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Presenter: Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld

**March 23, 2006
2:03 p.m. EST**

DoD News Briefing with Secretary Rumsfeld and Adm. Giambastiani

SEC. RUMSFELD: Good afternoon, folks. There's Bob, sitting in Charlie's chair.

Q: (Off mike.)

SEC. RUMSFELD: In the coming days, I plan to travel to Shanksville, Pennsylvania, to pay my respects to the passengers of Flight 93 who brought down the plane that hijackers had planned to use as a weapon against our country and our government.

In the years since September 11th, no part of the world has been spared the brutality of the terrorists: London, Madrid, Casablanca, to name a few. Consider some of their acts. In Russia, extremists killed 186 schoolchildren, some as young as 20 months old. In Israel, terrorists hid a grenade under a baby. And in Iraq, according to the mayor of Tall Afar, terrorists placed explosives inside the corpse [sic] of children to kill grieving parents coming to retrieve their bodies.

Imagine what the beheaders and the hostage-takers would do, were they to accomplish their goal of establishing a safe haven in Iraq, how a victory for them would aid their cause, their efforts to raise money and their recruiting efforts.

It seems to be comforting to some to hope that there might be some way to placate this enemy, that somehow if we acted differently, the violence, the conflict ahead might just go away. But this enemy seeks no armistice with free people. They've called America an enemy of God. They have said of Americans and Europeans, quote, "Their wives will be widowed and their children will be orphaned," unquote, and that, quote, "jihad against the United States does not stop with its withdrawal from the Arabian peninsula," unquote.

The question of our time is whether we face this enemy on their terms or on our terms, on their territory or on our territory, where they are on offense or where they are on defense.

Not too long ago a Guardsman wounded in Iraq said about September 11th, quote, "The longer it goes since it happened, the less people seem to think about it. I think about it every day," he said.

Not a day passes that this department -- when we're not considering if everything possible has been

done to safeguard our nation and our people. Not a day passes when we do not think and pray for the men and women wearing the uniform. We ask our commanders on the ground at every opportunity if there's something we ought to be doing differently, or if there's a new threat that we need to combat.

In our 200-plus years, America has learned some important lessons. One is that weakness is provocative -- it tempts aggressors; that appeasement is dangerous; and that military strategists and warfighters need to always be prepared for the unforeseen and the unexpected. And surely we can relate to what President Roosevelt said two days after Pearl Harbor. He said, quote, "We are now in this war. We are all in it all the way. We must share together the bad news and the good news, the defeats and the victories, the changing fortunes of war."

Today as well, we can prevail only if we are in it all the way. We can, we must, and we will see it through to completion, the mission for which these young Americans and their families have sacrificed, carrying with us the memory of those who have lost their lives in the battle, in the twin towers of the World Trade Center, here in this building where we sit today, or in a quiet field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.

Admiral Giambastiani.

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and good afternoon.

I'd like to briefly mention the department's release tomorrow of the Iraqi perspective project report. This project was conducted by the United States Joint Forces Command Lessons Learned Team. The report focuses on the perspective of the senior Iraqi civilian and military leadership of military operations conducted from March through May of 2003. These perspectives were gathered through a series of interviews, as well as extensive review of captured documents. The goal of this effort was to determine how our own coalition operations were viewed and understood by the opposing side, and what insights such analysis offers for future operations.

I should point out that this is the first such review of this scale since the end of World War II when the United States undertook a similar task, understanding how the German and Japanese civilian and military leadership viewed the war.

This report provides insights into the nature of Saddam's regime, the regime's strategic calculus, operational planning, military effectiveness and execution of the Iraqi defense.

This perspective project is assisting the department in developing Operation Iraqi Freedom lessons learned from what we would call a balanced, holistic view of a battlefield cause and effect.

And finally, Mr. Secretary, as you said, I know that we are seeing the passing of the baton from Charlie to Bob today. We're ready for your questions, sir.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Mr. Burns.

Q: Mr. Secretary, I'd like to ask a question about the current situation in Iraq. To what extent do you think the failure of the Iraqi leaders thus far to form a government is adding fuel to the sectarian tensions and perhaps emboldening the insurgents?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Well, I think I'd reverse it. I think the fact that the government has not yet been formed and the leadership has not quite yet found the arrangements that they're -- that they can comfortably agree to means that the favorable effect that should come from a establishment of a government is being delayed. And the inevitable effect of that is that some of the violence and incidents that are occurring might

have ended earlier had they been able to fashion a government at an earlier time. Who knows? Until it's done, it's not done.

We talk to the folks out there, of course, every day, and they feel that progress is being made, but it hasn't yet happened. It's unhelpful.

Q: It's not worsening. It's not contributing to the violence in any way?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Well, if one believes, as I do, that a good government, a competent government, a government that's seen as inclusive and seen as governing from the center, that gets about the task and -- of serving the Iraqi people -- the 8- or 10- or 12- or whatever million people it was that went out and vote -- risked their lives and went out and voted, and started representing the people that went out and voted, and serving the people that went out and voted -- I believe that that would be a good thing for the country and would reduce the level of violence.

So to the extent that isn't happening, obviously, the level of violence continues, and people are being killed. And that's unfortunate.

Q: Mr. Secretary?

SEC. RUMSFELD: And they need to get about the task.

Q: Mr. Secretary, there are voices in the Congress and elsewhere, including some belonging to retired senior military members, who are calling for your resignation. The president says he supports you and that you're doing a good job. If that support continues, do you plan to stay for the rest of his second term?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Ivan, those kinds of calls have been going on for five-plus years. And the president has asked me not to get involved in politics, and that's politics.

Q: Well, a quick follow-up, if I may, Mr. Secretary. You're not a young man by some standards, although you're obviously in very good health, or you're a wealthy man by many standards. Wouldn't you like to --

SEC. RUMSFELD: What is this about? I thought we were having a press conference? (Laughter.)

Q: Isn't there some pillow talk -- (inaudible) -- step down and smell the roses, perhaps, or, you know, take it easy for a while?

SEC. RUMSFELD: No, I'm hard at the job, working hard, and getting up every day and thinking what we can do for the troops and the wonderful people who serve our country.

Will?

Q: Mr. Secretary, President Bush this week indicated that he expected U.S. troops to be in Iraq through at least the beginning of 2009.

SEC. RUMSFELD: I saw that.

Q: Are you planning for that contingency? And what strain, if any, do you think will be placed on the military by maintaining troop rotations to Iraq for that extended period of time?

SEC. RUMSFELD: I think the stress on our military, interestingly, is being eased by the way the force is being managed. We have moved thousands of military people out of civilian positions and back into military positions, where they belong. We -- the Army -- has been aggressively modularizing their force and increasing the number of combat brigades that are available. We've been successful in reducing the extent to which the Guard and the Reserve are being called upon. From something in excess of 40 percent of the deployed force, today it's down around 20 percent of the deployed force.

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: Nineteen, actually.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Nineteen percent. That's close to 20.

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: Yes, sir.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yeah. And it is -- good progress is being made. So I would anticipate, as we've said, that as the Afghan and Iraqi security forces continue to take over more and more responsibility, we'll continue to reduce down our forces, and that any stress on the force would be eased rather than increased.

Q: Just to follow up, sir. The first part of the question: Are you planning for troops to be in Iraq until the beginning of 2009?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Oh, I think the way the president's repeated it -- first of all, I don't think that's what he said. But in any event --

Q: That future presidents would make the decision on the presence of U.S. troops.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yeah. I've avoided predicting timing. I remember when a secretary of defense announced that they were putting troops, I think it was in Bosnia or Kosovo and they'd be out in six or eight months, by Christmas, I think, and --

Q: That was a president, Mr. Secretary.

SEC. RUMSFELD: President.

And they were there 10 years later.

And I think guessing about things like that -- I mean, you'd have to define it. It would take a lot of time. I mean, we may be helping to train and equip some forces in Iraq in 2009. Are we making plans to do that? We're making plans to assist the Iraqis and the Afghans in training and equipping their forces so that they can take over the responsibility. And as the president said, it's conditions based. I'm not going to get into speculating about specific numbers or on specific dates. It just isn't fruitful.

Q: Mr. Secretary, on the formation of the Iraqi government, yesterday General Pace, in Saudi Arabia, said he had underestimated the reluctance of the Iraqis to form a unified government, and he blamed it on decades of fear under Saddam's regime. I'm wondering if you share that view?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Well certainly you cannot have a regime as -- I didn't see his remarks, so I can't respond about his remarks -- but anytime you have a regime as vicious and repressive as the Saddam Hussein regime was, it is not a formula for creating bold entrepreneurial people. Anyone who stuck their head up got popped and thrown in the jail or killed, put in one of the mass graves.

So it does -- it does take time for people to develop the skill sets to do something they've not done

before, and that's to politick and negotiate and compromise. And if you think of what they're doing, there's no question but that the terrorists are trying to prevent the establishment of the government. That's obvious. Why else would they have gone after the Golden Dome shrine? They failed. It's going to happen. They tried to stop the elections; they tried to stop the constitution from being ratified. Now, have they delayed it? Probably. They probably have. And is that harmful? Yes.

But I think that the people have demonstrated a lot of courage. Think of all the people who volunteered to go into the Iraqi security forces. Think of all the people who volunteered to run for office. Think of all the people who are out politicking now and trying to negotiate out and find a formula for a government that will give enough confidence to the Iraqi people that they can put their faith in it. That's a big thing they're doing. It's not easy.

Q: Mr. Secretary?

Q: If I could follow up, real quick. This is the third day in a row we've seen fairly major attacks organized against Iraqi police guarding captured terrorists or suspected terrorists. Do you feel or see a trend there on well-organized attacks in Iraq?

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: Bret, I don't think we see any indication -- they're always organized to one degree or another. What's important is, is when you look at them over the long term. And it's -- you know, you have two attacks in two days.

Is that a trend? I don't know. But what I would tell you is, what is a trend continues to be the overall performance of the Iraqi security forces here, working with coalition forces.

I think what's particularly important is this Arba'in celebration, this very long march from Baghdad down to Najaf and back to Baghdad. By anybody's estimate, somewhere between 2, 2-1/2, 3 million pilgrims -- very uneventful, minimal attacks, very successful, Iraqi security forces doing a very good job. General Casey, as a matter of fact, has reported to us that he's flown up and down the route to look at these pilgrims -- and a very successful pilgrimage. Those are the types of things that are happening.

So I can't tell you if it's a trend. It's two days.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yeah.

Q: Secretary Rumsfeld --

Q: Secretary, Admiral, to ask you about a good news story, if I can, the --

SEC. RUMSFELD: Oh, no. We wouldn't know how to handle it. (Laughter.) That would be a stunner. Cameras, make sure you get this. (Laughter.)

Q: -- the successful raid to free the hostages held in Iraq -- I'm wondering if you can tell me anything about how that came down and what, if any, was the involvement of U.S. forces in that.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Go ahead.

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: What I would tell you is that Major General Lynch this morning, earlier today, spoke on this subject. And he provided what details we have and we can release. It was a coalition operation, and I'll leave it to what he said earlier today. It was successful.

Q: What role did Canadian and British special forces play in this?

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: I'm going to leave it to what Major General Lynch said this morning. It's a coalition operation.

Q: Would you care to comment, Secretary, on the release of the hostages this morning?

SEC. RUMSFELD: No, I liked his answer.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary, given the performance of the Iraqi security forces, as the admiral just talked about, are you still confident that the size of the U.S. force in Iraq can be brought down significantly this year?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Jim, I don't know how many times I have to answer this. The level of the forces -- we'll try it one more time. All together: The level of the forces in Iraq will depend on the conditions on the ground and the recommendations of the commander. And if you can predict precisely what the conditions on the ground will be and what the recommendations of the commander will be, I can tell you precisely what the trajectory, up or down or level, might be of those troops.

We anticipate that they'll go down. And the reason we anticipate they'll go down is because we think the government will be formed and it will meet with reasonable acceptance and that the Iraqi security forces will continue to be performing well and that we will continue to pass over battle space, bases and responsibility to the Iraqi security forces.

Q: Have you received any recommendations through your commanders?

SEC. RUMSFELD: No, except the one I announced, which does -- was that we took one of the call forward battalions, brought it into Baghdad, because General Casey felt it would be desirable to have it there during the Arba'in pilgrimage period and for the -- until the formation of the new government.

And since that latter condition has not occurred, it's still there doing a good job.

Tom.

Q: Mr. Secretary, we've been told that General Casey's inquiry to the Lincoln group in Iraq will decide very narrowly that there were no violations because there's no specific prohibition against paying to plant military articles anonymously. Putting aside what the investigation may or may not say, is it time for this department to announce a new policy or guidance or directive? What will that say, do you think? And should this practice be specifically prohibited?

SEC. RUMSFELD: My understanding is that your understanding's correct -- that General Casey did ask for a study of what took place and that it's finished, but not -- he hasn't reviewed it, and it's not been sent here; and that the rumor is that it does not find anything that was done outside of policy because the policy is silent on that issue, as I understand it.

When it is sent here and as it is being sent, obviously, we're addressing the broader question not the question of whether policy was breached, which it wasn't, apparently, but the broader question. And when we have something to announce with respect to it, we will.

Q: General Pace was quoted today as saying --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I saw that.

Q: -- that he believed there should be transparency and that readers should know that an article was planted with military money. That seems to say that he's against this sort of activity.

SEC. RUMSFELD: It does.

Q: Do you agree with that?

SEC. RUMSFELD: With your interpretation of what it seems to say? Yes, I do. I --

Q: So General Pace is right that this is a bad practice?

SEC. RUMSFELD: No, I said we'd take it under advisement and take a look at it. I'm not going to make a judgment off the top of my head.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary, I'm just curious. Do you feel at all embattled at this point in your tenure --

SEC. RUMSFELD: No.

Q: -- given the fact that --

SEC. RUMSFELD: No.

Q: -- aside from the retired two-star general calling you incompetent and asking you to step down in an op ed over the weekend, we also had a column from Maureen Dowd in which she quoted an unnamed administration official saying that you don't hold the same sway in meetings and that you're treated as, quote, "an eccentric old uncle who's ignored."

SEC. RUMSFELD: You like to repeat all that stuff, don't you? (Laughter.) On camera? Did you -- did you get that? (Laughter.) Let's make sure he got it. He loves that stuff. It's a sure way to get on camera! You'll be on the evening news.

Q: I know that you like to have the facts in the premise of the question.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yes, I do, and you did it very well. (Laughter.) No --

Q: You can do one-arm push-ups and put all this to rest.

SEC. RUMSFELD: No. The answer is no.

Q: Do you hold the same sway in meetings?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Oh, come on. I'm not going to get into that.

Pam.

Q: Sir, in your opening statement, you said --

SEC. RUMSFELD: If you believe everything you read in Maureen Dowd, you better get a life. (Laughter.)

Q: I'll take that as a sound bite. (Laughter.)

Q: Sir, in your opening statement, you say this war will only be won, quote, "only if we're in it all the way." I think that statement's going to be parsed because there are a lot of people who've been complaining from the start that the country has never been in this war all the way, that the force that was sent over was smaller, that taxes have been cut rather than raised to pay a \$300 billion war bill.

I wonder if you can talk about if you think the nation is in it all the way, and if not, what more ought to be done to assure victory.

SEC. RUMSFELD: It's a good question. The -- unlike some of the others we've had today. World War II had characteristics that were so notably different than this. But that's been true of most of the wars, that they've been different. And I've been alive for a number of them.

Clearly, it is a different thing for people to internalize this thing called the global war on terror or the struggle that's taking place in the world between violent extremists and people who don't believe in their view of the world. I think that the American people do feel an anxiety about the problem of terrorism. They understand the fact that so many cities have been hit, and they recognize that 3,000 people were killed here in this country, but that it is a more distant thing and a less immediate conflict or struggle than some previous wars.

I think that I was quoting, as I recall, Franklin Roosevelt, and I would say that our society is in this struggle and that they are attentive to it and that they are concerned. I sense an awareness of the danger. I would also say that any time you have terrorist networks that are able to do what they did on September 11th and do what they did in Bali and London and Madrid and many, many other locations, and we know that they -- that there are people in our world that are developing and proliferating very, very powerful weapons that can impose damage on our people of considerable magnitude, that one has to be concerned about it.

Q: Poll numbers show that people are declining in their support for the war, that people who did support the invasion are now losing support. So doesn't that suggest that we're not in it all the way and that there's -- something else has to be done?

SEC. RUMSFELD: You're -- I don't know which particular polls, but I've read that polls may be down and are down in some instances. I think it depends partly on the -- people who've watched polls over the decades, they do tend to go up and down depending on circumstances. And if every time a poll went down, somebody changed their policy or changed their position or tossed in the towel, we wouldn't have a country today. There have been plenty of times polls have down in our history when people have persevered and been resolute and prevailed ultimately. And that's what will happen in this instance.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary, number of wounded Americans is down in the first months of this year, number of Americans wounded in Iraq. Is that a blip? Is that a real trend? What accounts for that?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Oh, I don't think -- I don't want to -- it depends on what time period you're looking at, and I think it's not something that I --

Q: It's not a real trend, as far as you're concerned, yet?

SEC. RUMSFELD: I haven't seen any analytical work on it. I know that our field commanders are spending a great deal of effort to try to adjust tactics, techniques and procedures to the circumstance on the ground.

And needless to say, the enemy has a brain also and is adjusting their tactics, techniques and procedures.

But the Joint Forces Command and our training commands around this country are spending a great deal of time training our forces before they're rotated in. There's a good long period of left seat/right seat passover where they can get situational awareness. And they're doing a great deal to try to reduce the risks to our troops, as you know. But I think -- I'm not going to say that a one- or two- or three-month trend is reflective of all the effort that's gone into it. I hope it is.

Yes?

Q: Thank you, Mr. Secretary. South Korean government wants to conclude the transfer of wartime command and control over to South Korean army. If it happens so, how will it affect the security and stability of Korean peninsula?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Well, you're correct, the South Korean government has raised the question as to when might it be appropriate to transfer responsibility to the Korean command. And that is something that gets discussed. And no time has been set. Everyone agrees that 55 years after the war, it's reasonable that the South Korean forces would increasingly take on more and more responsibility. They're doing that. And as they continue to take on more and more responsibility, the United States will be able to reduce its troops. And one would hope that we -- we, the United States and the South Korean government, would do what we do at a pace and in a manner that would not inject an instability into the Korean peninsula. And I'm confident we will not inject an instability into the peninsula.

Q: So within this year you will be able to start?

SEC. RUMSFELD: No, no. I don't at all.

Q: South Korean President Roh wants to --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I don't think that's correct. I could be wrong. I haven't read everything he's said. But my impression is that the discussions I've had with the Korean minister, and the cable traffic I've seen, is that they want the subject raised, which we do too; we think that's just fine, and then we'd set about a path to see that the South Korean military evolves into a position where it would be appropriate for them to have that control.

And you know, how many -- what period of time that might be is not something that's been determined, because it's partly a function of the pace at which the South Korean government is going to be able to investments and increase their capabilities in a way that they could assume that responsibility. But it's something we both agree is desirable.

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: And this is the path that the combatant, General Bell, is on, just what the secretary described.

Q: I'd like another question for Admiral Giambastiani.

SEC. RUMSFELD: You want to try somebody who hasn't asked, like Barbara?

Q: I just wanted to ask him about his --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I'd like get Barbara in this. I think I would. I'd like to hear -- no -- I wanted to hear what she has to say before I --

Q: All right.

SEC. RUMSFELD: -- I know if I want to get her in here.

Q: (Chuckles.)

SEC. RUMSFELD: Can't be worse than Jamie.

Q: You never know. (Laughter.)

Q: I wanted to actually follow up on Thom Shanker's question and just ask you to clarify one thing you said in your opening remarks about the war on terror. In terms of Thom's question, sir, clearly you have voiced your views about the news media in the past. It's -- your views on the record of accuracy, fairness and completeness by the news media in its reporting on Iraq.

So I'm curious where that leaves any room in your mind on the question of payment for articles, how you square even still contemplating it, given your view --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I'm not contemplating it or not contemplating it. I am trying to understand what was done, and I don't yet. My understanding is that the only things that were put out were accurate. No one was putting out anything that was inaccurate. So your question contained that element when you said accurate, truthful.

And so my understanding is that nothing was put out that was not truthful, and I wouldn't want to leave anyone with the impression that it was, unless the report suggests to the contrary. And I haven't seen the reports, but -- so I --

Q: But I think what people are raising is the question of the ethics --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I understand what they're raising. Yeah, I understand --

Q: -- the ethics of paying for news --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I understand. And I am not going to defend it because I don't have sufficient knowledge about what actually was done at what level, by whom and for what purpose. And I'm kind of old-fashioned. I like to engage my brain before my mouth.

Q: May I follow up, please?

Q: Can I ask you to clarify something in your opening remark on the war on terrorism? You mentioned -- when you were defining the U.S. enemies in the war on terror, I thought it was interesting -- you specifically mentioned the Beslan school massacre in Russia, you mentioned the situation in Israel. Is this sort of broadening of what the Bush administration perceives the terrorist threat to be to the American people to these other areas? And do you now consider Iran part of the long war on terror, defining that long war as the war against al Qaeda and its affiliated movements?

SEC. RUMSFELD: I don't know about the preface to the question on Iran. I think I was trying to characterize the nature of people who terrorize and behead people and kill children and plant bombs in corpses, and pointing out that that is a problem in the world, that there are people like that.

They are doing it in lots of places on the globe, and the point I was making, I think, was in that context.

With respect to Iran, we know that Iran is the major sponsor of Hezbollah, and -- a active terrorist organization and a very well-known one, and that that has been their path and one of the instruments that they've used consistently.

Q: Is Iran part of the U.S. long war on terror?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Terrorism is.

Q: Is Iran?

SEC. RUMSFELD: I think I'm going to leave Iran to the Department of State and the president, except with respect to what they're doing in Iraq or Afghanistan. And I feel comfortable commenting on that, but I'm not going to get into -- the president's spoken very clearly on what he thinks of Iran.

Q: Do you hold out any hopes -- do you hold out any hopes that the talks between -- proposed talks between Ambassador Khalilzad and a representative from Iran could contribute positively toward the situation --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I don't have any idea. I just don't.

Q: Can we have a question on the lessons learned study? I'm just curious, Admiral, you mentioned it in your opening statement, and I know that we'll get --

SEC. RUMSFELD: We'll make this the last question.

Q: -- tomorrow. But I'm just curious, is there any -- can you share with us at all just any of the insights that -- maybe something that you found interesting about what the Iraqi military or civilian leadership was thinking that maybe you didn't know and that you found out as a result of the study? Is there anything you could share with us?

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: I think, Jamie, I'd like you to -- I'd like to leave it to what you're going to see tomorrow because if I highlight one issue in 30 seconds here, everybody's going to focus on that, and, frankly, the work is more important in its totality. There are a lot of things we learned in that, and that's the reason why we do this. That's why we do the lessons learned. And remember, what we were trying to do here.

We always do lessons learned with what we call blue, U.S. or coalition, looking at the U.S. and coalition. Then, the next step is we have the United States try to red team what the other side would do. That's the next level. This is the last level, where we actually talk to, interview and read the documents that we can to understand what the other side's perception of us was, what we did, and why they are doing what they do. That's why we are looking at that, and if there's any message I want to give you, it's that one right there.

Q: Were you surprised a little bit -- without re-saying what you -- what's in the report -- were you surprised at all about what you learned?

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: We learned things that we didn't expect, and you'll see them in the report. I can

guarantee it. There were surprises in there, and there are a few. There always are. That's why we do these.

SEC. RUMSFELD: I sat down and got -- I forgot what it was, a 40-minute briefing or something -- 45 minutes and then asked for a couple more hours. This was months and months and months ago.

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: Yes, sir.

SEC. RUMSFELD: I haven't seen the -- this is an unclassified version, obviously --

ADM. GIAMBASTIANI: Yes, sir.

SEC. RUMSFELD: -- but I must say, that having a chance to see the lessons learned from the U.S. side and then looking at it from the Iraqi side, I found absolutely fascinating. I think it's a good piece of work, and it's fairly typical of the Pentagon to be willing to invest time and effort of thoughtful people to go back and see what actually took place, and what did people think at the moment, and what can we learn from that so we can do things better in the future.

Q: And in looking at that, did you discover any glaring miscalculations that the U.S. may have made going into --

SEC. RUMSFELD: It's fascinating, there's no interest as to whether they made any glaring miscalculations. Isn't that --

Q: Well, you know.

SEC. RUMSFELD: -- isn't that an interesting phenomenon?

Good to see you all.

Q: See you next week!

Q: We gave you a chance at the good news one and you punted that! (Laughter.)

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