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Rep. Duncan "Madame Secretary, you let the consulate become a death trap"



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Duncan Questions Sec. Clinton on Benghazi

Transcript from Benghazi hearing

Duncan: Thank you Mr. Chairman and Madame Secretary. Let me just tell you that Americans are frustrated. They're frustrated over the handling of Benghazi, what happened when four Americans died there. They're frustrated and sometimes they are downright angry about being misled about what really happened there. Being told this was a protest over a video, not just for a couple of days but for weeks on end. And then they are frustrated when they see comments from you this morning when you said "what difference at this point does it make?" I'll tell you what difference it makes, it makes the differences when Americans think they were misled about something for political reasons. In the hearing this morning, you mentioned that "we were clear eyed about the threats and dangers as they were developing in Eastern Libya."

Duncan: Madame Secretary, if you were really, in your words, "clear eyed" about the levels of threat to our consulate in Benghazi or a special mission in Benghazi, then you should have known about Chris Stevens memo, I believe, of 16 August, that said our consulate could not be defended from a coordinated attack. The questions Americans have is, did he expect an

attack? If you were clear eyed, why did your department reject the request on 7 June for 16 additional security agents? The site security team that would have been funded by the DOD not Department of State expenditure. If you were clear eyed, shouldn't you have known that there was no real Libyan government to turn to for security assistance? You answered that question for Mr. Meeks earlier, when you said that you were unsure about the Libyan government and their ability to provide that assistance. If you were clear eyed, were you clear eyed about Al-Qaeda's displeasure with who we seem to be supporting during the summer elections, the moderate that was elected? If you were clear eyed, shouldn't you have known that Al-Qaeda roamed freely in and around Benghazi? As my friend from Pennsylvania pointed out, there were Al-Qaeda flags not just at the protest, there were Al-Qaeda flags flying all over Benghazi. If you were clear eyed, were you clear eyed when the Brits left Benghazi because they were attacked? Why did four Americans die? What was so important that Ambassador Stevens, if he knew there was a security threat in Benghazi, he went there on September 10th and 11th and gave his life for our country, what was so important for him to go to Eastern Libya, knowing all these threats, knowing the memos were clear, and I think you misspoke earlier, when you said you didn't know of any requests that were denied for more security. June 7th, email exchange between Ambassador Stevens and John Moretti when he requested for one additional MSD team, and the reply from John Moretti said "Unfortunately, MSD cannot support the request." There was a request made, for more security, and it was denied on June 7th. And so, **Madame Secretary, you let the consulate become a death trap. And that's national security malpractice.** You said you take responsibility, what does responsibility mean, Madam Secretary? You're still in your job. And there are four people at the Department of State that have culpability in this, that are still in their jobs. I heard the answer about firing or removing personnel. I get that, but this was gross negligence. At what point in time can our administration, and our government fire someone whose gross negligence left four Americans

dead in Benghazi? What does the word responsibility mean to you, Madam Secretary?

Clinton: I think that I've made that very clear, Congressman. And let me say that we've come here and made a very open, transparent presentation. I did not have to de-classify the ARB, I could have joined 18 of the ARBs under both Democratic and Republican administrations, kept it classified, and then, you know, just said goodbye. That's not who I am, that's not what I do. And I have great confidence that the Accountability Review Board, did the job they were asked to do. Made the recommendations that they thought were based on evidence, not on emotion.

Duncan: Claiming my time... There was a lot of evidence that led up to the security situation, you mentioned transparency... you haven't provided the call logs of the messages, the instant messages, during the attack between the post and the operation center. In an era of transparency, will you release these communications between Benghazi, Tripoli, and Washington?

Clinton: I will get an answer to you on that. But I will tell you once more, the reason we have Accountability Review Boards, is so that we take out of politics, we take out of emotion, what happened and we try to get to the truth. I think this very distinguished panel did just that. We are working diligently overtime to implement their recommendations. That is my responsibility. I am going to do everything I can before I finish my tenure. And I would also, going back to your first point, about the concerns that people you represented have expressed about statements that were made, I would refer you both to the unclassified version of the ARB, where after months of research and talking to more than 100 witnesses, the picture is still very complicated about what happened that night, there are key questions I am quoting surrounding the identity, actions, and motivations of the perpetrators that remain to be determined and I recommend that every Member read the classified version which goes into greater detail that I

cannot speak to here today.”

Duncan: It was a terrorist attack. It's pretty clear what the motivation was.

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