Saddam Hussein, you have our appreciation for your courage, and our nation's hopes for your safe and successful return.

To all those in our Armed Forces who will spend this holiday season away from home, away from your loved ones, we thank you for your service. You are helping to insure a just and peaceful world.

As we enter the season of peace, we remain ever-hopeful that, one day, all nations and all communities will actually live in peace, with tolerance, respect, and civility. There can be no greater gift for our children.

Thanks for listening.

END

10:11 A.M. EST

7:00 AM EST DECEMBER 19, 1998 VIDEOTAPED REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT TO THE ARAB WORLD Cabinet Room, The White House

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you for this opportunity to address America's friends throughout the Arab and the entire Islamic world. I want to explain why we have taken military action against Saddam Hussein, and why we believe this action is in the interests of the Iraqi people and all the people of the Middle East.

Saddam has ruled through a reign of terror against his own people and disregard for the peace of the region. His war against Iran cost at least half a million lives over 10 years. He gassed Kurdish civilians in Northern Iraq. In 1990, his troops invaded Kuwait, executing those who resisted, looting the country, spilling tens of millions of gallons of oil into the Gulf, firing missiles at Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Israel and Qatar. He massacred thousands of his own people in an uprising in 1991. As a condition for the Gulf War cease-fire, Iraq agreed to disclose and to destroy its weapons of mass destruction, and to demonstrate its willingness to live at peace with its neighbors. Iraq could have ended economic sanctions and isolation long ago by meeting these simple obligations. Instead, it has spent nearly eight years defying them. Saddam has failed to disclose information about his weapons arsenal. He has threatened his neighbors and refused to account for hundreds of Kuwaitis still missing from 1991.

Each time Saddam has provoked a crisis, we've tried hard to find a peaceful solution, consulting our friends in the Arab world and working through the United Nations. A month ago, we joined the other 14 members of the U.N. Security Council in demanding that Saddam come into compliance immediately. We supported what Iraq said it wanted—a comprehensive review of its compliance after it resumed full cooperation with the U.N. weapons inspectors. And we were gratified when eight Arab nations—Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Oman—warned that Iraq would bear the blame—

Iraq alone would bear the blame for the consequences of defying the UN. Now, I canceled a military strike when, at the last moment, Saddam promised to cooperate unconditionally with the inspectors. But this month, he broke his promises—again, and again defied the U.N. So we had to act. Saddam simply must not be allowed to threaten his neighbors or the world with nuclear arms, poison gas or biological weapons.

America understands that Saddam's first victims are his own people. That is why we exempted food and medicine when sanctions were imposed on Iraq. That is why, since 1991, we have offered to allow Iraq to sell its oil and use the proceeds to pay for humanitarian supplies. For five years, Saddam rejected that offer while building lavish palaces for himself and diverting resources to his military.

Finally, in 1996, Saddam allowed the oil-for-food program to take effect. Since then, the U.N. has delivered nearly \$3 billion worth of food and medicine to the Iraqi people every year. Without the watchful eye of the U.N., we would soon see the oil-for-food program become oil for tanks, leading to less food for the Iraqi people and more danger for Iraq's neighbors. No decision to use force is easy, especially at a time when I'm working so hard to build peace in the Middle East and to strengthen our own relations with the Arab world. My visit to Gaza last week reflected my deep commitment to the peace process. I will never forget the warm welcome I received from the Palestinian people, eager to shape their own future at last. Let me also state my deep respect for the holy month of Ramadan. In the days ahead, I hope all

Muslims will consider America's sincere desire to work with all people in the Middle East to build peace. We have the most profound admiration for Islam. Our dispute is with a leader who threatens Muslims and non-Muslims alike.

As the crescent moon rises, and the ninth month begins,

Muslim-Americans—and all Americans—wish you the blessings of faith and friendship. May our prayers for a better world soon be answered. Ramadan Kareem.

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR TONY BLAIR, DOWNING STREET, LONDON, SATURDAY 19 DECEMBER 1998

The latest wave of air strikes on Iraq has just ended. The final wave of British Tornados returned just before 2200 GMT. All British and American crews have returned safely. We salute them and thank them for their courage. As ever we can be immensely proud of our servicemen and women.

For obvious reasons until this moment we have been unable to tell you the anticipated length of the campaign but I can say now that it was always envisaged it would last four days. That is both because such a campaign is the right and proportionate response to Saddam's breach of UN obligations and also because of our sensitivity to the holy month of Ramadan.

I will be holding a press conference tomorrow morning at 1100 . There we will give initial details of battle damage assessment and an outline of our forward strategy, including the diplomatic moves with our partners.

Tonight I can only tell you that our objectives have been achieved. We set out to diminish and degrade Saddam's military capability and we have done so. Substantial damage has been inflicted upon his air defence systems, the command and control system for his armed forces, missile production capability and the systems which could be used for chemical and biological warfare. In addition, there has been real damage done to the special Republican Guard organisation, the elite of his armed forces, heavily involved in the weapons of mass destruction programme. We have attacked targets with the greatest precision to minimise civilian casualties to the greatest extent possible. We regret deeply any loss of civilian life there has been. Tonight, significant parts of Saddam's military infrastructure are in ruins. His ability to threaten his region has been diminished. His ability to develop weapons of mass destruction has been substantially diminished too. What is more, he has now received the clearest possible signal of our intent to take action by force should he once again act in defiance of his international obligations in the face of an international community united in its determination to contain the threat which he poses. He should be in no doubt that we remain ready to act again.

As long as Saddam stays, the threat, and our readiness to confront it, stays. And once again I say to the Iraqi people: our quarrel is not and never has been with you. We have a common enemy in Saddam. But whilst he remains in power, we will remain determined to prevent him abusing that power and putting at risk the stability of his region and the world.

For the moment we can be satisfied with a job well done, proud of the forces who did what was asked of them and proud of the part that this country played in reducing the risk that Saddam poses, thereby making that region, and therefore the world, a safer place.

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright Interview on CNN's "Early Edition" Washington, D.C., December 18, 1998. As released by the Office of the Spokesman. U.S. Department of State

QUESTION: Let's go to our top story, the situation in Iraq. Right now, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has been quite busy of late; she is now in the center of all this. She joins us now from the State Department this morning to give us an idea of what's going on right now. We thank you for joining us, Madame Secretary. Can you tell us more about what we heard this morning about the US closing some 40 embassies in Africa as well as Kuwait and Israel. What is it that you're doing this for?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, there are some specific security threats to a variety of embassies. We're taking precautions. And then, of course, there is the general problem of the war—of what's going on with Iraq. But we are obviously taking every precaution in what is a dangerous situation in the world now with terrorism.

QUESTION: Well, while they have not closed their embassy, the Russians, we understand now, have called back home their ambassadors to the US and to Great Britain. What do you make of this? They're saying that what's happening right now in Iraq could ruin US-Russian relations. Is this a very serious issue to you at all or what?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think it's unfortunate that they have done that; we regret it. We are not recalling our ambassador. We obviously disagree about the use of force in Iraq, but we have a very important relationship with the Russians. We will continue to manage that relationship. We will cooperate where we can and manage our differences. I think that Iraq is just one aspect of this.

QUESTION: Then why is it happening, then?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that the Russians—they have a different view about use of force. They wanted diplomacy, but the truth is that they had no ideas. They worked very hard on trying to persuade Saddam Hussein to comply; they failed. We all decided and President Clinton felt very strongly that it was in our national security interest to deal with the threat that Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction—their future capability of threatening us, the neighbors, the regional stability with them, and that we had a responsibility, as the United States, to deal with a threat of this kind.

QUESTION: You said they have no ideas. Does the US or anyone else have any idea what is supposed to happen after the bombing is over? We know the bombing cannot possibly be the end-all, be-all here in your strategy. What happens next?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, it is possible still for Saddam Hussein, after this strike, to let UNSCOM—a real, hard-working UNSCOM with professionals—go in and have unfettered access to the various sites; to turn over documents; to let them do their work. Then we would go to this comprehensive review. We were always willing, if they cooperated with UNSCOM, the UN inspectors, to go to a comprehensive review.

I, frankly, am amazed that Saddam Hussein did not take that opportunity.

He had a chance to get out of his box and he blew it.

QUESTION: But, see, doesn't that put you right back where you started at the very beginning of all this? You're in another situation then, if you get to that point, where there is no end in sight. That is the reason the Iraqis are saying they've been acting the way they have been acting.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, let me just say this—obviously, our policy is to try to contain Saddam Hussein and the threat of the weapons of mass destruction. But we also believe that the Iraqi people need a government that is more representative of them, and we are talking about regime change and working with a variety of opposition groups to try for them to help themselves to have a government that is representative and that would abide by Security Council.

QUESTION: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, we thank you very much for your time. This is going to be, no doubt, a busy day for you. Thank you very much; take care.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Thank you.

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright Interview on NBC's "Today Show" December 18, 1998, Washington, D.C. As released by the Office of the Spokesman, U.S. Department of State

MS. COURIC: Joining us now is US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright. Madame Secretary, good morning; thanks very much for joining us.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Good morning, Katie.

MS. COURIC: How successful would you say the campaign has been so far?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think it's up to the Pentagon to really make that assessment. You've seen some of the photographs of what has happened. They are going to be assessing further. I think that the military campaign is on track.

The purpose of it, Katie, is to degrade Saddam Hussein's ability to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction and to degrade his ability to threaten his neighbors. The targets are related to that. They're going after weapons of mass destruction facilities, after military facilities, command and control security. It's very carefully targeted to carry out the purpose of the mission.

This is because Saddam Hussein has insisted that he wants to keep his weapons of mass destruction and have sanctions lifted—a clearly incompatible position.

MS. COURIC: Does this mean, Madame Secretary, the whole UN weapons inspection process is a thing of the past? And won't we have to—or won't the United States and Britain and perhaps other countries have to go in again and again to try to perpetually thwart Saddam Hussein?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, no, we think that it is possible for UNSCOM to go back in after this if Saddam Hussein would comply. The problem was that UNSCOM, the UN inspectors, had really not been able to do their job for the last eight months. They have been, really, stopped in every possible way. Chairman Butler has made clear in his report that the helicopters were interfered with, photography was impaired. So we think that a really functional UNSCOM, a strong UNSCOM with professionals, could go in after this, and Saddam Hussein can comply and then we can go to the comprehensive review.

MS. COURIC: Meanwhile, Tass reported this morning that Russian defense forces were on a heightened state of alert. Have you heard that; are you aware of that?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, we've heard that they're moving around, and it is unclear to us as to the purpose.

MS. COURIC: You're apparently paying a fairly steep price for not notifying the Russians prior to the strike. As you've heard, Russia has recalled its ambassador from Washington for the first time since the end of the Cold War. How concerned are you, and how much trouble is the US-Russian relationship in?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that clearly the Russians disagree with us about the use of force in Iraq. They, however, had no good ideas about how to solve the problem.

But the US-Russia relationship is a very important one. We have many, many relations. I think here the truth is, Katie, that we will disagree with them when we must and cooperate where we can. But I think that the overall relationship is a very important one for both countries.

MS. COURIC: Will the US be recalling its ambassador from Moscow? What kind of steps are you going to take, Madame Secretary, to fix this growing problem?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think it's unfortunate that they recalled their ambassador. We're not planning to recall ours. We think it's very important to keep the channels of communication open. I will be talking to Foreign Minister Ivanov again later today. I think that it is important for us to understand that this relationship is more than about Iraq.

MS. COURIC: Meanwhile, retired General Norman Schwarzkopf said on this program yesterday, Madame Secretary, that he thinks that Russia, China and France are partly responsible for what Saddam Hussein has done; that they've caused a lot of problems within the Security Council regarding Iraq, and they stand to gain financially when Iraq is able to start pumping oil again. What's your reaction to those comments?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that clearly every country has a different approach towards Iraq, and there have been those who have said that a lot of this has been done for commercial reasons. But I think that ultimately we have, in the Security Council, throughout the years that we've been talking about this, we have had disagreements about how to deal with Saddam. But in the end, the sanctions have always remained on; and I think that we have done very well in keeping the unity of the Council together. We all think that Saddam Hussein should not have weapons of mass destruction.

MS. COURIC: How long do you think this mission will go on; through the weekend?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, this is up to the military to decide; and it is a campaign that has to accomplish a certain amount of things.

MS. COURIC: But are you concerned about Ramadan?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, we're very sensitive about Ramadan, which is a great explanation for why the attack took place when it did; because the President was concerned about the sensitivities of the holiest month of the Muslim year.

MS. COURIC: Meanwhile, the Commander in Chief of this mission may be impeached by the US Congress today or tomorrow. So what message do you think this sends to the troops in the field?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think that the American people support this whole campaign against Iraq; that is very clear. The Congress made also very clear that they support our troops. It is our job to make sure the national security of the United States is protected. I think the troops know that. The other countries respect the authority of the United States.

MS. COURIC: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, again, thanks so much.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Thank you.

DoD News Briefing Friday, December 18, 1998 Presenter: Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen Subject: Operation DESERT FOX [Also participating in the briefing was Gen. Hugh Shelton, U.S. Army, Chairman, JCS; Vice Adm. Scott A. Fry, J-3, and Rear Adm. Thomas R. Wilson, J-2]

Secretary Cohen: Good afternoon.

In a moment Vice Admiral Fry and Rear Admiral Wilson are going to brief you on some of the aspects of our ongoing operation against Iraq, but before they do I'd like to report that the United States and British forces are continuing to attack a wide range of military targets in order to decrease Iraq's ability to threaten its neighbors.

We continue to be satisfied with the results, although the strikes are not yet complete. There have been no American or British casualties. Every military operation obviously poses risks, and this one is no exception, but we are taking every precaution to protect our personnel. This is one of the reasons we're sending additional personnel to the Gulf. I'm very, very proud of the job our combined forces are doing.

Mr. Chairman?

Gen. Shelton: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I'll be brief so that the Secretary and I can take your questions. And as the Secretary mentioned, the new Director of Operations, Adm. Fry, and our Director of Intelligence, Adm. Tom Wilson, will give you some operational details in just a few moments, which I know all of you have been anxiously waiting for.

I am pleased to report, as Secretary Cohen noted, that once again our aircraft pilots and air crews have returned safely from the missions they conducted last night.

As you know, OPERATION DESERT FOX is a joint operation. It's under the command and control of Gen. Tony Zinni, our Commander in Chief of U.S. Central Command based in Tampa, Florida.

In contrast to the first night's actions, which involved primarily naval and Marine strike aircraft and ship-launched Tomahawks, yesterday's strikes were an outstanding example of joint and combined warfare with U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps aircraft joining our British counterparts in coordinated air strikes.

There were more than 200 strike and strike-support sorties flown last night, including the first combat operations of the B-1 bomber.

Most of you saw some large explosions around Baghdad yesterday, and many of you correctly surmised that those were caused by air-launched cruise missiles launched from B-52 aircraft. Navy ships also launched additional Tomahawk missiles at targets in Iraq.

Although I'll not get into the specific numbers and types of cruise missiles launched to date, I can tell you that the total number of air-launched and ship-launched cruise missiles for this operation thus far, now exceed the total number expended during all of OPERATION DESERT STORM.

I don't want to steal Adm. Fry's presentation, but I'll give you a preview of some of the battle damage assessment photos that he and Adm. Wilson will show you in a moment.

This particular photo is one from an air-launched cruise missile, -- correction, from a Tomahawk cruise missile launched from a ship. It is against a missile R&D. It was the fabrication building that is shown right here...you can see the dark area outlined, and the final assembly building, which used to stand right here. You can also see significant damage done to a building over in this area just outside the fabrication.

We, in fact, have had some very good success with our strikes, but not all of them have gone exactly as planned, and later this morning Adm. Wilson will show you some of the good and some that are not quite as good.

Finally, we have for you today some aircraft video of some of the first night's strikes. You may have already seen some of the video of the British Tornados in operation. This example that I'll show you now is from the first night, and it's a Navy F-14 Tomcat from the USS ENTERPRISE attacking a critical communications facility with two laser guided bombs.

(Video shown)

A critical communications facility...we'll get you the name and the exact location later.

I know you're anxious to get on with the rest of the operational briefing, now that I hopefully have whetted your appetite for what the results have been thus far so, I'll pause here and the Secretary and I will take your questions before we turn it over to Admirals Fry and Wilson.

Q: Mr. Secretary, can I ask, first of all, can I ask both you gentlemen, has the third round of strikes begun? Have bombing raids, today's bombing raids begun yet?

Also, Mr. Secretary, you said a wide range of military targets continue to be hit, and yet Tariq Aziz said on television today that number one, you had hit the oil refinery in Basrah, and number two, you had hit radio and television facilities. Is that true, and are those military targets?

Secretary Cohen: Radio and television facilities are indeed part of the command and control operations of Saddam Hussein and how he communicates to the Iraqi people as far as his propaganda is concerned, so those were indeed part of our target base.

With respect to the facility in Basrah, that is a very limited attack on a facility that provides for the illegal shipment of oil out of that facility. So that is one of the illegal shipments that he uses at that facility to produce oil in violation of the Security Council resolutions. So that has been in fact...

Q: Has the third round of raids begun? Have bombing raids begun today?

Secretary Cohen: I think I indicated we have ongoing operations.

Q: But Mr. Secretary, if you in fact strike radio and television facilities, doesn't that further serve to isolate Saddam Hussein, and doesn't that in fact serve to destabilize his regime? One thing you said was not a goal in these airstrikes.

Secretary Cohen: We are not seeking to destabilize his regime. We are seeking to prevent him from in any way compromising this operation and from communicating under these circumstances with his other forces that could pose a threat to our pilots that continue to conduct operations.

Q: Excuse me, if I could follow please...

Q: There's a rumor floating around that a ship has been attacked in the Gulf. The oil markets are sky rocketing because of that. Any truth to the rumors that a ship was attacked in the Gulf?

Secretary Cohen: I have no knowledge.

Q:...radio and television communications...

Q: If I could follow up?

Secretary Cohen: Sure.

Q: Radio and television communications, however, are not necessarily used to communicate with his military. He could use that to communicate with his own people. Doesn't that in fact isolate Saddam Hussein and stabilize his regime—whether that's your goal or not?

Secretary Cohen: Apparently he's still able to communicate to his people. If Tariq Aziz is on television communicating to his people, they're still able to communicate.

Q: About the air raids. We understand that the air activity in the south of Iraq where there's less defense, now after two days, and two and a half nights, is it possible that the air defenses around Baghdad have been reduced to the point that we can fly it?

And I would secondly then ask you, there's a lot of talk about this being over this weekend. Can you say anything about any time limits?

Secretary Cohen: I would have to answer negative to both questions. I wouldn't want to comment in terms of whether our ability to go into Baghdad or over Baghdad has been increased or diminished; and secondly, I won't comment on the length of the operation.

Q: Mr. Secretary, do you plan daylight raids at all? These have been night raids up to now.

Secretary Cohen: I'm not going to comment on that.

Q: Mr. Secretary, has the impeachment debate underway now affected your operations in any way, or has it affected morale in any way that you can determine?

Secretary Cohen: The Chairman can perhaps address this. I would have to speculate at this point that those people involved in this operation are focused on one thing and that's carrying out the mission. I believe they are intensely and intently focused upon their job. Whatever else is going on at this particular moment is probably of little concern to them until they carry out their mission.

I've indicated before—I've always believed it's best in a time such as this, when people's lives are at risk, that we have expressions of bipartisan support for our men and women in uniform. We've had that on the part of both the House and the Senate Members. What else is taking place I don't believe will be influencing the men and women as they carry out their tasks. But I think the Chairman is probably in a better position to comment.

Gen. Shelton: Mr. Secretary... I think he gave a great answer to you. I would only add to it that at this time we all fully know and understand who the Commander in Chief is. We are focused on the mission at hand. That goes from the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs right out to every man and woman that's in the Persian Gulf at this time, and those throughout our armed forces.

Q: Can you characterize the Iraqi military response? What are they doing or not doing? Any SAM firings? How much AAA? More or less than expected? Are they moving troops around?

General Shelton: As you've seen on television, there's been a tremendous amount of AAA. I am not aware of any SAM firings as of this time. The radars have been relatively quiet up to this point. Our aircraft have enjoyed great success.

Q: Can you tell us about...

Q: How close are you to accomplishing your goal ?

Q:...south of Iraq and who authorized it and what did it say?

General Shelton: The leaflets were in fact authorized here by the National Command Authority. It told those units that were down in the south to stay put, not to threaten their neighbors or threaten the forces, and that they would not be engaged.

Q: How close are you to realization of your goals of this mission and how soon might you wrap it up?

Secretary Cohen: We are not going to indicate what the timeframe of this operation is. We are proceeding according to our plan. It's going reasonably well. We're satisfied with the way in which it's being carried out and executed, and we will have to just take it day by day.

Q: So the leaflet did not try to incite them to leave their units, did not try to incite them to overthrow. It was just stay put and you won't be shot.

Gen. Shelton: We can give you a copy of them right after this, John. It basically said, stay where you are, stay put, do not threaten anyone, and you will not be hit.

Q: Saddam Hussein has talked about that the United States is a coward in terms of reaching out and touching Iraq with this technology. Can you talk about the type of warfare that's underway here, how different it is from what was in the Persian Gulf War?

The use of the B-1 bomber indicates that you've got manned aircraft going over Iraq—

Gen. Shelton: We have a substantial number of manned aircraft. At this time, as I indicated, we've conducted a very large number of air strikes. These are manned aircraft. These are American pilots and British pilots that are in harm's way. They have the appropriate support aircraft with them so that, to provide the maximum protection that we can. But if he wants to talk about a coward, I think probably, people that lie, I think probably, should look in the mirror.

Q: Can you comment...

Q:...strike for...

Secretary Cohen: Let me add one other thing to that. We go back to 1991; you may recall that Saddam Hussein said that was going to be "the mother of all wars". In a very short period of time when our forces were arrayed against his, it did not take long to show where the courage was. So I think for them, at this point, to accuse the United States of being cowards, is really quite an extraordinary...

Q:...said yesterday you'd hit 50 targets, I believe about 50 in the first round or raids. Can you tell us how many total you hit in the second round? Give us some quantitative idea of how many targets you've hit.

General Shelton: We're over 75 targets today, as I speak right now.

Q: Can you tell us what the B-1 mission was?

General Shelton: Not to get into the operational detail. It's an ongoing operation at this time, and I'd prefer not to discuss what it's done thus far or what the future plans are.

Q: General, if you want to reduce his ability to threaten his neighbors, why those forces in the south that are closest to his neighbors, why would you not want to engage them?

Gen. Shelton: Because at this time those are not the forces that we were most concerned about and we were applying our resources against others that we thought were a higher threat than those in the south.

Q: How many...

Q:...look at how many Iraqi...

General Shelton: We do not have a count right now, Jamie, on any casualties.

Q: On terms of the number of targets. You said 75 targets have been hit. What about the success rate of the missiles and bombs that are being fired?

Gen. Shelton: We'll show you some of the success rates today, or some of the successful missions that have been carried out today.

Q: There are reports the Russian military has gone on alert. What do you make about that? Is that accurate? Are you concerned about that?

Gen. Shelton: I saw an initial report through the press that that happened, and I saw another one that said they had not been, so I don't make very much of that at this time.

Q: General Shelton, you've used the word "degrade" to talk about the objective of this operation, but degrade is a relative term. Degrade to what? What's the picture you want to see when the dust finally settles, whenever it does?

Gen. Shelton: We said to degrade his ability to threaten his neighbors and to degrade his WMD capabilities which include delivery systems, his ability to manufacture long range missiles, his facilities that he could possibly use to weaponize chemicals, etc. Degrade means that we want to in whatever period of time we intend to use to carry out this operation, to bring down his capabilities as much as we possibly can. We realize that you can't destroy it in all cases, and certainly when you talk about the chemical and biological systems, you've got a lot of dual use facilities that range from things that manufacture legitimate medicines to milk to you name it—all types of hospitals. We obviously have not gone out to those types of facilities and...

Q: Do you have any definition of degrade?

Gen. Shelton: ...So you can't destroy it, but you can bring it down.

Q: To what level though, sir?

Gen. Shelton: To the level that... The level will be determined from what your start point is; we know what he had. I think you can see from the R&D facility he has, his ability now to conduct research and development for longer range missiles has been degraded. Has it been destroyed? He's got two plants over there that he could possibly use, so we haven't destroyed his total capability right now, but we certainly have reduced his assets.

Q:...various...

Q: Can the...

Q:...Iraq has been very adept at playing a shell game with their chemical and biological weapons. UNSCOM inspectors would show up at a building and find that everything had been moved. While our sophisticated weaponry is very good at striking buildings, are there any guarantees that what you intend to hit is inside? And do you have any indication that you're being successful at hitting not just buildings, but those things that actually contribute to the production and concealment or distribution of his chemical and biological weapons?

Secretary Cohen: The Chairman has already indicated that we have indeed targeted missile fabrication plants, facilities that make weapons. Those have been hit and those have been destroyed—in some cases a building completely wiped out; in other cases partially destroyed. Yes, we can target those facilities which can pose a threat to the region and have done so.

With respect to the other part of your question?

Q: The fact that every time UNSCOM would show up at a place, it had been moved.

Secretary Cohen: Well, they would move things, move them out, and also move them back. They will not have some of those facilities to move back into; if they have put things back in place they'll have been destroyed. There's no guarantee that you can hit those items which have been moved.

They will not have that facility to go back to.

General Shelton: If I can just add, one of the reasons that we revised our plan back on 15 November so that we could strike within 24 hours was to try to hold down on the amount of movement time allowed, so that in those suspected areas, we would achieve maximum effectiveness.

Thank you.

Press: Thank you very much, sir.

Admiral Wilson: I'm Admiral Wilson, the Director of Intelligence for the Joint Staff. This is Vice Admiral Fry, the Director for Operations. We'll give you a military briefing on the operation to date, how to concentrate on some of the target sets and the battle damage assessment to date, and Admiral Fry will discuss the operations which have been ongoing.

I'd like to start, first of all, so we can get the lights down, with some more gun camera film from the USS ENTERPRISE, a strike which occurred the first night against some of the integrated air defense systems and command and control systems in southern Iraq.

The first one is targeted at a reporting post. It's an early warning site which provides both radar and visual information. There are two GBU-24 laser guided bombs into that facility which is assessed as destroyed.

That's a second view.

Also at Ashueva, the naval missile storage facility where offensive cruise missiles are stored. Also an F-14 with GBU-24 laser guided bombs.

A second view of the same attack.

Q: What's the size of the warhead?

Admiral Wilson: Two thousand pound bomb.

The final one is a radio relay facility which is important for providing secure command and control communications from the south up to the capital and points further north.

This was attacked by a F/A-18 Hornet with a GBU-16 1,000 pound bomb, laser guided.

Q: Was there any AA facilities or any radar turned on or any defenses to any of these...

Admiral Wilson: There was no reported AAA against those particular missions.

Q: Can you give us the geographic name again for the radio relay site?

Admiral Wilson: Al Rumaylah.

Q: This is south of the no-fly zone south of Baghdad?

Admiral Wilson: The gun camera film was taken from targets that were in the southern no-fly zone, that's correct.

Q: I meant to say SAM. Any SAM...

Admiral Wilson: We have no reports of any SAM missile firings.

I'd like to go through this briefing, then turn it over to Admiral Fry, and then we prefer to take your questions at the end of the briefing.

This shows the target sets which have been selected for OPERATION DESERT FOX. I'll talk a bit about the purpose of targeting these particular installations and what we see in terms of the battle damage assessments to date.

I would like to emphasize that the operations are ongoing. We are very oriented in our assessment methodologies at looking at targets which are the targets for future strikes, and in particular looking at targets which threaten the air crews which are flying out of the Gulf and the neighboring states.

So we don't have all the assessments complete. It will be days or perhaps even weeks before we have a complete assessment, so what I am passing on is very preliminary data.

We had very robust efforts against the surface-to-air missiles systems and the integrated air defense systems that we call the military IADS in the southern part of Iraq. This was to create access for the aircraft flying north, and in fact to create access even for the cruise missiles so that we increase the probability of those reaching their targets as well.

Our assessment is that the southern Iraq air defense system has been degraded and has largely proven to be ineffective against the strikes which have been conducted to date. It is not completely destroyed. We're still very wary of the capability of the systems down there, especially the mobile surface-to-air missile systems. But we have not had SAMs fired at the aircraft to our knowledge. There hasn't been a lot of AAA fired as you've seen on television, and of course that's especially true in the area of Baghdad.

We're going after command and control targets. As indicated earlier, the radio and TV transmitters are part of that command and control set. They have been severely damaged. It's important not only to know that some of these transmitters are used to broadcast, but also to jam incoming radio and TV signals, for example, Voice of Iraq and things like that. So it is important to helping us get certain kinds of messages in as well, should we choose to do that.

We've also gone heavily after security headquarters, military intelligence, and command and control sites, as well as alternate command and control sites and leadership sites. They have been attacked and damaged, and as I said, the assessments are incomplete.

There's a very extensive security apparatus which Baghdad has used to try to protect its weapons of mass destruction program, to move these things, hide these things from UNSCOM, as you indicated earlier in this press conference. One of the goals was to degrade in particular the special Republican Guard which is integral to helping move those systems around and keep the Iraqi apparatus one step ahead of UNSCOM as they've tried to conduct, in particular, the interference of inspections which are so important to validating where they actually stand in their WMD development programs.

We've also hit a number of WMD industry, weapons of mass destruction industry and production programs, primarily oriented at the missile programs, the research and development capability that will allow Iraq to develop these systems for the future and to make and improve upon the systems that he currently has, especially to give them more accuracy, longer range, better electronics, and things like that.

We're targeting Republican Guard facilities, especially the division and corps headquarters. The Republican Guard is the element of the Iraqi armed forces that creates or presents the greatest threat to his neighbors, and is also important for the security operations around Baghdad and to go against, for example UNSCOM and help this hide mechanism.

Certain airfields have been attacked, primarily ones that have attack helicopters which he uses to go after the Kurdish and Shia minorities in the north and south respectively, and we've already discussed the single economic target that was attacked, which was the Basrah POL facility, which is important to his illegal export of gas and oil.

Q: What is POL? That's not a refinery.

Admiral Wilson: Petroleum oil lubricant. It is a refinery from which they put stuff out via the Shatt al Arab.

I'd like to go on and finish the briefing before we take your questions.

This just goes through the target sets to date. As I indicated, we still have a lot of assessment in progress. Some of the SAMs are very mobile, even the strategic SAMs have been relocated frequently, so we certainly have not hit all of them. We're assessing the damage. Some have been destroyed; there's been moderate damage and severe damage to others. As I've indicated or said earlier, the southern sector certainly has been degraded and we have created the access for the pilots flying to the north, and also in addition to the damage to the SA-2 and SA-3 sites, which I mentioned earlier, we did significant damage to a very large missile repair facility. It was hit by CALCMs from B-52s last night.

Q: Where was that?

Admiral Wilson: At Taji.

Eighteen command and control facilities have been hit to date, or have been attacked to date. You can see we are halfway through the assessment process. We mentioned earlier the radio and TV transmitters and jammers. Clearly we've gone after the security apparatus in Baghdad, the special security organization and intelligence facilities which conduct collection and repressive operations against the people, as well as cuing the SRG, the Special Republican

Guard about how they can avoid UNSCOM inspectors. And we believe we've had a fair degree of success; in fact, you saw the military intelligence headquarters yesterday.

Next chart.

We've attacked to date 19 weapons of mass destruction security details. These are largely the Special Republican Guard headquarters buildings and the barracks buildings for the various brigades and battalions. It's a 30,000 strong organization. They operate throughout the country. We've attacked primarily in the Baghdad and Tikrit areas.

Next chart please.

Eleven WMD industry and production facilities have been attacked. We have information on Al Kindi, Al Karama, and even Al Hatham. Moderate to light damage, but we did go after key aim points that we think were important to the long term research and development of the missile industry. We have a lot more assessment work to do on this particular target set. At this time we're concentrating on the military targets because of force protection.

Next slide.

Eight Republican Guard facilities have been hit. We've only assessed on four of them. You can see the damage reports. Imagery does confirm severe and moderate damage on both Republican Guard corps headquarters and a couple of division headquarters.

Next slide.

And we've attacked five airfields looking primarily to go after attack helos, helicopters, as well as the L-29 aircraft which we have reports are being converted to unmanned aerial vehicles that could potentially be used to conduct reconnaissance operations or even delivery of weapons of mass destruction.

Now I'd like to go into just a few of the images.

This is Al Sava airfield up north of Baghdad. It's an L-29 base. You can see the aircraft were disbursed away from the parking aprons. The maintenance hangars were targeted—very good precision ordnance delivery here. TLAMs through the roof of both of the hangars. Didn't collapse the buildings but we believe severely damaged or destroyed all the equipment that was inside.

Next chart please.

This is a Special Republican Guard barracks facility in the city of Tikrit in north central Iraq. You saw some other Special Republican Guard facilities yesterday. These are, as I said, very key elements that have been used to thwart UNSCOM and protect these weapons of mass destruction—hide them, move them, deny access to the records.

We attacked the headquarters building which is right here. There were four barracks buildings here, four barracks buildings right here. Most of those have been destroyed or damaged. One is left standing. Another barracks over here which was attacked by Tomahawk land attack missiles .

Q: How many were killed, if you know?

Admiral Wilson: We do not have casualty estimates or any precise casualty figures for any of the barracks or the headquarters elements that were attacked.

This is a before and after photograph of the Saddam International Military Barracks North which is in the Baghdad area. These are very similar to the ones I just showed you. Here is the headquarters building and some barracks buildings shown right here.

This shows where we had mixed success. This barracks was fairly well destroyed and damaged. The headquarters building, you can see the crater for the Tomahawk land attack missile right here, destroyed half the building.

We have another crater here which did not destroy this building, and all of the facilities which were targeted, for example, were not successfully targeted in this particular photograph.

Q: Where is that?

Admiral Wilson: This is in the Baghdad area.

Next chart.

Finally, I'd like to go into a little bit more detail on this Ibn al Haytham missile research and development center which General Shelton was discussing.

This is a facility which manufactures a shorter range and allowed ballistic missile, but all the technology which is in this facility is useful in developing the longer range versions that could be used to conduct longer range attacks against Saddam's neighbors.

These buildings right here were welding, final fabrication and important buildings for the manufacture of these weapons and the equipment, as well as the building right here which is associated with the missile development. You can see it has been fairly well destroyed, all three of these buildings, and damage to this one right here.

Q: Where is that again? Is that...

Admiral Wilson: It's north of Baghdad. We can get you maps of these facilities later.

Next chart, please.

Another blowup of the Ibn al Haytham missile R&D center. General Shelton mentioned this very large final assembly building here. It was a critical aim point, and essentially there's not much left standing. That entire building has been destroyed. As well, there was light damage to the computer center which they use for research, development, modeling, simulations, things like that.

Q:...did it take to take out that facility?

Admiral Wilson: We're not going to discuss aim points or the number of missiles that were used on these facilities.

Q: Do they have some supercomputers in the computer center there?

Admiral Wilson: I would like to now turn the briefing over to the J-3, Vice Admiral Fry, who will give the operational aspects. Thank you.

Admiral Fry: In the Chairman's remarks he introduced me as the new J-3. I'd like to underscore that. I've had the job for a week. (Laughter) Until a month ago I had command of the EISENHOWER battle group which was also in the Gulf last November.

As you know, there was a decision made earlier that we would have sufficient force in the theater to conduct significant strikes when required. On the first night of the operation that fell

to the ENTERPRISE battle group who remains in the theater with her Aegis destroyers and other escorts.

The CARL VINCENT battle group is closing on the Straits of Hormuz as we speak, and will begin her transit this evening. She is bringing two additional cruisers and more destroyers.

Additionally, we've begun to flow the maritime pre-positioned force, some units of that, towards the Gulf.

Air forces, as the Chairman said earlier, land-based air was integrated into the second night of strikes. U.S. Air Force aircraft already in the theater as well as our British allies. These are the kinds of CONUS crisis response forces that will begin flowing at the 48 hour point where we are right now. These begin to provide General Zinni with the additional capability to provide for the force protection of his force in the theater. It also provides added capability as we march down the road to achieving the military objectives.

I've just put up the kinds of capability that are moving in that direction, but those forces will begin loading today.

Next slide.

Q:... where?

Admiral Fry: At TRANSCOM bases throughout the country.

These are the ground forces that we've had in the theater and we will also start flowing headquarters, some more brigade elements into the theater as well as some combat search and rescue and more helicopter capability.

So as the 24 and 48 hour and 72 hour forces that have been on alert begin to flow, there will be a steady buildup of capability in the region for the CINC's effort.

With that...

Q: This will be for Admiral Wilson primarily.

You mentioned two things about the allied aircraft operations. You mentioned something about making a corridor that would be safe to get to Baghdad, I presume. And can you tell us when this might come to pass? Is this imminent? Have any fixed wing aircraft actually flown over Baghdad and some of the SAM facilities?

Admiral Wilson: Whether it's piloted or not piloted, we wanted to reduce the air defense capability in southern Iraq. That was essentially the gateway. So early in the campaign or the DESERT FOX operation, the surface-to-air missile systems and the integrated air defense command and control systems in the south—Basrah, An Nasiriyah, and places like that—were targeted. So it's to create access to points farther north, regardless of the kind of platforms we're sending in.

Q: But you can't say if fixed wing aircraft have been farther north into the Baghdad area?

Admiral Fry: As the operation continues, it's not appropriate for us to talk about what kinds of capability or what kinds of units are going to which targets.

Q: Admiral Fry, General Shelton said already more cruise missiles have been fired in this operation than during the Gulf War. Can you tell us how many were fired during the Gulf War, and give us a sense of how many have been fired?

Admiral Wilson: I'm not sure I can answer the question about how many were fired in the Gulf War. Do you know, Tom?

Admiral Fry: Several. (Laughter) Less than 300, I know that.

Q: Have more than 300 been fired now?

Admiral Wilson: No. Mr. McWethy said 289. (Laughter)

Q: You're saying now that more than 300 have been fired?

Admiral Wilson: I didn't say that. We said more than were fired, than during the Gulf War.

Q: A lot more or...

Q: Has there been anything in this military operation so far that has been a surprise to you? Or has everything unfolded according to plan?

Admiral Fry: The strikes have unfolded in the sequence that we planned them. I think if there is any surprise it's the complete lack of response.

Q: What had you expected?

Admiral Wilson: I don't think there have been really many surprises in this operation to date, although all military operations, both from the ops and intel perspective, we always have a fair number of things to adjust to. We need to be flexible, but no big surprises.

Q: Can you give us your assessment of the overall extent of damage inflicted so far on the targets you've selected?

Admiral Wilson: I think the boards we put up there spoke for themselves. I would like to emphasize, we are very very early in the overall assessment of these. When we do battle damage assessment we have three tiers or three phases—phase one, phase two, phase three. We are essentially in phase one on a relatively small percentage of the target set. So we have a lot more work to do, and it will be awhile before we determine the overall impact.

Q: Up until now how would you gauge the...

Admiral Wilson: I think the forces have carried out very accurate, for the most part accurate precision strikes against their designated targets. Once again, we have a lot of work to do.

Q: Over the last couple of years every time you've hit Iraq, Saddam simply rebuilds whatever capability you've destroyed, especially the integrated air defense.

In the targets that you've hit, can you identify anything where you feel this is it, he could not simply wait it out and come back in several years with a rebuilt capability?

Admiral Wilson: The integrated air defense system and the SAMs are what we would call supporting targets. They are necessary to suppress and degrade and to hit while you are going after other kinds of principle targets in the system. So we think we have degraded that system to support the strikes, and in the sense of, for example, the WMD, our goal is to degrade and delay the way he can develop those capabilities in the future. But as you saw we have had very little assessment to this point on that target set.

Q: The Iraqis say a hospital has been struck in Baghdad. Can you say anything about that?

Admiral Wilson: I have no knowledge of a hospital being struck.

Q: Admiral, Iraq also claims it shot down 77 U.S. cruise missiles. Do we put any...

Admiral Wilson: We have nothing that would confirm that. We don't have any indication that any have been shot down.

Q: Admiral Fry or Admiral Wilson, do you plan to use the B-2 out of CONUS in all this buildup?

Admiral Fry: It would be inappropriate for me to tell you which types of aircraft we intend to use at this point as the operation continues.

Q: The aircraft and the other assets that are deployed, we are told the B-2 was not deployed, would operate from its home bases here in CONUS and use aerial refueling if it's put into play, so there's a little bit of a gray area here as to whether or not the B-2 is going to be used.

Q: True or false on WMD. No actual stores of chemical or biological weapons have either been targeted or destroyed by this operation?

Admiral Wilson: I'm not going to talk about our entire targeting plans. We have targeted at least one chemical facility that has the potential for chemical weapons development in the future, and I will not go beyond that point in this particular target set.

Q: Could you talk a little bit about the ground forces that are in the region and what their activities have been, if any?

Admiral Wilson: The Iraqi army, --Iraq has a robust army. The ground forces that we are principally concerned about are the Republican Guards, and especially their armored and mechanized divisions. For the most part they have been disbursed; it's a disbursed force in a defensive position during the strikes themselves.

Q: Why do either of you gentlemen think the Iraqi armed forces have not responded?

Admiral Wilson: I think they're essentially trying to protect themselves right now and believe that's a better tactic than trying to go and fight against the attack.

Q: During the Persian Gulf War the Pentagon came under some criticism for presenting an unrealistic picture of success by only showing the successful application of smart weapons and not really giving a complete picture.

How complete a picture are we getting here today? Is there a difference because of the increase in the number of precision guided munitions that are used?

Admiral Wilson: I led off by trying to say, and I will reemphasize, it's a very incomplete picture. We are in the initial phases of battle damage assessment. We haven't even looked at all the targets. We are emphasizing the targets which we need to emphasize to provide protection for the striking force. We have had some success, and we have had some areas that were less than successful. So we need to make an assessment over time with all sources of information before we can gauge the total success of the OPERATION DESERT FOX.

Q: Have you used the GBU-28, the earth penetrator? The 5,000 pound bomb.

Admiral Fry: I don't know.

Q: Do you have plans now to deliver that now...

Admiral Fry: We have not; I don't think so.

Q: Can you talk about the overall degradation of communications, unit to unit, north to south, east to west? How taking out the TV transmitter on a different level affects the ability of this government to communicate with the different parts of the country?

Admiral Wilson: I'm not going to get into details about the overall communication systems, I think for obvious reasons. And if you take out the TV stations, clearly you degrade the ability to communicate. I also wanted to indicate, it's not the stations, it's the transmitters. Some of the ones that we took out were also used and can be used to jam incoming signals.

Q:...over the next 48 hours?

Q:...B-1 bomber in combat. I think we ought to talk about that before you sneak out of here.

What capability does that plane bring and why was it...

Admiral Fry: Well, it brings a large level of effort, capability to the fight. Lots of...

Q: How?

Admiral Fry: Lots of iron bombs, and it flew its first sortie last night. We haven't had the bomb damage assessment on it yet so I'm not sure that we can tell you...

Q: What type of munitions did it drop?

Q: Did it...

Q:...by the Iraqis?

Admiral Wilson: We have no information of Saddam using human shields during this particular operation.

Q: You've got troops that are leaving on the eve of Christmas. It sounds like you've got a range of units that are still deploying. Can you give us some sense here of where the operation is headed in terms of longer range? Not really specifically talking about Ramadan as a true or false marker.

Secretary Cohen has talked about being ready for the long term.

Admiral Fry: There are lots of ways to get to an answer on that. As we continue with the operation and as Tom has mentioned in more than one response, we are only in the initial stages of looking at the BDA. We need to gauge how we are moving towards accomplishing our goals with each of those target sets that Tom briefed you on and their contribution to the overall objective of degrading Iraq's ability to attack it's neighbors and deliver weapons of mass destruction.

We are flowing forces into the theater now to enhance our ability as far as force protection, and should Saddam Hussein lash out, either in a thrust south or in some other fashion, we need to have the forces there that can deal with that.

Q: Have you gone back and hit...

Q: Can I...

Q: Have you gone back and hit any targets?

Mr. Bacon: I'd just mention three things. One, we have copies of the pamphlets, or we're making them. They're in English. Obviously the ones that were dropped were in Arabic.

Two, we're leaving behind copies of the bomb damage assessment pictures so you can look at them or shoot them photographically.

Three, we are making small copies of the slides that Admiral Wilson used and you can get those—I'm not sure we have them yet, but you'll have them soon.

Q: Can we also get the Arabic version of the leaflets?

Mr. Bacon: We're working on that, yes.

Q: And the video?

Mr. Bacon: The video, we'll get that as well

DoD News Briefing Thursday, December 17, 1998 Presenter: Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen Subject: Operation DESERT FOX [Also participating in the briefing was Gen. Hugh Shelton, U.S. Army, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff]

Secretary Cohen: Good afternoon.

Our early assessment of the military action against Iraq shows that our forces are performing well. There have been no American casualties and we are achieving good coverage of our targets. As a result, we are advancing our goal of containing Saddam Hussein. We're diminishing his ability to attack his neighbors, either conventionally or with weapons of mass destruction. And since Iraq has now prevented the United Nations inspectors from doing their job, we have to resort to military action to continue to contain him.

Our targets include Iraq's air defense system, its command and control system, airfields and other military infrastructure and facilities.

One thing should be absolutely clear—we are concentrating on military targets. We are not attacking the people of Iraq and we have no desire to increase the suffering that Saddam Hussein has imposed on his people.

Before General Shelton brings you up to date on the operations, I want to stress that our military is performing extremely well, and every American should be proud of the troops who are participating in DESERT FOX. General Shelton: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Good afternoon.

I wanted to take a few minutes to give you a brief update today on our military operations thus far. I should warn you up front that there will not be the level of detail on either targets or the initial damage assessment that I know all of you would like to have. That kind of detailed assessment either simply isn't available, or in some cases would reveal too much about the ongoing operations.

That said, I can tell you that last night our operations were executed very well, very professionally, and we're thankful that all of our pilots and air crews returned safely.

As I said last night, we can all be extremely proud of the men and women of our armed forces on duty around the world, and particularly those in harm's way in the Persian Gulf. Last night's actions principally involved our naval forces in the Gulf with more than 70 Navy and Marine Corps and strike support aircraft from the USS ENTERPRISE; and well over 200 Tomahawk cruise missiles launched from Navy ships.

While I will not discuss any specific targets at this time, I can say that last night U.S. forces struck more than 50 separate targets, including attacks against targets outlined by Secretary Cohen which included weapons of mass destruction sites and WMD security sites and security forces, Saddam's integrated air defense and airfields and the command and control infrastructure that supports Saddam's military and his regime.

I have a couple of examples of damage that I can share with you at this time.

The first example is of the Baghdad Director of Military Intelligence Headquarters in Iraq. The way this is broken down, we have an area, one which shows the pre-strike photo. This happens to be "the" building right here, along with one of the ancillary buildings shown over in this area that was also targeted.

Down in this photo up here where you don't see anything but rubble is what formerly was this building. And where you see in this case this building right here, you'll notice down here there's nothing left but rubble.

Also we'll take a look at Baghdad's barracks—brigade and the Abu Ghurayb facilities which are part of the special guards, special security guards. Here are their barracks shown in this area, area one, before the strike; along with the headquarters area up in this area. You see over here that this headquarters is now rubble.

If you go from these barracks, the pre-strike to the post-strike, you'll see out of the five barracks, four of the five were destroyed.

We have a considerable amount of data coming back in. Much of it is as successful or more successful than this was. Some of it not quite as successful. But as you know, additional strike operations are underway even as we speak. While it would obviously not be appropriate to discuss ongoing operations, particularly in any detail, I can tell you that today's strikes will include land-based aircraft including the British Tornados, as well as additional Navy and Marine strike sorties from the deck of the USS ENTERPRISE.

To update you on the current status of our Crisis Response Force, the deployment of that, the USS CARL VINSON, the carrier battle group, will arrive in Central Command's area later today. Some of the ground and air forces based here in the United States will begin to arrive in the Gulf this weekend.

I know that you realize that the augmentation of our forces in the region would not be possible without the support of our Gulf partners, and we're grateful for their continued assistance and support in our efforts to reduce the threat that Saddam poses to the overall security of this vital region of the world.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to note the strong support from the British forces in the region. They are not only staunch allies, they are superb warriors.

Finally, I want to emphasize one point. It is inevitable that during conflict, that the focus will be on our weapons and their effectiveness. But we must not lose sight of the fact that it is our people that make the difference.

To underscore what Secretary Cohen said earlier, it is our superb soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines that make America the super power that it is. We owe our men and women in uniform carrying out this operation a great deal.

Now Secretary Cohen and I will be very happy to take your questions.

Q: General, in these two examples that you cite here, what were the particular objectives in attacking these two sites? And can you give us any kind of casualty estimates? After all, we see five of these barracks here that were partially if not totally destroyed.

General Shelton: First of all, Jim, to talk about the casualties, we do not have any casualty data yet based on the results of the strike. In terms of the two targets, the first one, the barracks area that belongs to the special Republican Guards, these are the units that, in fact, guard the WMD to help transport it. They're the ones that basically help move it. They deny UNSCOM access on occasion. This is part of the apparatus that Saddam uses to maintain control of his WMD facilities.

When we look at the military intelligence headquarters, these are the ones that in fact provide the advanced intelligence to the force as to where the UNSCOM teams were going. They were also used to help try to deny access by deceiving UNSCOM and moving UNSCOM in ways that, or providing information or lack of information that allows UNSCOM to do its job.

Q: A follow-up question, please ...

Q: Mr. Secretary ...

Q:... occupied at the time?

General Shelton: We have no way of knowing whether or not the barracks were occupied at the time. We hit the barracks, these particular barracks were sometime between 1:00 and 4:30 in the morning, a.m., Baghdad time. You would assume that with the advanced notice they got probably some of the troops had left the barracks. There may have been others inside.

Q:...the Iraqi air force? Any movement by Iraqi aircraft against ours?

General Shelton: To this point we have not seen any movement by the Iraqi aircraft.

Q: Mr. Secretary, the Iraqi Foreign Minister said today that Saddam's sister's home had been hit by a missile. I was wondering if U.S. forces are targeting Saddam's personal palaces? And was the strike on his sister's home intentional?

Secretary Cohen: The last time I checked, Saddam had something like 80 palaces. I don't know that any one is his residence, and frankly, I wouldn't get into a discussion of targets at this point.

We are targeting military or militarily related targets, period.

Q:... the Republican Guards in general, in addition to these ...

Secretary Cohen: We are going to hit those forces that deal with weapons of mass destruction, and also put him in a position to threaten his neighbors.

Q: Mr. Secretary, after you have destroyed many of these facilities and after you've gone after different military targets in Iraq, if Saddam Hussein does not yield in some way, what is the bottom line for the United States? Where do you go?

Secretary Cohen: As I indicated, we're going to continue to contain him. Containment has worked to this point. He has been unable to seriously reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction program and rebuild his military. He's been contained from going north, in the south as well. He has been in a box.

He's had two objectives for some time now. One objective is to get rid of the inspectors. The second objective is to get rid of the sanctions. He has felt all along that he could frustrate, deny, obstruct, in any way deprive the inspectors from carrying out their obligations, and also seek support in changing their effectiveness, either their professionalism or their leadership. Secondly, he is looking for "a comprehensive review that will lead to a lifting of the sanctions" so that he will have relief from both of the burdens that he currently is faced with.

We intend to keep the sanctions in place. We intend to keep our forces on the ready. In the event he seeks to reconstitute again or threaten his neighbors, we will be prepared to take military action once again. So we intend to continue the containment policy.

Q: To what extent are you targeting the ...

Q:... the alliance, Mr. Secretary? And to a degree he has been successful in that because many of our friends are now critical of what is taking place.

Secretary Cohen: And many of our friends are very supportive of what is taking place.

Q: Mr. Secretary, one of the problems that came to haunt the Pentagon in the wake of the Persian Gulf War was Khamisiyah. Have you had any evidence or any indication that in attempting to strike his WMD targets that there's been any release of any problematic chemicals or anything of that nature that might affect Iraq?

Secretary Cohen: The short answer is no. First of all ...

Q: How about a long answer?

Secretary Cohen: I'll give you a longer answer.

First of all, Saddam Hussein has claimed for eight years that he has no chemical weapons, that he has no biological agents. Only when confronted with facts as he retreated and admitted that he had been lying. So we don't take him at his word that he has none. If we did, we'd have no concern about striking any of the facilities for fear of releasing any sort of poisonous gasses.

Since we don't take him at his word, we try to be very careful and scrutinizing in terms of which facilities we would target with the idea that there might be some sort of poisonous gas that could be released threatening the lives of innocent people. We've been very scrupulous in looking at those targets and trying to minimize any possibility of that.

Q: As a follow-up ...

Secretary Cohen: We've had no such information that any kind of release of anything has taken place.

Q: Have you actually avoided then certain targets because you do believe that weapons are there? Or are you using types of arms that are able to

... Secretary Cohen: There are a number of facilities that could probably be characterized as dual use facilities. They may have civilian activities on certain floors and inappropriate activities on others. We have been careful in our targeting to try to limit it to military types of targets that would minimize the potential for harm to innocent civilians.

Q: Have you ...

Q:... military first ...

Q:... some targets off ...

Q: Mr. Secretary, a question. A lot of the organizations that are the center of the WMD program are essential to the security regime. If you attack them in the sustained way that you've described, you in fact destabilize the regime. Is that not the goal here?

Secretary Cohen: The goal is not to destabilize the regime. The goal, as I've indicated, is to decrease and diminish his capacity to threaten his neighbors and to either deliver weapons of mass destruction and hopefully be able to hit some of the facilities that would put him in a position to be making them.

We have no illusions of how difficult it is in terms of the biological certainly, or even indeed the chemical, but we intend to focus on the military aspects of his regime.

Q: Do you have any ...

Q: General Shelton, you indicated yesterday at the briefing that at the time that the last set of strikes were reported back in November, that you had anticipated then that mid-December was the likely time when there would be another crisis. Could you tell us in that case why you stopped so precipitously the buildup of aircraft at that time and brought them back home, including key aircraft like the F-117?

General Shelton: Well, as we've said all along, we have maintained a sufficient force in the Gulf to be able to respond on very short notice to many contingencies that Saddam might pose. As we started to flow back, just like we are this time now, having commenced the operation; once we realized that we were not going to go through with the operation we didn't need to build up the additional forces at the time because we had made the decision; the President had made the decision that we were not going to strike. So rather than build up we simply brought those back and have maintained the forces that we keep there all the time. All of the essence of which is they could strike within 24 hours as we've proven.

We then, of course, have a follow-on force that starts deployment almost immediately in order to provide General Zinni, the CINC, with additional flexibility in the region, and to be prepared to respond to any contingency that Saddam may pose.

Q: Even I understand that as a general proposition, but even critical assets like the F-117 which you always have held to be absolutely essential to taking out command and control and air defenses.

General Shelton: Based on the plans that we had available, we had sufficient and proper assets in the region to be able to launch the strike that we had in mind if we needed to do that.

To answer the question that was being asked back here in terms of how long have we known about, or how much time did we have to prepare, we basically, since the 15th of November, had been able to respond within 24 hours. We had about a 72 hour notice to make sure that all systems would be in place, and then the real requirement to be ready to respond was a 24 hour one since 15 November on.

Secretary Cohen: I'd like to answer just a part of the question that was asked about the F-117s and why the aircraft were left here.

You may recall, I have enormous respect for the Chairman and his ability to look into the future, but I don't think any of us can predict exactly which month or which day Saddam is going to put his finger in the eye of the UNSCOM inspectors or seek to bar them in such a brazen fashion that he did.

But nonetheless, the Chairman and I have also been concerned about an issue called readiness. We have been dealing for some time on how do we balance what we're doing, as far as our forces are concerned, the kind of pressure and stress that we're placing on them with so many deployments back and forth. We made a calculated decision that we would be in a position to move those forces quickly, if necessary, to reinforce whatever action would be taking place if the President made such a decision. So it was always a question of how to balance the composition of the force.

We in fact reconfigured it in a way that would allow us to take action very quickly, and then to be reinforced with these aircraft that are under heavy stress as far as their over-utilization. So ...

Q:... any attempt on Iraq's part to strike out at his neighbors? Have you seen any action taken towards Israel or Kuwait or anything of that sort?

Secretary Cohen: Not at this time.

Q: Mr. Secretary, what ...

Q:... American pilots ...

Q:... concerned about the increased threat of terrorism, and what precautions have you taken? And as a follow-up, could you answer Dana Priest's question when you're finished, because she can't shout over the crowd. (Laughter)

Secretary Cohen: That may be a new historic mark for CNN to yield to the Washington Post.

With respect to terrorism, the threat of terrorism has been with us for some time. It is increasing. As a result of Osama bin Laden and some of his associates, there have been plans that have been in the making on their part to attack U.S. facilities. We have been aware of these plans, we have tried to verify those plans, we have tried to assess their credibility, we follow it very, very closely.

It is our anticipation that attempts will be made, as attempts have been made in the past. We have been somewhat successful, quite successful, as a matter of fact, in frustrating several attempts during the course of this year to prevent bombings from taking place following those that occurred in East Africa.

But we understand the nature of the threat. We can take only so many precautions. Everyone is on alert. We are also prepared to deal with it in whatever fashion we can from a military point of view, but we should always be prepared that this could happen at any time. And the American people should understand this is not something that is related to what is going on in Iraq. This is something that has been in the planning for several years. It continues on a regular basis on their part, and we try to follow it as best we can.

Q: Can I have a follow-up on the Khamisiyah question? Are there sites that you know contain stockpiles of weapons, that you also know, if you hit them [they] can cause some plume problems and things like that, [and] that you have then taken [them] off your list of targets.

Secretary Cohen: Not to my knowledge. This would be something that UNSCOM would have more information about in terms of where they would look for certain types of either records or indeed any sort of substance. I am not personally aware of any such site that might contain this.

Q: General Shelton, the Pentagon said previously you had approximately 400, or slightly more than 400 naval cruise missiles in the region, and about 100 ALCMs. If that's true, you've used half of your naval cruise ... Are you moving more cruise missiles into the region? Or do you have an adequate stockpile?

General Shelton: We have a very adequate stockpile of cruise missiles in the Persian Gulf region. As you know in terms of the CALCMs, the CALCMs are very capable of being deployed from CONUS bases on very short order.

Q: General, when you considered how to respond to Saddam Hussein, which really amounts to using a lot of force to change one man's mind, did you look at any alternatives to the bombing that we've done so many times, and each time he defies us at a cost of several billion dollars?

For instance, would it make any sense to have a United Nations rifle company with stronger forces over the horizon escorting the inspectors? In other words, have you looked at any alternatives to this strategy which failed to change Churchill's mind; failed to change Ho Chi Minh's mind; and we keep doing it. Are there some options that you've explored other than this?

General Shelton: George, we have examined a number of options and continue to examine other options. But I think the truth is, what we have here is a Saddam Hussein who is intent on defying UNSCOM, intent on defying the international community, the United Nations, everyone, and continuing to develop and pursue his programs of weapons of mass destruction.

In looking at the other alternatives, there are very few that are really viable under the existing conditions other than the program that we've been pursuing for about eight years, and that is to have him come clean, get out from under the sanctions, and rejoin the international community, which would certainly be best for the Iraqi people.

Q: Hitting his Republican Guards, General, you are in fact reducing his power base. I would ask if there's any other plans you can tell us about that will continue to reduce the power base, destabilize Saddam Hussein? And isn't it our policy to get rid of Saddam Hussein? Isn't that at least our long range goal?

General Shelton: I will not discuss in any further detail the specific target set that we've got. It's an ongoing operation. We're only in day two right now. But what I would say is that we have a plan that we are pursuing right now. It is designed to accomplish the objectives that were outlined by Secretary Cohen to reduce his ability to threaten his neighbors, to degrade his WMD capability. Anything else that would influence, weaken his regime, would be value added.

Q: In this first round of strikes, did you hit the last known whereabouts of Saddam Hussein?
General Shelton: Jamie, we have not been tracking Saddam Hussein and Saddam Hussein was not an objective established for this operation.

Q: Mr. Secretary, yesterday in the briefing, when the question came up about Ramadan, the holy month in the Islamic calendar which is very close upon us now... this weekend, you were not quite emphatic about continuing the strikes during Ramadan. Is it based on your BDA? Have you seen the BDA... whether or not the strikes will continue? Or can you tell us unequivocally if you will stop before Ramadan, or continue on into Ramadan, if the strikes have not been successful the way you would like to have them?

Secretary Cohen: I thought I had engaged in Delphic ambiguity yesterday, and would perhaps like to do the same today. Namely, that we have begun this operation prior to Ramadan. Our goal is to complete it as soon as we can without restricting the military operation. We will take whatever time is necessary to carry out the operation. But we're sensitive to the Ramadan period, and that's all I care to say about it.

Q: Is UNSCOM dead, Mr. Secretary? And if it is, what's your long term strategy for keeping weapons of mass destruction out of Saddam Hussein's hands? Is it simply bomb and then wait and then bomb again?

Secretary Cohen: According to Mr. Butler, Saddam Hussein had effectively emasculated UNSCOM and that they were on the ground but not able to do their job.

It would be my hope, that following this operation, that Saddam Hussein would see the wisdom of finally complying by allowing UNSCOM to return and do its job. Failing that, we intend to maintain our forces as I've indicated. Failing that, we intend to continue the containment strategy. And should he either threaten his neighbors or try to reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction program, we are prepared to take action again.

Q: If he makes a promise to allow UNSCOM back in to do its job, isn't that just another promise? He's broken many in the past, has he not?

Secretary Cohen: One would hope that after this operation he and others would see the wisdom of fully complying. In the event he doesn't, he will continue to be contained. We have no intention of providing any relief from the sanctions until such time as full compliance ...

Q:... holiday season, and of course the families of the people involved in this are concerned about their safety. Could you outline some of the dangers that the people there might be facing? For instance, has Iraq made any threats against pilots? What are the dangers of the mobile air defense? Can you just outline some of the dangers that ...

Secretary Cohen: I'm going to let the Chairman do that, but let me just make one prior comment.

We have very brave men and women in all of our services and they risk their lives every single day in wartime or peacetime. They're out there practicing.

When I was there this past September, during the month of August the temperature on the ships was 160 degrees—combined humidity and heat. They nonetheless had 2,000 launches during the month of August. They are out there under very adverse conditions, training, getting their readiness at the highest possible rate every single day, and we lose people every single week virtually. So their lives are in danger just by virtue of the fact that they are the best fighting force in the world.

In addition to the kind of danger that they face on a daily basis, there are additional ones. Those pilots who are flying over Baghdad run the risk of being hit by surface-to-air-missiles; they run the risk of being captured. The people who are in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia, or wherever, run the risk that a SCUD missile might be fired, that they might be under that kind of attack. Those are the risks that they are under on a daily basis. And to the extent that there is an attack underway, that risk perhaps has been heightened.

We have taken every measure ...defensive measure that we can. They are prepared. And that's one of the risks of any operation. And when you make a determination that you're going to use force, you have to be prepared for any contingency.

General Shelton: I would only add one thing. I think Secretary Cohen gave a tremendous answer.

We also maintain 17,000 to 20,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines in the region daily, and they in fact, and have for about 20 years now ...they in fact, are subject to the threats posed by Saddam's weapons of mass destruction when he has them on a daily basis, as long as they're within range of the systems he has.

Q: General, in this operation have any of these pilots come under any direct threat? Have their planes been painted by acquisition radar? Any of these anti-aircraft missiles fired at our aircraft?

General Shelton: Jim, I'd prefer not to discuss the operational details on that right now or anything that might assist Saddam in this operation.

Q: Do you expect the VINSON to get into the battle when it arrives tomorrow or today, and do you expect the follow-on forces to join in the strike?

General Shelton: The Crisis Response Force that is en route, and as I said, the VINSON will arrive later today, are there to provide the CINC with additional flexibility. Whether or not we actually integrate those into the battle will depend on how the operation goes.

Q:... comment on how you feel about Senator Lott's statement that he couldn't support the military operation?

Secretary Cohen: I'm going up to see Senator Lott—the Chairman and I are going to give a briefing to the members of the Senate, and certainly we'll have an opportunity to discuss it at that time.

Senator Lott, like any other member, has to make a judgment based on his assessment of the situation. No one should try to second guess that.

What I indicated is, that I believe it's important for our troops that we have bipartisan support for the operation. I believe, following the meeting that the Chairman and I had for almost two hours last evening before a nearly full House, that at the end of that briefing, I would say the overwhelming majority of the members came to the conclusion that this mission was made on the merits. It was the right thing to do at the right time, and the President made the right decision. I think the overwhelming majority felt that following our briefing yesterday.

Q: Did you feel that by moving in quickly as you did, that you actually did catch some part of their operation by surprise, and therefore the strike was more effective?

Secretary Cohen: All of the intelligence that we had for this past several days ... all last week, would indicate that Saddam Hussein felt that notwithstanding the fact that he was frustrating and obfuscating and denying the UNSCOM inspectors their opportunity to conduct their business, that he felt that there was no chance that the United States would take any action, under the circumstances of the Ramadan period coming up, and the fact that he didn't think the United States would be in a position to take action. That's precisely one of the reasons why, since November 15th, we have put our forces in place in a way that would allow us to exercise maximum effectiveness with a minimum amount of notice should it become necessary to take action.

Q: General Shelton, are you ...

Q:... planning for this on Sunday?

Q:... ongoing right now?

General Shelton: Tony, I'd prefer not to discuss any additional operational details, to include the types of aircraft that are participating in the operation today. It's still ongoing.

Q: You said the British Tornados. You said land-based aircraft.

General Shelton: There will be land-based aircraft today. There will be Tornados. There will be sea-based aircraft. There will be all kinds of aircraft that will be in today's operations.

Q:... military planning started on Sunday?

Secretary Cohen: Our military planning started on November 15th in terms of being prepared to carry out an operation should it become necessary.

Q: How about the immediate preparations, though? It suggests that you were ready to go with this attack before the UNSCOM report was presented to the UN.

Secretary Cohen: We have always been prepared to go during the month of December, to take action. We were not going to take any action until such time as the report was filed, we knew what was said, and the President actually called for a strike. So there was no ...

Q:... put on notice that DESERT FOX was forthcoming?

Secretary Cohen: We did not have any final word on the Security Council report until it was either Monday or Tuesday, the very last moment.

Q: Is Saddam Hussein still alive...

Q: Mr. Secretary ...

Q:... Is he communicating with his troops?

Q:... f I understood General Shelton right, he said that they'd been on a 72 hour warning.

Secretary Cohen: That's right.

Q: Seventy-two hours, if my arithmetic holds up, gets us back to Sunday night for the warning. When did the warning order ...

General Shelton: We've had a 72 hour warning on our forces in the Gulf, prepared to execute, since back in the spring time frame. It's been a long time.

Q: So was there a warning ...

General Shelton: Effective 15 November, we upgraded where we could respond within 24 hours, if asked to do that.

Q: But was there another warning order given in the context of the last three or four days? If so, when was that warning order given? Not the execute order, but the warning order. In the context of that, if you could say when.

General Shelton: The 24 hour warning order? It's really not a warning order per se, but an execute order. Be prepared to execute within 24 hours was given 1700 hours, day before yesterday, which was 24 hours out from the time that the first missile would be down range, or on target.

Q: Is Saddam Hussein still alive? Is he able to communicate with his troops?

***Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright Press Remarks on Military Attack on Iraq
Washington, D.C., December 17, 1998 As released by the Office of the Spokesman U.S.
Department of State***

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Good afternoon. We have been very active in explaining our actions in Iraq and securing support around the world for the military campaign now underway. In the last 24 hours, our ambassadors around the world have personally engaged host governments in clarifying our reasons for resorting to military force. In Washington, we are briefing every foreign mission on the reasons we've undertaken this action. Since yesterday I have personally contacted over 20 foreign leaders and the Secretary General of the United Nations to discuss the situation. The response has been gratifying.

In my calls to the Arab leaders, I found a full understanding of why we have undertaken military action. Most expressed the view that Saddam Hussein is entirely responsible for the military strike now underway, due to his refusal to take advantage of the final chance offered him in November to begin full and unconditional cooperation with the United Nations weapons inspectors.

They also understand that we have given diplomacy every possible chance to work. They know we have resorted to this action because Saddam Hussein has left us no other choice. Like us, they are concerned for the welfare of the Iraqi people. They, too, strongly support the massive United Nations humanitarian program in Iraq, of which the United States was one of the chief authors. They know that we are exercising every effort to avoid civilian casualties in this operation. There have been a few critical public comments, but the reaction so far serves to underscore how isolated Saddam is in the Arab world.

Among our allies, we have been pleased by the strong expressions of support we have received from Canada and the EU, Japan, Korea, Australia and New Zealand. They point out that Saddam Hussein bears the responsibility for the military action now underway as a result of his defiance of the Security Council and his obstinate refusal to honor his obligations under binding Security Council resolutions.

Among members of the Security Council, we have encountered some expressions of regret that a peaceful solution couldn't be found, despite all our best efforts. There is also a general sense that the behavior of Saddam Hussein has brought us to this pass. This is the French position. The Russians and Chinese are critical, of course, but over the past year they have failed to provide any viable alternative.

Our efforts to build support for the joint US-UK action in Iraq will continue. But one thing is clear—the international community is firm in its determination that the way forward is for Iraq to comply fully with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. The actions of Saddam Hussein himself have led us to the point we are at today.

I'll now be happy to take your questions.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, does the lack of unanimity hurt the US cause in any measurable way? And I must say—these anonymous references—but I must say, comparisons are being made to the Gulf Coalition in '91 suggesting that the Bush Administration got more

Arabs onboard visibly and got the French onboard. That raises the question what looks like mostly an Anglo-American mission can be as successful?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, let me say, I do think we are being successful in terms of our goals here. But also—I think we've had this discussion before—the situation in '91 was quite different. What you had was a cross-border aggression and something that is very visible and aggression into an Arab country. Also, as you remember, it took a long time to put the coalition together.

One of the problems that we have had is that the sanctions regime has been in place a long time. As I've described to you a number of times, basically we have held onto the Security Council Coalition to keep the sanctions in place. As you know, there are these regular reviews; and while there's a lot of discussion during them, there never has been a decision to end the sanctions.

We are now dealing with a threat, I think, that is probably harder for some to understand because it is a threat of the future rather than a present threat or a present act, such as a border crossing, a border aggression. Here, as the President described in his statement yesterday, we are concerned about the threat posed by Saddam Hussein's ability to have, develop, deploy weapons of mass destruction and the threat that that poses to the neighbors, to the stability of the Middle East and, therefore, ultimately to ourselves. So it's the same country, but a different situation.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, looking down the road toward a possible end to this crisis, supposing Saddam Hussein does write another letter saying that he will agree to cooperate fully without exception, why would you believe him, given his track record?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, it would be hard to believe him, I must say. I think that, again, we would have to get proof of his cooperation. Let me say that this military campaign is going to continue. We are sensitive to the beginnings of Ramadan, but this campaign will continue to its completion. Saddam Hussein can, in fact, say that he will let UNSCOM back in—a functioning UNSCOM—and he can cooperate. Again, the proof will be as to whether he does cooperate with them. But we will not stand for an UNSCOM that is not fully capable of doing its work.

I think that one of the things we have to remember is that UNSCOM has not been able to do its work for the last eight months. So we would have to have an UNSCOM that is able to function under strong leadership.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, were you all surprised at the tone of the Russian remarks in the Security Council? They seemed much harsher than they have been for some time.

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I think I wasn't surprised because I've had a number of conversations with Foreign Minister Ivanov. I think that they have tried to find some way to persuade Saddam Hussein to live up to his obligations. The interesting part is they do not deny the fact that he has to live up to this obligations. They have, in the past, tried to persuade him and sent a variety of envoys and tried to make it work.

I would say that they're disappointed in the fact that they have not been able to make it work. They have no better solutions. While I regret their attack on Chairman Butler, it's like as I've said, they're trying to shoot the messenger here. The fault and the problem here is Saddam Hussein; there is no other problem here beyond the fact of Saddam Hussein's non-compliance.

The Russian relationship is one that we consider very important, and we will cooperate where we can on a whole host of issues, and we will manage our disagreements where we must. As I said, I had a number of conversations with Foreign Minister Ivanov yesterday. I haven't talked to him yet today, but I probably will. I think that they are very frustrated with the fact that they have been unable to persuade Saddam Hussein to live up to his obligations.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, I'm trying to understand the sort of larger strategy, because on the one hand we say we want Iraq to comply fully with all relevant UN resolutions, which would have to include UNSCOM, in order to get sanctions lifted. On the other hand, we say actually we want regime change, we want Saddam Hussein out—that's the real goal -- and we don't believe UNSCOM will ever be allowed back in in a functioning way. Can you try to square the circle for us, please?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, first of all, I think there are kind of longer, medium and shorter term goals here. Obviously, the short-term goal at the moment through this military campaign is to degrade his ability to develop and deploy his weapons of mass destruction, to degrade his command and control of some of his security areas in order to degrade his ability to threaten his neighbors. That is the short-term goal of what we are doing.

A medium-term goal is, in fact, to have him comply with the Security Council resolutions. And I believe that he can't have two contradictory things, which is to have sanctions lifted and retain his weapons of mass destruction. So the medium-term goal is to—he's the one who we can't square that circle. The only way here is for UNSCOM, a strong, professional, functioning UNSCOM with unfettered access to be able to continue to do its work; and, again—parenthesis here—just keep in mind that it has not been able to do that. So if we can get a functioning UNSCOM back in, that is a plus. We will continue our policy of containment of Saddam through the economic embargo and, generally, in terms of keeping him in his box.

Longer term, we have come to the determination that the Iraqi people would benefit if they had a government that really represented them. So we know that this is something that cannot be done overnight, and we are working with the various opposition groups on a longer range way of trying to help them help themselves to have a regime that represents them.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, some of us had a meeting with a Senator Biden this morning, and he was commenting on the fact that in all the years he's been in Washington, he couldn't remember a controversial foreign policy or national security action in which members of Congress sharply criticized the President, even on a decision they agreed with. There are plenty of occasions, such as the invasion of Cambodia, where they disagreed with the basic decision. What does that tell us now about the conduct of foreign policy?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I have spoken a lot about the importance of having bipartisan support for foreign policy and the fact that that is the best kind of foreign policy—when you're able to get that kind of support. The truth is there has been bipartisan support for this action.

There have been some very strong statements by Chairman Helms and Senator Lugar and Senator Hagel and Senator McCain—to mention a few -- and Senator Warner, some Republicans, some support on the House side. I spoke with Chairman Gilman; he said he was supportive. I saw Congressman Buyer last night on television saying that he was supportive.

So there has been bipartisan support. It is not complete support, obviously. I think that one would hope very much that there would be support for the President's action and for our troops. I think that is very important.

But I do believe that some of the kind of rules of the game that had existed for so long about criticism when the President's out of the country and various kinds of criticisms at the water's edge, I wish that those kind of came back into style.

QUESTION: (Inaudible) -- again Senator Biden this morning was saying he thought that really anybody would be better in the leadership position in Iraq than Saddam Hussein. Do you agree, and is this really the aim of US policy—just to replace him, to oust him?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, it's very hard to imagine anybody worse. I think that he is somebody who has no respect for his own people. There are not a lot of leaders in the world who have used chemical weapons against their own people. I will not make the obvious comparison. But I think that he is someone who has aggressive designs on his region and he is somebody who has total disregard for the will of the international community. So it's very hard to imagine somebody worse.

I do think that there are—there's been a lot of discussion about the Iraqi people and who cares about them and how they suffer. I think that in my conversations with mostly the Arab leaders—but this is true of the other leaders I've spoken with—there is genuine concern about the Iraqi people and that they have suffered under this cruel dictator for decades now, and that they really ought to have the possibility of a choice of their leadership. They clearly are better people, potentially, than the leader that they have now who is imposing his will on them.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, in your conversation with these 20 foreign leaders, have the comments, have they reacted to the comments that they saw on CNN and other places of Senator Lott and Congressman Solomon; and especially your predecessor, Mr. Eagleburger, who said the timing smelled. Did that raise questions among those leaders to you?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Frankly, it didn't. They did not; they did not ask those questions. I did actually speak to my predecessor, Secretary Eagleburger, last night. I'm very sorry that I didn't speak to him before he made those comments because I was very—a little secret about me, I always wake up to the radio; and I woke up to Larry Eagleberger's voice this morning basically saying that having spoken to me last night and that I had assured him that there was no connection of the timing to the current domestic issues; that he took me at my word and therefore he believed that that did not play a role in the decision.

QUESTION: Could you please comment on the Russian parliament's decision, statement that this act could make it more difficult to ratify START II?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Well, I have heard that; but the truth is that the only reason that the Russians would ratify START II is that it's in their national interest.

There have also been statements by various Russian leaders who are concerned about the fact that if START II is not ratified, that they will have to use scarce defense funds for the problem of maintaining missiles that they don't need, rather than on some of their other force needs.

So we hope very much that the ratification of START II will go forward, because it's in our national interest and because it's in Russia's national interest; otherwise they wouldn't have signed on.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, on a related question, can you comment on temporary closures of US embassies in Africa and whether it's related in any way to the action in Iraq?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: We have temporarily closed our embassies and done some ordered departures in Kuwait and in Israel because we are concerned about general threats and the heightened situation, yes.

QUESTION: Madame Secretary, the support that you say you are hearing from the foreign leaders you speak to, who are also expressing concern for the Iraqi people, do they say that they are basing their support in the belief that your strategy will bring relief to the Iraqi people—your short, medium and long-term strategy for Iraq?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: I think that they—that isn't quite the way the question has worked. But let me do something first and explain—I have tried, being a professor, to group my answers in some kind of a way as to how these calls have gone. I think they're kind of in four groups.

The first is of those who are strongly supportive of what we have done -- the list I have read; and I think in addition to that list, there's also Denmark and Norway. They are those who are strongly supportive of what we are doing.

Then there are the Arab countries, who are supportive and are giving us the support that we need to carry on this mission. They are the ones, I think, that are primarily voicing the problems of the Iraqi people. I think the others have mentioned it, but clearly it's the Arab countries that are the most concerned about it.

The third group are those who I would say the kind of key word for their comments is they regret this; and they regret it because Saddam Hussein led us into this situation.

Oh, and let me just say—back on the Arabs—they also are very clear about the fact that it was Saddam Hussein's responsibility that this happened, as they made clear in their GCC statement and as they have repeated to me on the phone.

But the regret group are basically regretful of the fact that we have come to this and that a diplomatic solution has not been found. Then there's the fourth group, which are really the Russians and the Chinese. But the main concern about the Iraqi people, I think, clearly comes from the Arab group. And I think that I would read into what they're saying that basically, they are concerned about civilian casualties. I told them that we are doing everything we can to avoid that. But they are concerned about the long-term situation of the Iraqi people. I've talked about the fact that the oil-for-food program needs to be in place and that we think—and they agree—that some other form of government, some other leader would be of help to the Iraqi people. These are general discussions.

QUESTION: Can I just follow up—and they support this long-term strategy?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: It depends, frankly. I think it's inappropriate for me to really go into it.

QUESTION: In your discussions with Arab leaders, have you found that they would regard continuing bombing during Ramadan as less offensive than initiating bombing during Ramadan?

SECRETARY ALBRIGHT: Specifically, we have not talked about that; but I have expressed the fact that we are sensitive to the fact that Ramadan is about to be upon us. But frankly, they

have not talked about it. I am the one that has initiated the fact that—just the way the President did in his statement—that we are sensitive to Ramadan.

Thank you.

DoD News Briefing Wednesday, December 16, 1998 Presenter: Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen [Also participating in the briefing was Gen. Henry H. Shelton, U.S. Army, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff]

Secretary Cohen: Good evening.

President Clinton's decision to strike Iraq has clear military goals. We want to degrade Saddam Hussein's ability to make and to use weapons of mass destruction. We want to diminish his ability to wage war against his neighbors. And we want to demonstrate the consequences of flouting international obligations.

Saddam Hussein has been an outlaw for some time. In the 1980s he used chemical weapons against Iran and against his own Kurdish minority. In 1990 he invaded Kuwait. In 1991 he fired SCUD missiles at his neighbors. At the end of the Gulf War the United Nations Security Council demanded that Iraq fully disclose and dismantle its program to build deadly biological, chemical, and nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them. But Saddam has used a combination of denials, deceptions and delays to evade Security Council mandates.

At nearly every turn Iraq has chosen obstruction over openness, and confrontation over cooperation. Let me illustrate the history of obstruction and evasion by recounting the events over the past year or so.

In October of 1997, the U.N. inspection team known as UNSCOM told the Security Council that Iraq was blocking inspections and refusing to disclose details of its programs to build chemical and biological weapons. Iraq responded by ordering American inspectors with UNSCOM to leave the country. The United Nations refused to let Iraq define the inspection terms. That would have been akin to letting a parolee dictate the terms of his parole, indeed the composition of his parole officers.

In January of this year Iraq blocked an UNSCOM inspection team headed by an American, provoking a confrontation with the Security Council. The United States and many other nations responded by building up our forces in the Gulf. Faced with the threat of a military strike, Iraq reached an agreement with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan after the Iraqi government made a commitment to allow UNSCOM inspectors to return and to conduct unfettered inspections.

But once again, Iraq refused to abide by its own agreement, and in August Iraq announced that it was stopping inspections but would allow passive monitoring of weapon sites to continue.

In October, it halted the monitoring. The United Nations and Arab countries condemned Iraq's refusal to cooperate with the United Nations. And faced with such a blatant obstruction, the United States and Great Britain with the support of many of our allies prepared for military action.

Then on November 14th, just minutes before a planned strike, Iraq said it was prepared to cooperate "unconditionally" with UNSCOM.

On November 15th, President Clinton listed five benchmarks that Iraq must meet. He said that Iraq must resolve all outstanding issues with UNSCOM; two, give the inspectors unfettered access to inspect and monitor all sites they chose without restriction or qualification; three, turn over all relevant documents; four, accept all weapons of mass destruction related to U.N.

Security Council resolutions; and five, not interfere with the independence and professional expertise of the UNSCOM inspectors.

By December it was clear that Iraq once again was refusing to live up to its obligations. Then yesterday in his report to the United Nations Secretary General, Ambassador Butler, the head of UNSCOM concluded, and I quote, "Iraq did not provide the full cooperation it promised on 14 November 1998, and initiated new forms of restrictions upon the Commission's work. Then as a result," Ambassador Butler said, "in light of the absence of full cooperation by Iraq, it must regrettably be recorded again that the Commission is not able to conduct the substantive disarmament work mandated to it by the Security Council."

This is not a matter of diplomatic nicety or detail. Iraq has followed a planned, systematic pattern of obstruction and delay. Saddam Hussein wants to force the international community to allow him to keep his deadly chemical and biological weapons and to wiggle out from under the economic sanctions that the Security Council has imposed on him.

Despite seven years of efforts to halt Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program, the U.N. inspectors believe that Iraq could quickly develop and use deadly chemical and biological weapons. And despite the appeals from the U.N. Security Council and the Arab world, Iraq has once again refused to reverse its course.

Iraq has spurned the U.N., it has spurned diplomacy, it has spurned all reasonable efforts to resolve this crisis peacefully. And faced with Iraq's outright refusal to obey its international obligations, the United States acted to restrict the threat that Iraq poses to its neighbors and to international order.

The world knows that it cannot trust Saddam Hussein. The world also knows that it can trust the United States.

A month ago President Clinton said, quote, "Until we see complete compliance, we will remain vigilant, we will keep up the pressure, and we will be ready to act."

Well, we have acted. We do not use force lightly. We did not do so today. But Iraq has exhausted patience, it has exhausted all options but the use of force.

The United States and the world community cannot allow Iraq to brazenly break its promises, just as it could not allow Iraq to bully its neighbors back in 1990.

Great Britain is joining us in this action, and we have the necessary support from other nations as well.

Any use of force, as the President has indicated, involves risk. To limit the risk to our troops and to our allies I am ordering a sharp increase in our forces in the Gulf. We are sending an Air Expeditionary Wing and more ground troops. Iraq should not misunderstand our determination.

Now the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs will make a statement, and we're prepared to answer your questions.

Gen. Shelton: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I do not intend to review in detail this evening how once again we have found it necessary to take military action against Iraq. The President and Secretary Cohen have covered that ground very well.

Nonetheless, I do want to note that throughout the seven years since the end of the Gulf War, U.S. military forces and those of our allies and partners in the region have kept a watchful eye on Saddam Hussein to ensure that he did not reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction, threaten his neighbors, or put the security of the strategically vital Persian Gulf region in jeopardy.

We also watched as Saddam Hussein relentlessly and shamelessly lied about his remaining chemical and biological weapons capabilities, as he denied UNSCOM inspectors access to information they needed to do their jobs, and as he thumbed his nose at the United Nations' and the international community's efforts to ensure that he honored his commitments.

The time for watching has ended. As the President and Secretary Cohen have noted earlier, Saddam's actions to evade and defeat U.N. weapons inspectors in recent weeks were but one last very clear example that he does not intend to fulfill his obligations to cooperate fully with UNSCOM. So today we commenced a military operation—OPERATION DESERT FOX—that includes American and British forces to carry out military strikes aimed at degrading the very capabilities that Saddam has tried to preserve.

The operation employs U.S. Navy aircraft flying from the decks of the USS ENTERPRISE; U.S. Air Force and Royal Air Force aircraft operating from land bases in the region; and Tomahawk cruise missiles launched from U.S. Navy ships at sea and United States Air Force B-52s.

We're also in the process of deploying additional U.S. military forces to Southwest Asia, to the U.S. Central Command's area of operation to bolster our already substantial military presence in the Gulf region as Secretary Cohen mentioned.

Elements of the Crisis Response Force that we created last spring are also moving to the region. We have some fact sheets for you on the major elements of the Crisis Response Force, but most of you are familiar with the major pieces. An Air Expeditionary Wing of approximately 36 combat aircraft including fighters, bombers, and anti-air defense aircraft; the F-117 Stealth aircraft; an additional aircraft carrier, the USS CARL VINSON and the other ships of its battle group which will arrive the day after tomorrow; and elements of a division ready brigade to reinforce our troops already on the ground in Kuwait as a part of exercise INTRINSIC ACTION. And of course there are numerous logistic and support units including refueling and reconnaissance aircraft and ground support elements that will also be deployed.

Deploying this Crisis Response Force will provide our theater commander Gen. Zinni with additional flexibility and will allow us to increase the intensity and tempo of our strike operations if that is necessary.

Because operations in the region are still ongoing, it would be inappropriate for me at this time to provide the specific numbers and types of cruise missiles launched thus far; the number of aircraft sorties flown; or other actions that are carried out or will be carried out.

The ongoing nature of the operations also means that I cannot share with you at this time any specific information about the targets we have struck or those that we plan to strike or any assessment of the damage done so far.

I know that you and the American people are keenly interested in this information, and I assure you that we will make every effort to provide you and the American people with more detail at the appropriate time.

Before I close and the Secretary and I take your questions, I'd like to take a moment to note that all of you can be proud of the men and women of our armed forces—those that are on duty around the world selflessly carrying out dangerous and difficult missions, whether it's flying in harm's way in the Gulf, deterring aggression in the demilitarized zone in Korea, or preserving the peace in Bosnia. And we can be particularly proud tonight of those that are answering the call in the skies over Iraq and the Persian Gulf.

Thank you. Now we'll take your questions.

Q: Mr. Secretary, the President said that these will be a sustained series of strikes. Can you tell us how long you expect them to last? Over a period of days, several days? And could any statement or promise be made by Iraq that could cut these strikes short or stop them?

Secretary Cohen: I won't get into any specific time table other than to say we intend to carry the mission out until such time as we accomplish our set goals. I mentioned those in my opening comments, that we would degrade his capacity to threaten his neighbors, and his capacity to deliver weapons of mass destruction, as well as manufacture them. Those are our goals. We will continue the operation until that is complete, to our satisfaction at least.

Q: You mean it might go into Ramadan? Could that go into Ramadan?

Secretary Cohen: I wouldn't want to set any time frame. The President indicated that he was sensitive to the issue about Ramadan and that we would not begin an operation in Ramadan. We're aware of that holy period for the Islamic people. But we intend to carry out our mission, however long it will take.

Q: Mr. Secretary, do you have any information yet about potential loss of life? Either American forces or Iraqis involved here?

Secretary Cohen: As of the most recent notice we received, there have been no American casualties at this time. We're not in a position to calculate casualties on the Iraqi side.

Q: Can you tell us when the strike began, sir? When it actually began. And also either you or Gen. Shelton, if you will, in an operation such as this, as has been planned in the past, the idea was to use cruise missiles, both Tomahawks and CALCMS of the B-52s, to soften up air defenses, and then go in with manned aircraft. Apparently, according to Gen. Shelton, this was not the case here. They were done in concert. Can you tell us why that was done? When did the strike actually begin, sir?

Secretary Cohen: The strike began approximately at 5 o'clock Eastern Standard Time. The Chairman can comment in terms of the composition of our forces.

I will not get into any discussion in terms of what forces will be used on any given day. We have a complement of forces that are designed to carry out the objectives of the mission.

Q: Secretary Cohen...

Q: Can Gen. Shelton answer the question, please, about the...

Gen. Shelton: That falls into the category of operational details that I'd rather not talk about right now. At the appropriate time we'll provide you with the data that you're asking for, but not until we get further into the operation.

Q: Secretary Cohen, do these military strikes mean the United States has given up on the United Nations weapons inspection regime?

Secretary Cohen: They mean that we have given Saddam Hussein every opportunity to fully comply and to cooperate with the UNSCOM inspection team. Last November, November 14th, approximately a month ago, just as strikes were about to be carried out, the President indicated that when Saddam Hussein raised the white flag and said I agree to cooperate, one more time he said I agree to fully cooperate, that we said fine. The inspection team went out, and the inspection team came back. They filed their report yesterday indicating non-compliance, more restrictions, more obstructions, and key was that of Mr. Butler, Ambassador Butler saying they could not carry out their mission. So...

Q: Do you think they'll ever go back?

Secretary Cohen: We don't know if they'll ever go back, but we do intend to keep the sanctions in place until there is full compliance on the part of the Iraqi government.

Q: How confident are you that you can degrade his ability to manufacture weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them? Aren't those very hard targets to find?

Secretary Cohen: They are difficult targets to find. We've indicated we will degrade his ability to threaten his neighbors; we will degrade his ability to deliver those weapons; and we will strike some of those facilities.

Q: Sir, what would it take, if anything, on Saddam Hussein...

Q:...strike plan?

Secretary Cohen: I'm sorry?

Q: Are there pauses built into the strike plan?

Secretary Cohen: I'm not going to discuss operational details.

Q: Secretary Cohen, what if anything would it take on Saddam Hussein's part to end this attack?

Secretary Cohen: Saddam Hussein has had every opportunity to end the sanctions. All he's had to do is to comply. He has promised year after year that he would fully comply and frankly, I think very little credence can ever be given to his promises based on past performance. So we intend to continue the mission until such time as we carry out our objectives.

Q: Mr. Secretary, why is it that...

Q: Mr. Cohen, sir, the President said just a few minutes ago that this was "the last chance" for Iraq, the Iraqi government. What did he mean by a last chance?

And let me go back to the subject of Ramadan. If we can't start a war during Ramadan, how can we continue hostilities during Ramadan?

Secretary Cohen: Much depends upon Saddam Hussein in terms of his own activities during this period of time. I wouldn't want to speculate what he will or won't do. He's on notice that

we intend to deliver a substantial blow, and he may or may not respond in a certain way. We'll see.

But the President, in terms of the last chance he's indicating that we gave Saddam the last chance last November 14th. Once again, he breached his promises. So this is a reaction to that. We're saying we're going to do what he has refused to allow the inspectors to do. Because he has refused to allow UNSCOM to carry out its duty, we intend to carry out ours. And that's all the farther I can go.

Q: Mr. Secretary, is the objective of the attack to destabilize his regime and force...

Secretary Cohen: As I stated, the objective of the attack is to go after those chemical, biological, or weapons of mass destruction sites to the extent that we can; to prevent him from being able to threaten his neighbors with his military; and to prevent him from being able to deliver to the best of our ability the chemical or biological and nuclear weapons.

Q: Why not go after his regime, if that's what the problem is?

Secretary Cohen: We have set forth our specific targets, and that's what we intend to carry out.

Q: If this is such a critical international crisis and it's so serious, why has the Clinton Administration not been able to convince any other nations but the U.K. to join with the United States?

Secretary Cohen: First of all, we had planned in the past to cooperate and work very closely with the United Kingdom. We also had the support of many other nations. I have talked personally with a number of countries, and they were prepared to volunteer assets and they did, in fact, call and say they would be supportive of anything that we were to undertake.

We obviously, also, had to consider the plan itself. We have tried to maximize our ability to strike quickly without any further warning. We indicated last November 14th that we had all that we needed in place, there would be no additional diplomacy, no more concessions, no more carrots. That we had the ability and would move without any further notice in the event he broke his promise once again. So from a security point of view, we decided that we had enough in place and could carry out this operation with minimal notice and with minimal compromise of the surprise element.

Q:...decline the offer of other nations to supply weapons...

Secretary Cohen: We did not solicit the offer of other nations in addition to what we had from Great Britain and the support voiced by others if we needed it. We could certainly have other support.

Q: Did the looming impeachment vote in the House of Representatives play any part, was it a factor in any way in the decision to carry out this military action?

Secretary Cohen: The only factor from my point of view and from the Chairman's point of view, or from anyone else's point of view, was what is in the national security interest of the United States. We are convinced, we have absolutely no doubt this is the right decision, this is the right time for us to move. Once Ambassador Butler made the determination that Saddam did not intend to comply, then we felt that that was the time that we had to enforce what we said before. And I again, would repeat, what we say matters. And if we lay down markers that say unless you comply you're going to face a military operation and there's non-compliance, a failure to take action under those circumstances, I think, would, in fact, impair our national security interests for some time to come.

Q: Mr. Secretary, as a Republican, a former member of the Senate...

Gen. Shelton: Let me answer Jamie's question first. I wholeheartedly supported the decision, the President's decision. I felt like we had looked at every aspect of this operation and we had to measure action against the consequences of inaction. We had looked as far back as the 15th, starting on the 15th of November when the President very clearly outlined what Saddam Hussein had to do in order to meet the requirements of the international community that had been set for him by the U.N. That unless he did that, there was a potential for military action.

So we started planning as we do in our business, for the worst case. We started looking at what windows of opportunity might be available. And all of that was driven, of course, by when Ambassador Butler would complete his inspections and what his report would say. If it were a negative report, we'd have to wait until we got that report.

We looked at that. We had several factors we had to consider. But it all boiled down to that if he had released the report by the 15th, then the 16th was the day that we should do it in order to achieve tactical surprise, as well as we had several other things that were lining up to include the arrival of a second carrier battle group, the turnover of our B-52s which were in the process of rotating for Christmas, and things just fell into place.

So militarily, it was the right decision, the right date, and that decision was made back in November.

Q: Mr. Secretary, as a Republican and a former Member of the Senate, what do you think about Senator Lott's criticism of this attack at this key time for national security?

Secretary Cohen: I think that every Member of Congress and every member of this country will have to make his or her own judgment based upon the facts. I have come to the conclusion, in looking at the facts, that this was in America's national security interest. I am prepared to place 30 years of public service on the line to say the only factor that was important in this decision is what is in the American people's best interest. There were no other factors.

So each person will come to their own decision. There are other Members of the Senate, other Members of the House who will reach a different conclusion. We respect their individual judgments. But based upon the facts as we have worked with them... The Chairman and I were talking about this just before we came down here. We have worked together since a year ago, in October of 1997, on this issue. We have followed it closely. We have looked at what's in our

national security interests, and we are convinced that this is the right thing to do under the circumstances, and we have recommended and support going forward.

Q: Mr. Secretary, would you recommend to Members of Congress not to speak out against the strike and the President during this period?

Secretary Cohen: I have made no such recommendations to Members of Congress. That is a judgment on their own. I think each Member will decide for himself or herself what they feel compelled to say during this time, but I've made no such recommendations, and would not.

Q: Are you saying this attack will come to an end once you've gone through your target list? Once Saddam Hussein has surrendered? Or some other...

Secretary Cohen: Once we have accomplished our set objectives, we will stay on station. We intend to continue to enforce the sanctions until such time as there is compliance.

Q: Are your objectives anything other than the target list? Once you've gone through your target list is it over?

Secretary Cohen: It is over in the sense of the military operation itself, but we will remain at the ready for an indefinite period of time to maintain our presence with the support of our Gulf allies, and to stay at the ready in the event that Saddam seeks to reconstitute his weapons of mass destruction. We will be there. To the extent that he moves against any of his neighbors, we will be there. So this particular military operation is directed specifically to achieve the goals that I outlined.

Q: Does...

Q: Mr. Secretary...

Q:...his neighbors?

Secretary Cohen: I'm sorry?

Q: Does the U.S. expect that once again Saddam Hussein may attack his neighbors?

Secretary Cohen: That's a possibility, and the neighbors are on full alert. They understand what the consequences are. But they also understand what the consequences, as the Chairman has indicated, of not acting. He has been determined to maintain his weapons of mass destruction, to rebuild them if he can, to slip out from underneath the sanctions so he can get more revenues in order to rebuild his military, and then again pose a serious threat to his neighbors.

Q: Is that why the Patriots were left in Israel?

Secretary Cohen: The Patriots have been in Israel on an exercise that had been planned for some months, as the Chairman indicated.

Q: Is Saddam Hussein being targeted personally?

Q: Can you give us some indication of just how large a force you're going to maintain in the Gulf? Are you going to maintain two carriers there? Are you going to go back up to 40,000, 50,000 troops as there has been there in the past?

Gen. Shelton: Susanne, there's not an easy answer for that. We will maintain an appropriate level over there. As you know, we've maintained a force of about 20,000 in the region for quite some time. There's no plan right now to reduce below that level, but whether or not we

maintain some of the additional force, how long we maintain the additional forces will be determined by the outcome of our plan and our achieving our objectives.

Q: Will the two carriers stay for the foreseeable future, rather than one leaving at Christmas time?

Gen. Shelton: I won't comment on that right now. I think that's something to be determined, depending on how the operation goes.

Q: When specifically did you and the Secretary of Defense become aware of the tone and starkness of the upcoming Butler report? When did you begin discussing specifically that this might be go this time? For instance, was this part of your thinking? Did you know about this when you decided not to go to Germany, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary Cohen: We started planning this particular operation, as I indicated, back as early as November 15th. Based upon the President's benchmarks that what Saddam had to do was to fully comply with those five benchmarks, we had to put in place, and you may recall that I made a number of statements on that day indicating that we would be at the ready, we would have sufficient forces on hand to carry out a military operation should it become necessary and should he fail to fulfill his obligations.

The timing of this was set primarily by the inspection teams. When Mr. Butler indicated his teams would be carrying out the inspections during the first two weeks of December, then obviously we were not going to take any action until such time as they conducted the inspections and filed the report.

At the other side, we were looking at the calendar—seeing Ramadan that we were going to be sensitive to.

So we had to prepare for a window during which time if there were a failure to comply we could take action. So it was not until Mr. Butler filed his report that this became a reality as far as we were ready to go, and then the decision had to be made, in view of the fact that you had this statement which is categorical and qualified that UNSCOM cannot carry out its obligations, for us at that point to fail to take action I think would have been an abdication of our responsibilities.

So it became...

Q: Did you have any advance warning of the contents of the report?

Secretary Cohen: No. There was some speculation about what it might contain. And frankly, we had assumed that it might be mixed. We didn't know. And until such time as it was actually filed with the Security Council, it was at that time when it became a matter of decision.

Q: Mr. Secretary, what words would you use to describe these strikes?

Obviously you...

Secretary Cohen: Serious. Serious and sustained.

Q: The Gulf War, if I could follow-up, reduced the Iraqi military by half. Yet Iraq has remained a thorn in the side of the international community for nine years. These strikes will clearly not be as large as the Gulf War. Do you have any optimism that they'll have any lasting effect?

Secretary Cohen: They're not designed to try to compete with the Gulf War. They are designed specifically to accomplish what Saddam Hussein has prevented the UNSCOM team from accomplishing. What we are seeking to do is to degrade his capacity to threaten his neighbors. We're not seeking to try to eliminate it. We're not saying that that's going to be the measure of success. We're trying to degrade his capacity to threaten his neighbors with chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons, and the means to deliver them. So that's what our goal is.

Q: Are you targeting Saddam Hussein personally?

Q: How difficult will it be to degrade, from a military standpoint... Back in February both you and the Secretary were very measured about what would constitute success by way of degradation of his weapons or his capability. Give us some parameters now.

Gen. Shelton: Without getting into the operational details, I would say we have very carefully selected those things that are very closely associated with the things that he uses to transport, the things he uses to protect, the things he uses to guard his facilities, as well as delivery facilities and some production capabilities. So it goes after everything from security to manufacture, to delivery.

It's not an easy task, but I think we're up to it.

Q: How about Republican Guard units?

Q:...surprised...

Q: What about the types of units that are used to guard those? What's going to happen to that?

Gen. Shelton: Susanne, at this point I won't discuss any types, any detail about types or types of targets that we're going after. That...

Q: Secretary Cohen, what is the worry about civilian casualties? And also, what would the U.S. response be if Israel is hit by Iraq?

Secretary Cohen: We have indicated to Iraq that it ought not to threaten its neighbors or be met with a very severe consequence from the United States. We would hope that Saddam would not act foolishly in striking Israel, but the Israelis, of course, are prepared for any potential type of attack upon their country. But we have indicated to Iraq that that would be met with very severe consequence.

The other part?

Q: Civilian casualties.

Secretary Cohen: Civilian casualties. We always try to take that into account. We have tried to minimize civilian casualties. We don't know exactly what will occur until the operation is over.

Q: Was surprise achieved...

Q:...civilians into the targeted areas?

Secretary Cohen: I'm sorry?

Q: Do you have any indications that he has moved civilians into the most obvious target areas as he's done in the past?

Secretary Cohen: Not at this time. We think we've achieved as much tactical surprise as one can do under these circumstances.

Q: Can you give us an update tomorrow?

Q: Will you be going to Belgium? No?

Press: Thank you.