

**PREPARED TESTIMONY BY U.S. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
DONALD H. RUMSFELD  
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
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Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to meet with the Committee. Let me begin by saying a few words about the remarkable man seated next to me—General Tommy Franks.

On Monday, I was in Tampa to attend the change of command ceremony where General Franks handed the reins of U.S. Central Command to his able deputy, General John Abizaid.

It was an occasion to reflect on General Franks and what the CENTCOM leadership team has accomplished during his tenure as the Combatant Commander. It is an extraordinary record of achievement.

Think back to September 11<sup>th</sup>—a dark day for our country. But how fortunate our nation was to have General Franks and his team in command at CENTCOM.

Consider what they have accomplished:

In less than a month, they had developed and were executing a war plan for Afghanistan employing a range of capabilities—from the most advanced (such as laser-guided weapons), to the antique (40 year-old B-52s updated with modern electronics) to the rudimentary (a cavalry charge)—they and our Afghan and coalition allies drove the Taliban and al-Qaeda from power in a matter of months.

The plan they developed for Operation Iraqi Freedom was even more innovative and transformational—employing an unprecedented combination of speed, precision, surprise, and flexibility.

The Iraqi regime very likely expected the war to begin, as did the 1991 Gulf War, with a sustained bombing campaign. Instead, General Franks started the ground attack before the air campaign—sending a large force of Special Operators into Western Iraq, followed by thousands of coalition forces streaming across the Kuwaiti border. Instead of a long march through the South, with pitch battles for each city along the way, they drove through to reach the gates of Baghdad in a matter of weeks—liberating the Iraqi capital and toppling the regime in less than a month.

The plan was adaptable and flexible, allowing General Franks and his team to turn difficulties into opportunities. For example, the inability of coalition forces to enter Iraq from the north was disappointing. But instead of bringing the 4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division out of the Mediterranean

to the Gulf, General Franks kept them in the Mediterranean—creating the impression in Baghdad that the attack would not start until the coalition could open the northern front. This very likely contributed to the surprise of the Iraqi regime when the war began without those forces in the fight.

One of the most interesting aspects of the campaign was the fact that the “lessons learned” process began before the war began. General Franks installed a “lessons learned” team from Joint Forces Command with his command from the start. They did more than take notes to improve our performance for the next war—they provided immediate feedback, allowing CENTCOM leadership to apply “lessons learned” in real time and improve coalition performance in *this* war.

I’ll leave it to General Franks describe in detail the lessons he believes are most important. For my part, I’d say some key lessons so far include:

- The importance of **speed**, and the ability to get inside the enemy’s decision cycle and strike before he is able to mount a coherent defense;
- The importance of **jointness**, and the ability of U.S. forces to fight, not as individual de-conflicted services, but as a truly joint force—maximizing the power and lethality they bring to bear;
- The importance of **intelligence**—and the ability to act on intelligence rapidly, in minutes, instead of days and even hours;
- And the importance of **precision**, and the ability to deliver devastating damage to enemy positions, while sparing civilian lives and the civilian infrastructure.

Another lesson is that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century “overmatching power” is more important than “overwhelming force.” In the past, under the doctrine of overwhelming force, force tended to be measured in terms of mass—the number of troops that were committed to a particular conflict. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, mass may no longer be the best measure of power in a conflict. After all, when Baghdad fell, there were just over 100,000 American forces on the ground. General Franks overwhelmed the enemy not with the typical three to one advantage in mass, but by overmatching the enemy with advanced capabilities, and using those capabilities in innovative and unexpected ways.

There are many more lessons we will learn from the experience in Iraq, and we are still in the early stages of studying them. Admiral Giambastiani and his team at Joint Forces Command are leading this effort, and the conclusions that are drawn will most certainly affect how the U.S. Armed Forces, and the services organize, train and equip for many years to come.

This will be one of General Franks truly enduring legacies. He led the coalition forces that liberated two nations. But *how* he liberated those countries—the tactics and strategies he developed and employed—will contribute to the freedom of our country and our people for years to come.

So, while General Franks may be leaving the Service, his service to our country will live on—in the impact of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom will have on budgets and procedures, training and doctrine. And the people he led, those who served with him in Iraq and Afghanistan, will now take those transformational experiences to their next important commands, and teach them to the next generation.

So Tom, we salute you, and we thank you for your remarkable service to our country.

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Mr. Chairman, Operation Iraqi Freedom will go down in history, not just for what was accomplished, but also for what did *not* happen as a result of the speed and flexibility of the war plan General Franks and his team employed. Consider just some of the things did not occur:

- Neighboring countries were not hit with Scud missiles.
- The vast majority of Iraq's oil fields were not burned.
- There were no massive civilian casualties, or large masses of refugees fleeing across borders into the neighboring countries.
- There was no large-scale collateral damage. The infrastructure of the country is largely intact.
- Bridges were not blown, and rail lines were protected.
- The dams were not broken and villages were not flooded.

So for all the difficulties in Iraq today—and there are tough challenges to be sure—it is important to keep in mind all of the problems that Iraqis do *not* have to overcome because of the way the war was fought. Today, Iraqis do not have to rebuild oil wells, bridges, roads and dams that were not destroyed in the war. They do not have to bury large numbers of innocent civilians, or rebuild residential neighborhoods, because of the compassion and precision with which coalition forces fought.

Iraqis do face the enormous challenge of rebuilding from three decades of tyranny. We must not underestimate how difficult that task will be. But we can take comfort knowing that, as we freed them from tyranny, we did not add to their burden by destroying Iraq's infrastructure. To the contrary, we saved it.

Today, coalition forces are helping the Iraqi people rebuild, and get on the path to stability and democratic self-government. We are making progress in helping Iraqis re-establish security and commerce; restore power and basic services; reopen schools and hospitals; and establish rule of law. With each passing week, more services come online; power and water are restored in more of the country; gas lines disappear; and more Iraqi police are on the streets.

Indeed, civil society is beginning to form. There are now dozens of independent newspapers sprouting up, in Baghdad and throughout the country. Town councils and associations are forming, and people are expressing opinions openly for the first time in decades.

Vendors in Baghdad are selling videotapes detailing the atrocities that took place in Saddam's prisons. As the President put it last week, these are "the true monuments of Saddam Hussein's rule—the mass graves, the torture chambers, the jail cells for children."

Despite the difficulties they face, most Iraqis are far better off today than they were four months ago. The residents of Baghdad may not have power 24 hours a day, but they no longer wake up each morning in fear, wondering whether this will be the day that the death squads come to cut out their tongues, chop off their ears, or take their children away for "questioning"—never to be seen again.

It is true there are some Iraqis who are *not* better off today—those who comprised the small, elite segment of Iraqi society that benefited from the dictatorship. Such people exist in any dictatorship. And they are understandably unhappy now that the regime that favored them has been removed from power. Today some of them are in hiding. Others are engaging in acts of sabotage and violence.

Let me say a word about the security situation in Iraq today. There seems to be a widely held impression that regime loyalists are operating freely throughout the country, attacking coalition forces at will. That is not the case.

Large portions of Iraq are stable. Most of the recent attacks have been concentrated in Baghdad and three corridors reaching West, North and East out of the Iraqi capital.

At this moment, coalition forces are engaged in operations to deal with the threats in these areas. Indeed, a number the recent incidents in those regions are the result of offensive operations by the Coalition—cases where Coalition forces have sought out and engaged enemy fighters.

Mr. Chairman, the problem is real—but it is being dealt with in an orderly and forceful fashion by coalition forces.

Some may ask: why is the Coalition still engaging hostile forces nearly 10 weeks after major combat operations ended? The answer has to do with the nature of the enemy.

In Iraq, coalition forces drove the country's leaders from power. But unlike traditional adversaries of wars past that sign a surrender document and hand over their weapons, the remnants of the Ba'ath regime and Fedayeen death squads in Iraq did not surrender. Some were killed or captured, but many others faded into the population, and are forming pockets of resistance against coalition forces.

We now have to deal with those remnants of the regime—just as we are dealing with the remnants of al-Qaeda and the Taliban hiding in border areas of Afghanistan. Those battles will likely go on for some time.

In Iraq, we face added challenges. In addition to remnants of the former regime, coalition forces are also dealing with tens of thousands of criminals the regime released into the streets before the war began. They are now at large and are doing what criminals do—looting, robbing and killing people.

In addition, our forces must also deal with foreign terrorists who crossed into Iraq for an opportunity to harm the coalition and to try to shake our resolve in the war on terror. They will not succeed.

So there are a number of sources of instability. But this much is certain: Iraq has been liberated. The Ba'athist regime has been removed from power, and will not be permitted to return. But our war with terrorists—the remnants in Iraq and Afghanistan and terrorist networks across the globe—continues. And it will take time.

Just as we are dealing with terrorist networks in Afghanistan—breaking them up as they attempt to reconstitute—we will deal with them in Iraq. It will take time, but we will prevail.

As President Bush made clear last week:

“There will be no return to tyranny in Iraq. And those who threaten the order and stability of that country will face ruin, just as surely as the regime they once served.”

To help ensure long-term security, the coalition is forming a new Iraqi Army. Walt Slocombe, the Director of Security Affairs for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, announced last month the start of recruitment for the new Army, with an initial goal of having a division of 12,000 men ready within a year, and 40,000 less than three years. As with the training of the Afghan National Army, the objective is to create a situation where, over time, Iraqis can take responsibility for their own stability and security, and not need to depend on foreign forces.

One of the challenges facing the coalition is finding Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs. We are still early in the process, and the task before us is sizable and complex. Major combat operations ended less than 10 weeks ago. The Iraqi regime had 12 years to conceal its programs—to move materials, hide documents, disperse equipment, develop mobile production facilities, and sanitize known WMD sites—including four years with no UN weapons inspectors on the ground. Uncovering those programs will take time.

The coalition did not act in Iraq because we had discovered dramatic new evidence of Iraq's pursuit of WMD; we acted because we saw the existing evidence in a new light—through the

prism of our experience on 9/11. On that day, we saw thousands of innocent men, women and children, killed by terrorists. And that experience changed our appreciation of our vulnerability—and the risks the U.S. faces from terrorist states and terrorist networks armed with weapons of mass murder.

The United States did not choose war—Saddam Hussein did. For twelve years, he violated 17 United Nations resolutions without cost or consequence. His regime had an international obligation to:

- To destroy its weapons of mass destruction; and
- To prove to the world that they had done so.

He refused to do so.

It was the UN Security Council which passed the 17<sup>th</sup> resolution declaring Saddam Hussein was in “material breach” of his disarmament obligations, and giving him one “final opportunity” to disarm. If he had in fact disarmed, why didn’t he take that final opportunity to prove that his programs were ended and his weapons destroyed? Why did he continue to give up tens of billions of dollars in oil revenue under UN sanctions, when he could have had those sanctions lifted simply by demonstrating that he had disarmed? Why did he file what all agreed was a false declaration with the UN? Why didn’t he cooperate with international community—as Kazakhstan, Ukraine and South Africa did?

Had he done so, war could have been avoided. If he had in fact disarmed, he had everything to gain and nothing to lose by cooperating with the UN. Yet he did not cooperate. He continued to lie and obstruct the UN inspectors. The logical conclusion is that he did so because he wanted to keep his weapons—and believed that he could continue to outwit the international community for another 12 years —just as he had for the past 12 years—and survive.

Mr. Chairman, terrorist regimes have been removed in Iraq and Afghanistan—but the global war on terror continues. The President declared last week:

“As long as terrorists and their allies plot to harm America, America is at war.... From the beginning, we have known the effort would be long and difficult, and that our resolve would be tested. We know that sacrifice is unavoidable.... We did not choose this war. Yet, with the safety of the American people at stake, we will continue to wage this war with all our might.”

The objective in the global war on terror is to prevent another attack like September 11<sup>th</sup>—or a biological, nuclear, or chemical attack that could be far worse—before it happens.

One wonders, looking back on history, what might have happened if the world heeded Winston Churchill’s warnings in the 1930s—if, instead of ignoring the growing evidence, free

nations had united, and formed a coalition to intervene and stop Hitler before he completely rearmed; before he invaded Czechoslovakia, and Poland, and set Europe aflame. Consider the lives that would have been saved if the world had faced up to the mounting evidence and the compelling logic of the case Churchill presented, instead of waiting for perfect evidence of his capabilities and intentions in the form of 25 million dead human beings.

The historical record of appeasement is a sorry one. And in an age when terrorists and dictators are seeking nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass murder, we need to consider the lessons of history.

We can look to our experience on September 11<sup>th</sup>. We can look to Saddam Hussein's brutal record of using chemical weapons on foreign forces and on his own people, his history of aggression against his neighbors, his rewards to families of suicide terrorist bombers, and his stated hostility against the United States. We can look to his 12 years of defiance of the international community's demand that he disarm—and the near unanimous assessment of successive Democratic and Republican administrations, the intelligence community (both ours and those of foreign countries), the Congress, and the UN that he had weapons of mass destruction. We can look at all this and imagine a world in which such a dictator was permitted to develop nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, while the world's free nations stood by.

We can say, with confidence, that the world is a better place today because the United States led a coalition of forces into action in Iraq—and because of General Tom Franks' skilled execution of the President's orders.

So, yes, we are paying a price in Iraq and elsewhere around the world today—a price in lives and treasure. But it must be compared to the price we paid on September 11<sup>th</sup> and the price we would have paid for doing nothing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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