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SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI,  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

INTERVIEW OF: [REDACTED]

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2015

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room HVC-205,  
Capitol Visitor Center, commencing at 10:30 a.m.

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Appearances:

For the SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI:

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For [REDACTED]:

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For the U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE:

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ERIC SNYDER

Mr. Missakian. Let's go on the record.

Ms. [REDACTED], this is the transcribed interview being conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi. It is being conducted, as I understand it, voluntarily, that you're appearing voluntarily as opposed to pursuant to a subpoena, as part of the committee's investigation into the attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya and related matters pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Could we begin by having you state and spell your name for the record?

Ms. [REDACTED]. Yes. It's [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

Mr. Missakian. First, let me thank you for appearing here today. We know you traveled a bit of a distance, so the committee appreciates your cooperation in the investigation.

My name is Craig Missakian, I'm one of the lawyers from the majority staff, and at this point, it's traditional for everybody in the room to introduce themselves to you, so why don't I start with Mr. Grider over there in the corner.

Mr. Grider. Hi, I'm Mark Grider.

Mr. Missakian. And then, Mr. Su, why don't you state your name and relationship to the witness, for the record.

Mr. Su. Sure. Jonathan Su, Latham & Watkins on behalf of Ms. [REDACTED]. And Craig, when you have a minute, I'd like to make a brief opening remark whenever you have a chance.

Mr. Missakian. Absolutely. [REDACTED]?

Ms. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED], attorney advisor for the U.S.

Department of State.

Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with minority staff.

Mr. Missakian. All right. Have you ever had your deposition taken before?

Ms. [REDACTED]. No.

Mr. Missakian. Have you ever been interviewed by Congress?

Ms. [REDACTED]. Nope.

Mr. Missakian. Okay. So this will be new to you. There are some procedural and ground rules. I'll just kind of go over those now, and then we'll let your attorney make the statement that he just referred to.

Off the record for a second.

[Discussion off the record.]

Mr. Missakian. Let's go back on the record.

Generally speaking, the way questioning proceeds during these interviews is that a member of the majority staff will ask questions for up to an hour, and then the minority will have an opportunity to ask you questions for an equal amount of time.

Questions may only be asked by a member of the committee or designated staff member. We then rotate back and forth, 1 hour per side until we are out of questions, and at that point, the interview will conclude

Unlike testimony or a deposition in a Federal court proceeding, the committee format is not bound by the rules of evidence. The witness or your counsel may raise objections for privilege, and those would be

subject to review by the chairman of the committee, Mr. Gowdy.

If the objections cannot be resolved during the interview, you may be required to return for an additional -- additional session or for a hearing or for a deposition. Members and staff of the committee are not permitted to raise objections when the other side is asking questions.

With regard to classified information, this session is going to be treated as unclassified. If any question calls for a classified answer, please let us know and we will reserve its answer until we move into a classified setting if we decide to do that. I don't expect that will happen today, but at any rate, just let us know if your answer requires the disclosure of classified information

You are welcome to confer with your attorney at any time during the interview, but if something needs to be clarified, then we simply ask you to let me know. If you don't understand one of my questions, just let me know, and I'm happy to rephrase it. If you need to discuss anything with your counsel off the record and outside the presence of the other members of the staff, just let me know, and we'll take a break. Beyond that, if you want to take a break for any other reason, just let me know.

With regard to the court reporter who you see seated here next to you, there will be -- she's an official court reporter and is taking down everything we say. So recognizing that, we just ask that your responses be verbal as opposed to a nod of the head, for example. Occasionally, the witness and the questioner, sometimes have a tendency

to talk over each other. It makes it difficult for the court reporter, so I will do my best not to talk over you, and I would just ask the same, that you allow me to finish my questions and then we'll allow you to answer.

Ms. [REDACTED], you are required to answer questions posed to you from Congress truthfully. Do you understand that?

Ms. [REDACTED]. I do.

Mr. Missakian. This also applies to questions that are posed to you by congressional staff in an interview. Do you understand that?

Ms. [REDACTED]. Yes.

Mr. Missakian. Do you also understand that witnesses that knowingly provide false testimony could be subject to criminal prosecution for perjury or for making false statements?

Ms. [REDACTED]. I do.

Mr. Missakian. Is there any reason why you're not able to give your best truthful testimony during this interview today?

Ms. [REDACTED]. No.

Mr. Missakian. Peter, do you have anything to add?

Mr. Kenny. I would just like to thank the witness, thank you, Ms. [REDACTED], for appearing here today. I look forward very much to hearing your statement.

Mr. Missakian. All right. Mr. Su, at this point, if I want to make a statement, please do

Mr. Su. Sure. So thank you for the opportunity to talk with you all today. Ms. [REDACTED] is here, as you noted, voluntarily, you know,

to answer the committee's questions. She has expressed an intent to, you know, cooperate with the committee, and that's why she's here.

As you know Craig, you and I, and Dana, Dana Chipman, had some brief correspondence earlier in the month regarding the scope of these proceedings, and we understood, and Dana confirmed that the relevant period of inquiry would be the 2012 attacks in Benghazi, Libya and the immediate days thereafter. That the committee's interest related solely to this witness' government service, and that, you know, the committee would advise me if there are any other specific matters of interest, and I have not heard any other than what's been described here. And further, that the committee's questions would not delve into any classified issues.

So that's kind of the bounds from which we, you know, prepared and are prepared to answer questions, but you know, with that, we'll let you proceed, and we'll go from there, if that makes sense

Mr. Missakian. Okay. Great. Thank you. That's my understanding as well with regard to the scope of the interview. Should something come up in one of your other answers that requires us to follow up on areas that may ordinarily fall outside that scope, we'll do our best to deal with that at the time, but I don't expect that I will have them, but if it does, we'll deal with it.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Okay. First, let's start with the basics. When did you begin work at the State Department?

A I started work in March of 2009.

Q Where did you work prior to that?

A Immediately prior to that, I was at a firm here in town, a speech writing firm called West Wing Writers for a few months. Previous to that, I had been the speech writer for Michelle Obama, on the 2008 Obama for America campaign, and before that I was at this firm, West Wing Writers for about 5 years, if that makes sense.

So I stayed with this firm the whole time, except for a brief period when I left to -- moved to Chicago and write for Mrs. Obama.

Q When you say you were working for Obama for America, was it?

A Yes.

Q Is that the same as the Obama presidential campaign, or is that something different?

A Yes. No, no, no, the campaign.

Q How long did you work on the campaign?

A From August 2008 through election day.

Q Okay. When did you leave the State Department?

A In February 2013.

Q That was when Secretary Clinton left?

A Shortly after, yeah.

Q Was there any discussion of you staying after she left the State Department?

A Not really.

Q Was that typical for people in her speech writing department

to leave with her?

A I don't know actually how long everyone else stayed. I left.

Q Was it expected that people would leave when she left?

A I don't know actually. I know I had made up my mind to leave then, and so that kind of foreclosed the issue for me. And I didn't really talk seriously with anyone about staying, so I didn't -- I don't know. That was sort of the beginning of the end of the conversation in my own head.

Q Okay. Now, from March 2009 to February 2013, when you left, what was your title or titles during that time?

A Yeah. I was her speech writer. I think eventually I became her senior speech writer. Also, as a speech writer, I was also a member of the policy planning staff at the State Department speech writers -- their home is within policy planning.

Q Tell me a little bit more about the structure. So you have the -- who was the head of the policy planning staff at that time?

A When I started, it was a woman named Ann Marie Slaughter. She was director of policy planning for 2 years, so that's, I guess, roughly the calendar years of 2009, 2010. Having said that, I'm actually not positive about the dates of her service, but they're publicly available. So she was my first boss as the head of policy planning, and then she was replaced by Jake Sullivan for the last 2 years or so of the Clinton time.

Q Just so I understand, there's the policy planning staff,

and the speech writing department is under that, so --

A Right.

Q -- essentially your boss was first Ann Marie Slaughter and then Jake Sullivan?

A Yes. Although, as perhaps a slightly complicating circumstance.

Q Please.

A There's also a director of speech writing. So as a speech writer, I answer to both, I guess.

Q Who is that director?

A Well, at first it was a woman named [REDACTED] who hired me.

Q Could you spell that?

A Yes, her first name is [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and her last name is [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

Q Okay.

A So she hired me and she served as director for about 2 years, and then when she left, she was replaced by a man named [REDACTED].

Q When did [REDACTED] leave, to your knowledge?

A That's a good question. I don't -- around when I left, I think. I'm not sure.

Q Describe for us the relationship between the director of speech writing and Jake Sullivan, for example, the head of the policy planning staff?

A What do you mean by describe the relationship?

Q Well, tell us a little bit about the process of how Jake Sullivan fit into the process of approving the work product that came out of the speech writing department?

A Uh-huh. Well, he certainly read everything that we produced. He was an editor, or he weighed in on the drafts that we wrote, some more than others. He offered edits. Often we would meet with him before drafting to get his thoughts for what ought to be in a speech. We also did that with other high-level officials across the building, especially depending on what the content of the speech was. For example, if it were a speech about China, we would speak with the head of the East Asia Bureau or maybe whoever was the head of the China desk, so we do a lot of preliminary meetings, especially on big speeches with people around the department, including Jake, and he would generally be on the list of people who would vet speeches, who would read speeches, who would read drafts. Yeah.

Q Okay. And how would that work physically? Would somebody in your department do a Word document, for example, and then email it around?

A Exactly.

Q Okay. And physically, where was your department located in relationship to Jake Sullivan's policy planning staff?

A So the policy planning staff occupies several suites in like a general area that -- depending on how big we are, you know, I believe we sort of commandeered some rooms here and there in order to make sure everyone has a seat.

So there is one main suite of offices, it's relatively small, on the 7th floor of the State Department. That's where the policy planning director has his office, it's where his chief of staff is, it's where his deputy director is, and then there are like eight offices in that suite. Mine was one of them, and the director of speech writing also had one of them.

Q One thing we've learned in some of the other interviews is that various bureaus, for example, the one that we're most interested in here is the NEA bureau. Within that bureau and others, there are people that specialize in communications.

A Yeah.

Q What was your -- what was the relationship generally, between the speech writing department and those communications departments within the individual bureaus?

A It was small. I can't think now of who those people were in any -- I do know that there are -- you're right, that there are communication staff sort of scattered around the department.

Q Uh-huh.

A There are also other speech writers. Some people have speech writers. I don't even know who -- I don't know who they are.

Q So to the extent that you mentioned earlier that with regard to certain speeches you might talk to the folks in that particular area, I think you used China as an example, when you met with the people in that area of the world, were you talking to the communications people or more the, I don't know, policy, subject matter experts within that

department?

A Policy. I can't remember ever meeting with a communication staffer. It was almost always like the assistant secretary or the deputy assistant secretary, so it was the front office staff. Now, having said that, I certainly attended meetings in which there were like a bunch of people from that bureau, and I wouldn't know necessarily who all of them were. We might meet around a table like this and very quickly introduce ourselves, and then I would say, what do you all think?

Q Do you recall any instances where the people from the communications departments within those other bureaus were involved in the editing process of any speech that your shop had drafted?

A I don't remember many examples of that. There was a woman in the EURB, the European and Eurasian bureau who was a talented writer, and I think, I think wrote speeches for the assistant secretary, and he had, I think, at one point cc'd her to ask her to weigh in on edits. I remember this because they were very good, and there aren't a lot of woman speech writers, so I noticed this.

Apart from that, I have no memory of a communication staffer editing.

Q Okay. So it sounds like that was an exception rather than the normal process?

A I believe so, yes.

Q Let's talk a little bit about the relationship between speech writing -- before I get to that, just for the record, Heather

Sawyer from the minority staff has joined us.

Let's talk about the relationship between the speech writing department and the State Department's press office, which at the time, I believe, was headed up by Victoria Nuland. Is that correct?

A Uh-huh. She was our spokeswoman. I'm so bad with titles. I have no idea if she ran the office, but I trust that you know.

Q Let's not assume that.

A I know she was behind the podium every day.

Q Okay. So --

Mr. Su. Well, let's define time period, how about that? Is that --

Ms. [REDACTED]. Oh, that's a good point. When are you talking about?

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q All these questions just relate to the time period you were at the State Department.

A Okay. Well, there were several people during that time who were spokesperson.

Q Okay. Let's start with the structure of that department and identify the --

A Yeah.

Q -- positions first. We've identified the spokesperson, Victoria Nuland held that at some point in time.

A Right.

Q Who else was in that department?

A Boy, you're really exposing my ignorance here. I genuinely don't know a lot of -- I can't think of a lot of people that I knew in that department.

Q Would you know them by title or position?

A Maybe. No, I mean, I --

Q Okay.

A -- truly -- my mind is blank thinking of anyone in public relations, except Victoria.

Q Okay. Why don't you describe in general the interaction between State -- I mean, the speech writing shop and Victoria Nuland's --

A Right.

Q -- department?

A Well, Victoria herself was on a lot of the -- often was on the distribution list for speeches. She is a very beautiful writer herself, so she would often offer edits, and I often really admired them and took them, so she's someone that I knew well and worked with often. She also traveled with us.

Apart from her, I can't think of anybody in the public relations or public affairs bureau that I worked with.

Q Would it have been typical for Victoria Nuland to sit down with your group in one of these pre-meetings that you talked about?

A No.

Q So it sounds like she would have come into the process, if at all, after something had been drafted and then it was being

circulated for comment and edit?

A That's right. That is the process that I recall, yeah, generally.

Q Tell us more about who is in your department. We know about [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] --

A [REDACTED].

Q -- [REDACTED], thank you. Who else was in the department during that period from March 2009 to February 2013?

A Well, there were a number of people. This is speech writing specifically that you're talking about?

Q Speech writing department, yes.

A People came in and out, as you can imagine, during that time, so how would you like me to --

Q Let's talk start with how many permanent slots are there in that department?

A That's a good question. I think -- well, there was a director who at one point was [REDACTED] and one point was [REDACTED]. There was me, there was another permanent spot, which was filled for a time by a guy named [REDACTED].

Mr. Su. You are going to want to spell that for her.

A [REDACTED] is his first name, which is [REDACTED], and his last name is [REDACTED]. Then there is another permanent spot, which is somebody who writes both for the secretary and for the deputy secretaries, so that person has a multiple roles. We had a staff assistant, and then there were few other people who wrote with us who

I believe technically were seated -- belong to different bureaus but who were sort of on loan to us. There was one woman who had a presidential management fellowship.

Q Hold that thought.

[Discussion off the record.]

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q All right. Do you remember where you were?

A Yeah. We were talking about the people that work with us. So I think there were about four permanent speech slots. We had a staff assistant as well that might have also been a fifth slot.

Then there were a few other people who wrote with us who I think technically belong to different bureaus who I don't think actually occupies our slots but who were effectively on our staff who wrote, who attended our meetings.

Q Do you recall anybody from the NEA bureau being in one of those slots?

A No.

Q How were those bureaus identified; do you recall?

A Well, in the case of one person, she was a presidential management fellow who was in a bureau where she wasn't really -- she didn't have that much to do, and she had an interest in speech writing, so she sort of helped out from time to time, and then it was clear that she was very talented, so her bureau was willing to lend her to us, so it really was the person, not the bureau, if that makes sense.

Q It does.

A That's the one person that I could think of actually.

Q At one point I think you mentioned that some people write speeches for the secretary, some people write speeches for the assistant secretary. Were there clear lines of demarcation or were assignments done more on an ad hoc basis?

A Well, for that one person who wrote for the deputy, the secretary and the two deputy secretaries of State, he was the only person who had that responsibility and no one else wrote for the deputies.

The rest of us all worked for the Secretary, and it was pretty ad hoc. It was basically who is next available got the next speech.

Q Now, one thing we've seen is on occasion, Jake Sullivan would put pen to paper and draft a statement that the Secretary would give or maybe even a speech. How were those decisions made? And by that I mean, the decision to have somebody in the speech writing department write the speech versus having somebody outside that department, like Jake Sullivan, weigh in and do something?

A That's a good question. I don't remember incidents of that happening, although it makes sense that they would, but I can't, I don't remember that happening, so I don't know how to answer that question.

Q Okay. That's fair. I have in mind one statement that we'll get to later on, we know that Jake Sullivan wrote or at least took part in writing. It was a short, not what I would describe as a speech. I mean, is it fair to say that the speech department wrote all the speeches and Jake Sullivan or others may have come in to write

statements, or did the speech writing department write statements as well? I mean, were the lines that clear or am I just reading too much into it?

A The lines were not that clear. Over the course of 4 years, an enormous amount of writing was produced in the form of speeches or occasionally written statements. We usually, for the most part, usually didn't write written statements. It was usually produced elsewhere. Sometimes we would give them a read or an edit or a polish. But it's hard to state authoritatively exactly where every product originated, if that makes sense.

So over the course of those 4 years, there was just so much that I'm sure that if I said this is how it always worked, there would be a counterexample.

Q Okay. So it sounds like the speech writing department did focus on speeches, and statements, not so much. Do you know why that is or was?

A Well, it's a volume issue. She gave a lot of speeches. She gave a lot of speeches. Every Secretary of State gives a lot of speeches, but she gave more than most or than previous secretaries had given, so we had a lot of work to do.

Q Okay. With regard to the statements that were prepared, were those sent to your department for vetting or were those vetted outside the speech department? By vetting I mean reviewed, edited, that kind of thing?

A That's another good question that I don't really know the

answer to that.

Q What do you recall personally? Do you ever recall seeing a statement come to you that you were asked to review and edit?

A I'm sure that happened, probably several times. I don't remember off the top of my head a specific statement, but I'm positive they exist. I don't know how speeches that I wasn't cc'd on or asked to review -- I mean, pardon me, statements. I don't know how those statements were vetted. You know, I would only know if they -- if I were on the email chain, I would be a part of that moment, but otherwise, I don't know how they were handled, if that makes sense.

Q Uh-huh.

A So I'd say as a -- I don't know if this is a hypothetical. I don't know if that's the right word, but like a general matter, if occasionally there was a statement that, you know, perhaps it borrowed language from a speech I had recently written, perhaps it was on an issue area where I had written a number of speeches on that area, I might be asked to take a quick look at this before we send it out, and I would.

Q All right. One thing that we've noticed is, on occasion, something being drafted, the State Department will be sent to somebody in the White House for review. For example, we've seen that with Ben Rhodes getting involved in the process. Can you shed any light on the relationship between, you know, the written product coming out of the State Department and the White House's review of that?

A I can remember off the top of my head one example of that.

I wrote a speech about energy diplomacy, energy security, and then at some point I sent it to Ben to have him take a look at it knowing that it was one of the first times she'd ever spoken on this topic. It was a fairly new bureau. We had created it. It was the first time that -- it was the first major policy statement about this issue area, and Ben wrote back to say something like looks good.

Q Okay.

A So it was a very light touch.

Q Okay. How did you know to send it to Ben Rhodes?

A Jake Sullivan asked me to send it to Ben Rhodes.

Q Did he give you an explanation for why Ben Rhodes was coming into the process?

A I don't believe he did so, no. I don't remember exactly, but no, I don't think so.

Q And going forward, did you have an understanding what if any role Ben Rhodes would play in reviewing speeches that you were drafting, for example?

A I don't know that I had an -- I don't really know how to describe it. There wasn't like a set of rules where it was like if you write a speech like this --

Q Uh-huh.

A -- please send it to Ben. That did not exist. It was more that in this one scenario, this one case that I do remember, it was that Jake said can you send it to Ben to make sure he sees this, or something like that, and I did, and that was kind of it. So you know,

that's how that incident worked. That's how that worked that time.

Q Do you recall how many discussions with your colleagues in the speech writing department about either Ben Rhodes reviewing their work or anybody else in the White House reviewing their work?

A I don't remember a conversation like that, no.

Q All right. Let's move to the night of the attack, September 11. Obviously, we are going to focus a little bit on that. Let's start out with the basics. Were you at the office that day?

A I was.

Q And at any point during that day, did you become aware of the protests that were going on in Cairo?

A I did. I did, at some point, come to know that, yeah.

Q Do you recall how you became aware of it?

A I do not.

Q So it could have been you were following a twitter feed, it could have been a conversation with one of your colleagues, at this point you don't know one way or the other?

A I just don't remember.

Q That's fine. We know it was awhile ago. What if anything do you recall about Cairo when you first heard about it?

A I remember being upset. I had gone to Cairo not that long before then, I think. Gosh, I should have that answer for you, I'm sorry. But at some point in the months preceding that, I had taken a trip to Cairo with the Secretary, so I remember thinking I know exactly where this is happening. I've been to that embassy. And at some point

I believe during that, those protests -- I mean, I think they crossed the -- the protestors got over a wall. I think they pulled down our flag. That was extremely distressing.

Q Do you remember how you were getting any of the information you had regarding Cairo?

A Well, I don't remember exactly if I had. I mean, what I would -- almost certainly I was glued to the television. I would have had, you know, the various newspaper and TV sites up on my computer. We also, likely, because it was a -- again, this is -- I'm sorry that I don't remember this exactly, but we usually get, when there is -- certainly when there is like an attack on an American facility, I think we would likely to have gotten an alert from the Op Center at the State Department, so I would have been hearing from them, too, probably.

Q We have seen some emails that come from Ops Alert at maybe State.gov, I don't remember. What's your understanding of who receives those Ops Alerts?

A I don't know the answer to that. I never signed up for them or anything like that, but I receive them, so I don't know if that means that everyone at the State Department gets them or if certain staffs do. I don't know, but I know that I did.

Q What was your understanding of where they were coming from?

A Well, there is an Ops Center, it's an office not far from our offices at the State Department, and I've seen in them once. It's like a 24-hour center that's pretty high-tech, and they follow events

around the world at all times, so I think they all come from that office.

Q At this point in time, September 11, 2012, was [REDACTED] the head of the speech writing department?

A He was.

Q He had taken over at that point. All right. Did you have any conversations within the speech writing department about -- professional conversations about how the speech writing department would fit into any messaging about what was going on in Cairo?

A I don't remember a conversation like that.

Q Do you recall any meetings with your colleagues about what was going on in Cairo?

A I do not.

Q Do you recall what time you left the office that night?

A I don't know that either. I'm sorry.

Q That's okay.

A So it's going to be -- sadly, that's going to be my answer for a lot, for what happened that day. I just don't remember a lot of what happened that day.

Q Can you say whether or not it was a normal day, you left at 6:00, 7:00, or whether you stayed later?

A It probably was a normal day. You know, I will say that as a speech writer, there are times when I'm up writing many days in a row, and then if it's -- if I don't have an active assignment, we'll leave early, or I might be staying late in order to get -- my hours

were extremely erratic, so it's hard to -- when you say like a normal day, there are actually -- there kind of weren't a lot of normal days for me in terms of hours at the office.

Q All right. So let's move ahead a little bit in the day. At some point at around 3:40 Eastern time, that's when the attacks in Benghazi occurred. Do you recall hearing about those attacks?

A I know that I did at some point hear that something terrible is happening in Benghazi. I don't remember when. 3:40, that's interesting. I wouldn't have been able to name that time.

Q Do you remember how you learned of the attacks?

A Again, I do not.

Q Do you recall what you learned about the attacks?

A No. I know that -- I mean, I know at some point I learned that something was happening, and I don't remember how it was described. I don't know.

Q What's your best recollection of what you heard, first off, about what was happening in Benghazi?

A Right. Well, I really don't know. I don't know. I don't know how it was originally described, or I don't know where I heard about it. I don't know. I think that if I had to make my best recollection, is that the phrase?

Q That's all we want is your best recollection.

A It's probably that I heard that it was a protest just like what was -- similar to what was happening that day in Cairo, but I'm sorry, I don't have a real recollection of this.

Q Okay. So if your best recollection is that you heard it was a protest, I mean, what's your best recollection of where you got that information?

A Well, probably a combination of an Ops Alert, which I'm just -- again, I don't remember receiving an Ops Alert about Benghazi, but that is what they do. That's exactly what they do. They send out alerts when something like Benghazi happens, so I probably was getting alerts from them.

And then if I recall, there was a great deal of press reporting about what was happening in Egypt that day, and in time ago, what was happening in Benghazi that day, so probably a combination of that.

Q Okay. So a combination of information from the Ops Alerts and then possibly what was being reported in the open media?

A Right.

Q Okay. With regard to what was being reported in the open media, I mean, would you have taken that as gospel, or how would you have treated that information?

A No, certainly not. I wouldn't take any press report as gospel, you know, ever.

Q As you sit here today, do you recall participating in any briefings that night about what was occurring in Benghazi?

A No, I did not.

Q There's some evidence that there was a SVTCS, a secure video teleconference, that night at 7:30 p.m. Did you take part in that?

A I did not.

Q Were you aware of it?

A I was not.

Q Until now?

A Until hearing about it now.

Q Is that something that Mr. ██████ would have taken part in, to your knowledge?

A I don't know. I don't know.

Q Have you spoken to Mr. ██████ about anything that occurred that night since you left the State Department?

A I have not.

Q Have you spoken to anybody about what occurred that night, other than your attorney?

A That's a good question. I can't think of an example with me talking to anybody about what happened that night. I talked to my family, but that was a really terrible night for a lot of us, and it's really -- it was certainly the worst day I ever had at the State Department. So though I can't remember a specific conversation about it, I don't want to foreclose the possibility that I've spoken about it with friends or colleagues.

Q Why don't you walk us through the events that night as best you can remember them. Why don't we start with, you know, around 3:40, which is when the attack occurred in Benghazi, and just as best you can, take us through what you did that night?

A Well, where my memory really kicks in is quite a bit later in the day, which is after I was home, it was in the evening, I was

ready to start winding down, and I got a call from my colleague [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who said that -- something like it looks like our facility in Benghazi has been attacked, some Americans might be dead, we're afraid that the Ambassador, that Chris might be dead, and we are going to have to put our heads together and write something for the Secretary because she's going to want to talk about this in the morning.

Q Did you get a sense that Mr. [REDACTED] was coming up with this idea on his own, or was this coming from Mr. [REDACTED]?

A No, I did not. I don't think he was coming up with this on his own. I actually don't know who would have been the person to give him the heads up that this was happening. I don't know.

Q So what did you say to him, as best you can recall, in that conversation?

A Well, we came up with a plan for how to get this done. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I lived in [REDACTED]. I had been to his house quite a bit. We're friends. He has a comfortable home, so we agreed that I would grab my computer and I would come up to his house and we would sit together and try to write something good under tough circumstances.

Q How long was the phone call?

A Short. Basically as long as what just happened here.

Q Okay. So you hung up the phone, you packed up your stuff, and you went to his house.

A I did.

Q Shortly after the call.

A That's right.

Q Can you remember anything about what type of night that was?

A Just a straight up guess, an uninformed guess, 10:00, 10:30, in the evening. It was not early. It was late, at a point where I would normally be trying to get to sleep.

Q How late were you at Mr. [REDACTED] house that night?

A So soon after that, so --

Mr. Su. I think he's asking you -- I think Craig is asking you when you left, right?

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Yes. How late were you there?

A Well, that's a good question. I've seen an email that I wrote that had a time stamp like 3:30 in the morning, so certainly until then, maybe a little bit after that, 3:30, 4:00, something like that.

Q Was anybody else there besides you and Mr. [REDACTED]?

A Yes, one of our other colleagues, a guy named [REDACTED].

Q Could you spell that for us, please.

A Yes, it's [REDACTED]. Everyone's named [REDACTED] in my life, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. His last name is [REDACTED], [REDACTED].

Q [REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED], like [REDACTED], exactly, and he -- I called him after [REDACTED] [REDACTED] called me, and he came and picked me up, and the two of us drove up to [REDACTED].

Q And who is he, Mr. [REDACTED]?

A He is another speech writer with us, so the three of us were

colleagues.

Q At that point, I think you said you took your laptop. Did Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED] both have their laptops as well?

A That's a good question. I think [REDACTED] did, it was his home, so I think his laptop was there. I don't know if [REDACTED] brought his laptop.

Q Did you have anything that gave you access to your work email?

A Yes. We had fobs that we used to sign into our work email from when we were not on from outside the building.

Q Do you recall doing that that night?

A I do not.

Q So we've got three people in the room, probably three laptops, at least one. What other information did you collect before you went over to Mr. [REDACTED] house?

A I don't remember collecting any.

Q What information did he have about the attacks when you got there, if any?

A I don't remember specifics. I do remember that we didn't know a lot.

Q Let's just take it step by step. You three got there. Did you have a kind of a conversation to get your bearings and decide who was going to do what at the outset? How did the evening begin?

A That's another great question that I don't have a great answer to, I'm sorry. You know, there's not like a set of steps that

you follow when you sit down to write a speech, no matter what, but certainly in a situation that just wasn't that --

Q Let me give you an example of what I'm thinking about.

A Please.

Q Potential one way to divvy up the labor is they could have said, [REDACTED], you're going to be writing the speech, Mr. [REDACTED], you're going to be collecting the information that goes into it, and Mr. [REDACTED], you're going to be ordering the pizza, whatever it turns out to be. I mean, did you have that kind of conversation where you're dividing up the labor at the outset, and what do you recall about that conversation?

A I don't think we did do that. I think we definitely -- part of the conversation that started then but really did last the whole time was, you know, what can we actually give her, what should she say.

Q Did you have any direction on what the -- first of all, were you just writing a speech in the abstract, or was this a speech that was intended for a specific event or a specific purpose?

A Right. Well, you know, so this now, at this point was like 3-and-a-half years into our time together writing for her, and then of three of us, several of us had been writing together. I mean, we now all had a few years, at least, under our belts.

So I'd say that we all knew, because of our previous months or years of experience, never quite in this situation but in similar sort of, you know, you got to write something quickly because of the fast-moving events somewhere in the world and she needs to say something

about it.

We knew basically a few things that we wanted to accomplish. If indeed some people had died, we knew that we wanted to give her some material that she could say about them, so she could say gracious things about them, which we knew she would have wanted to do. We knew that we would want to give her some sort of a -- something that she could say that would summarize what had happened, anticipating that, you know, if Americans were waking up and turning on their TV in the morning and their Secretary of State was standing there, that they would -- one of the questions on their mind would be what, what happened. We wanted to be able to give her some language that would at least begin to answer that.

And then, you know, we knew that, as we often do in response to a violent, you know, distressing worldly appalling moment, we knew that she would want to say something that reiterated our values, our purpose, our, you know, continuing on our mission, how we won't be swayed by this. So there were sort of, I guess, units, if that makes sense, of what we knew this document, this speech would need to cover.

We had a loose idea of how it would be delivered, which is that we knew that some time in the morning, so not too late in the day, she would want to go on camera, probably in the blue room at the State Department which is where she often does statements. And we knew it should be pretty short. I don't know if that's helpful, but that's sort of --

Q No, no, it's very helpful. Thank you. So you knew

that -- did you know she planned to go on camera the next morning, or was that just something that you expect that she would do?

A I don't know the answer to that. I'm not sure if we knew that for sure or if we assumed that she would want to.

Q Where was Mr. [REDACTED] in this process that night?

A He really wasn't a part of this process that night. I'm not -- I don't know if he knew that we were gathering like that. He may have. I wasn't in contact with him that day -- that night.

Q With regard to the, to use your term, the unit of the speech that explained to the American people what had happened in Benghazi. How did you all go about collecting the information to answer that question?

A That is such a great question because so many of the facts of the matter were like -- were very foggy at that moment. Often, in a circumstance like that, we would be getting the information from our people on the ground, but obviously, in this circumstance, it was impossible to get information from them because they were under attack.

So we wanted to write something that was, you know, safe, that we could have confidence in without going too far into any details that would turn out to be -- perhaps that would turn out to be wrong. We didn't want, as ever, never want to give her something that's wrong.

So I looked at the final text since then, and I think, if I recall, it's pretty -- it's actually fairly generic, which is just what happens in a circumstance like this. There's just not a lot that we could assert with total certainty. So we stuck with what we felt like we

could safely assert, that our compound was attacked by, I think we described them as heavily armed militants, which I believe -- I mean, that is like a fairly safe phrase, you know.

They were clearly armed, and they were -- anyone who attacks an American facility is a militant, so that was sort of how we settled on that. Just what can we have confidence in.

Q And we'll get into that statement in more detail later. So is it fair to say that you were not relying on anything that was being reported in the open source media?

A Well, I would say relying -- I don't think -- no. We were not relying on anything reported in the open source media, by which I mean we wouldn't see something reported in CNN or New York Times and say great, and cut and paste and put it in a document for her, absolutely not. Having said that, we were certainly following what was being reported in the open source media.

Q Sorry. Did you finish your answer?

A No, because --

Q Go on.

A Because you know, that was helpful.

Q Okay. Did you speak to anybody in the Ops Center that night about what was going on, because my understanding is that there were communications going back and forth between the United States and Benghazi, United States and Tripoli?

A Yeah.

Q Did you speak to anybody either in the DS command center

to the Ops Center that night?

A No.

Q Did you speak to anybody -- and this is again about what happened in Benghazi. Did you speak to anybody in the NEA bureau about what had happened in the attacks?

A I don't recall speaking to anyone in the NEA bureau.

Q Is that something you would have done? I mean, you talked earlier about the process. If you're writing a speech about China, you go to --

A Right.

Q -- the China experts and ask them. I mean, did that happen that night with regard to Libya?

A No, I don't think so. I don't recall any conversation with anyone from -- no.

Q All right. So let's just try to circumscribe the sources of information you three had that night. Obviously you had access to your State Department email?

A Right.

Q So whatever was in those emails is, you know, that was in those emails. We talked about the open source reporting. Were there any individuals that you spoke to either within the State Department or outside the State Department about what had occurred?

A So just putting it -- to add one thing. In terms of State Department emails, I don't recall what emails I received that night. Hopefully there is a record of them. But my guess is that we probably

were getting some information from people who were just sending us things, either us specifically, the speech writers, or that perhaps we were on a distribution list, I don't know. But I wouldn't be surprised if it turned out that, you know, in addition to an Ops Alert, perhaps we got some sort of an update maybe from NEA, maybe from -- I don't know. I don't know who else.

Q I mean, at this point --

A I don't want to foreclose the possibility that there was more information coming at us.

Q Right.

A If that makes sense.

Q The record of what emails you received is the record, whatever that is?

A Right.

Q Just sitting here today, you can't recall any specifics?

A Not a one.

Q With regard to speaking to anybody, do you recall speaking to anybody that night?

A Jake Sullivan is probably -- that's the only person I can think of, outside of that room.

Q When you had your conversation -- or let me ask you. Was it one conversation or multiple?

A Well, he joined us. I don't know if we spoke on the phone before he joined us.

Q He joined you in person?

A Yes. He came to [REDACTED] office -- apartment.

Q Apartment. At what point in the evening did Mr. Sullivan show up; do you recall?

A It was sometime after we got there, so my guess it was after midnight.

Q Was he alone?

A Yes.

Q What if anything did he bring with him?

A I don't think he brought anything.

Q No laptop, no briefcase, no files, no nothing?

A No. His Blackberry.

Q How long was he there, if you recall?

A He stayed with us until we were finished, so we all left together, whenever that was.

Q And prior to him showing up, I assume you knew he was coming?

A I probably did know that he was coming. I don't remember being surprised when he showed up.

Q All right. So I'm just trying to understand. If Mr. [REDACTED], the head of that department wasn't -- seems that maybe he wasn't involved, maybe he didn't even know about it, the three of you got together and decided to meet. Was that at Mr. Sullivan's suggestion or did you reach out to him and invite him to the --

A Right.

Q -- working group?

A So I don't remember the exact chain of events here. You

know, I don't remember exactly how that happened. I don't know why -- who called [REDACTED] originally and said something's happening, we think it could be very bad, we think Chris could be dead, you guys should write something.

I'm not sure who made that call to him. I'm not sure when -- if I told Jake at some point separately, hey, I'm on my way to [REDACTED]. I may have. Jake was our boss. We had worked together very, very closely for many years, for several years at this point, so it would have certainly been natural to say we're working on this, let us know if you need anything, or whatever, just to keep him in the loop as to the fact that someone was taking care of this, you know, certainly compared to everything else that was happening that night, this comparatively very small piece of what was happening, but you know, something that needed to get done. Having said all that, I don't remember for sure.

Mr. Su. So I am going to give you this advice, which is what Craig wants to know is what your recollection is.

Ms. [REDACTED]. Right.

Mr. Su. He understands that you are not -- by saying that you do not recall a specific event, that you're not necessarily foreclosing other possibilities, so --

Ms. [REDACTED]. Right.

Mr. Su. So I'll deign to speak for Craig. He's just asking for your recollection. So don't feel like, if you cannot recall a particular event, that what he's going to take from that, well, then

██████ is foreclosing any other possibility.

Ms. ██████. Right.

Mr. Su. I don't think he's taking that position. He just wants to know what you specifically recall.

Mr. Missakian. I couldn't have said it better myself. That's fair.

Ms. ██████. Thank you. Thank you.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Okay. So let's go back to Mr. Sullivan a little bit and finish off with him. Now, my understanding is that the State Department issued a statement at around 10 o'clock the night of the attacks, and I'm sure you're aware of that statement as you sit here today, but what I'm asking you is the night of the 11th when you were at Mr. ██████ apartment, were you aware that that statement had gone out?

A I don't remember.

Q Do you recall, when Mr. Sullivan got there, he had a copy of that statement? In other words, I mean, think of it in this context. He walks in, this is what we put out, let's get to work on the longer piece. Do you remember anything like that?

A I don't.

Q Okay. Well, as best you can recall, just take us through the evening before Mr. Sullivan got there, and then we'll go into after he got there?

A Well, there's not that much of a difference between before

and after. I mean, part of my answer is that, you know, writing a speech, I mean, I'm like pulling back the curtain on how to write a speech. It's like a very haphazard situation. There's no clear process.

We all started thinking out loud, you know, this would be a nice phrase, maybe she should say this. I can write a little bit about Chris. Let's find out a little bit more about the other guys if we can. Do we know who they are. Has it been confirmed. So it's just like a narrative conversational process.

I don't think that changed much once Jake got there. He certainly would have known more than we did about what was happening just by the nature of his work, but we just kind of kept that process going until there is a page-and-a-half written.

Q I'm sure you're aware that one of the possible motivations of what had occurred in Cairo was the video that was put out on YouTube. Now, prior to going to Mr. [REDACTED] apartment, do you recall being aware of that video?

A Yes.

Q How did you become aware of it?

A I don't remember.

Q What do you recall about the video? Again, this is back then.

A Right.

Q Not now.

A Well, I remember that the Egyptian television, I believe,

played it or played segments of it on the national Egyptian TV. I believe that was before the protest. I believe that is what triggered the protest. I haven't seen the video. My understanding of what it contains is some pretty ugly depictions of the Prophet Muhammad in pretty ugly situations.

Q Do you recall having any information that connected the video to what occurred in Benghazi prior to getting to Mr. [REDACTED] apartment?

A I do not.

Q Now, was there a draft of the speech that would be done prior to Mr. Sullivan getting there that night?

A No. Well, actually I don't really remember but almost certainly not because I think it took as long as it took. I think it took awhile.

Q Sorry.

A No, of course.

Q I've got to try harder. Do you remember who physically typed the speech that you three were working on, you four were working on eventually?

A I think we shared that duty. I know I certainly typed for awhile. I recall, for example, [REDACTED] at one point saying maybe we should say something about, you know, our strength in the face of situations like this. He was sort of musing out loud, and I remember being like write it, don't just narrate it.

Q What I'm trying to get at, and I probably didn't ask it in

the best way, is would there be a way for us as investigators to go back and kind of piece together the chronology of drafts that were done that night by you four?

A I don't know. I think that would be hard. I think it was just one document that we just worked on exclusively. I'm not really sure how one kind of forensically takes that kind of a draft apart, so I'm not really sure what you could do with that.

Q So your best recollection is there was one laptop and maybe you all traded off typing on it?

A That is my best recollection, yeah.

Q As you sit here today, is there anything about the process that you recall that night involving anything specific that was being said about what occurred in Benghazi, anything that stands out in your mind now?

A I don't remember if it happened while we were there or afterward, but I do remember there was a video taken by someone in the crowd that night that showed the Ambassador's body being taken to the hospital. It was incredibly upsetting, so I will never forget that. I think we saw that while we were all still together. It may have been --

RPTR MCCONNELL

EDTR HUMKE

[11:31 a.m.]

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q On the news?

A No. It was someone had -- I mean, someone in the crowd had taken it and put it up, I think, on Twitter. Maybe I saw it on Facebook. It was on social media, and it was heartbreaking.

Q And do you recall any discussions on the video and how to treat that video in the speech that you were preparing?

A We definitely discussed it. I don't remember specifically what we said. I think whatever -- I'm sorry that I can't recite or don't quite remember exactly how we treated it in that first draft. But that -- how we treated it in that first draft would have been, obviously, the result of whatever conversation we had about it.

Q Right. As you sit here today, do you recall anything generally about the conversation specific to the video that night?

A No. Only that we thought it belonged in the statement.

Q Do you recall why you thought it belonged in the statement?

A Well --

Q When I say you, I don't mean you necessary. I mean you, the group?

A That's a good clarification because I was just about to say I can only tell you why I remember thinking, yeah, that should be in the statement.

Q Okay.

A Which is that I believed that it played a role in sparking the events of that night. And that any sort of conversation about what had happened, and what has to happen now would have to be taken into account in some way.

Q Okay, just so I understand, it was your view that night that the video should be referred to in the statement because in your mind, the video had played some role in the attack in Benghazi?

A Yeah, in sparking them or triggering them or motivating some of the people that night. Yeah, yes.

Q And so you were kind of going back to your point about one of the goals for this speech was to explain to the American people what had happened. For that reason you wanted to refer to the video. Is that fair?

A Yeah. I would say that's fair.

Q And as best you can, could you just tell us what you based that conclusion on, or that opinion that the video somehow sparked what occurred in Benghazi?

A Well, at the time it seems like the commonsense conclusion. You know, there was this incident happening in the same -- not far from Benghazi, just a few countries to the -- well, shoot, one country to the east. God, I'm failing on the geography -- a nearby country, Cairo, Egypt, on the same day there was this protest that seemed -- that was similarly targeting an American facility, that similarly had our facility breached in this alarming way. And that seemed to be very

clearly connected to this video since, again, I believe that not long before that protest broke out, the video had been broadcast on Egyptian news. So, you know, I was learning about what was happening in Egypt, and oh, look, the same day, something is happening at an American facility not far from there.

So I drew the conclusion that it was probably for the same reason. And I don't know if it was September 11, or September 10, or September 13. I'm not sure, but that week saw protests, incidents at American facilities in a lot of places, in Hong Kong, in Australia, in Afghanistan, in Pakistan, Dhaka, and just in tons of places, and in Europe -- American schools in Europe, there was a Tunisian school that was bombed, an American school in Tunis.

And many of those protests, were reported for what that's worth, were reported as being connected to the video, so I guess like the gestalt of these incidents seemed to involve the video. So I drew the conclusion, I guess, that what had happened in Benghazi was like that, was like those events.

Q Yeah, I understand. I understand, but what I really want to focus on, again, the circumscribing information you had had that night. Some of the protests you just referred to occurred after September 11 --

A That's right.

Q -- as you said. So at that point you have got the protest in Cairo, and nothing else, no other protest. So were there any other facts, other than the Benghazi attack followed the protest in Cairo,

that led you to that conclusion that the video sparked the Benghazi attacks that night?

A I don't recall anything else. I don't recall any other.

Q That's fine. That's fine.

A Yeah.

Q Do you recall anything that anybody else said in the room about the connection between the video and the Benghazi attacks that night?

A I do not.

Q Can you recall anything that anyone else said on the subject of the video, generally, that night?

A Well, I recall when we got to the section of the remarks where we wanted to reference and do, you know, deal with and quickly do away with the video, in the course of the remarks when she said that -- I don't remember exactly how it went, but she refers to them in the context of decrying people killing in the name of religion.

Q We will get to that. You don't have to guess about the --

A Great.

Q We will get to that.

A I remember when we got to that part and we thought we should say something about this. You know, we talked about -- I wouldn't be able to -- I don't remember exactly how that conversation went, but that's a tricky topic to try to handle in a few sentences, so --

Q Why do you consider it a tricky topic?

A Well, it's a complicated -- you know, religion, violence

motivated by religion, gosh, that's hard. So figuring out a way to have her talk about it in two or three sentences, is -- that's tough.

Q And do you recall that night being aware that a group called Ansar al-Sharia had taken responsibility for the attacks?

A I do not recall that.

Q Do you recall hearing anything at that point about the fact that the attacks began at the State Department facility and then continued at the classified CIA annex? Did you know that fact?

A I did not.

Q When did you learn that?

A I don't know, but it was after that night. I know because I remember being -- I remember learning that and going ah, okay, now I see that. I get it. It wasn't that night. It took a little time before that became clear to me at least.

Q Do you recall Mr. Sullivan telling the group anything about what he knew relating to the nature of the attacks, why they occurred, anything like that that night?

A I don't remember exactly what he said.

Q You are never going to remember exactly.

A Yeah, that I'm not sure.

Q If you remember generally.

A The one thing that I believe we were confident of by the time that we were asked was that Chris was dead, and that one other person was dead and we knew who that person was; this guy named Sean Smith. I'm pretty sure that came from Jake. I don't know where else

we would have learned that.

Q Okay, all right. I think my first hour is up, so -- see. We can go off the record.

[Recess.]

Mr. Missakian. Okay, let's go back on the record. Peter, can you just confirm on the record that you decided to forego your hour, and that you are going to reserve questions for the end?

Mr. Kenny. Yes, out of respect for the witness' time and the fact that we have additional witnesses this afternoon, we will be reserving our time for a second round.

Mr. Missakian. Okay, thank you.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Ms. [REDACTED], we have talked about the one speech that you participated in drafting on the night of September 11 going into the morning of September 12. Were there any other speeches, statements that you participated in drafting that week.

Mr. Su. Prior or after?

Ms. [REDACTED]. Yeah, that's a great question. Prior or after the attacks?

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Oh, okay.

A Prior to the attacks, I'm sure there were.

Q Yes, I'm sure there were. Let's focus on after that one.

A So at some point, I don't know if it was the next day or the day after, it might have been the next day, President Obama came

to the State Department to lend his support to everybody. It was, obviously, a really tough time. And I put together some talking points for her to use while the two of them were going to be standing together in the courtyard of the State Department, kind of impromptu talking to everybody. And as I remember because as I was working on them, I could hear her already talking, and I realized that some signals got crossed and I was working on something that was never going to be used because the event was starting. So that was one thing. And then --

Q You know, before you continue, I think I'm going to make this a little easier on you. I'm going to mark this document as an exhibit.

[REDACTED Exhibit No. 1

Was marked for identification.]

MY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q It is a compilation of what we believe to be the statements the Secretary made on the subject of Benghazi --

A Great.

Q -- in the days and weeks after the attack. So it might be easier for you to look at this specific statement and tell us whether you participated or not.

A Perfect.

Q So I will mark this document as exhibit 1 to the transcribed interview of [REDACTED].

Mr. Su. And Craig, would you mind just -- is exhibit 1 a compilation that you all put together?

Mr. Missakian. No.

Mr. Su. Okay.

Ms. [REDACTED]. Thank you.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q For the record, what we have marked as exhibit 1, is a multi-paged document. The first page is an email from Jacob Sullivan, to H dated September 24, 2012. Below that is another email from [REDACTED], to Jake Sullivan also September 24, 2012. The document identification number on the first page is SCB0045474 through SCB0045498.

Mr. Su. So what Mr. Missakian is asking you to do is to review the statement, and then tell him of days which you recall working on. Fair?

Mr. Missakian. We will go through them one by one;

Ms. [REDACTED]. Okay.

Mr. Missakian. Make it a little bit easier for you.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q So flip to the first page, sorry, the second page. The document control number at the bottom is 45475. At the top, there is a heading: "Statement on the Attack in Benghazi, September 11, 2012." Okay, if you could just read that and let me know when you're done.

A Okay.

Q Do you recognize that statement?

A I do not really. I'm sure that -- I don't remember reading this before, but --

Q And do you recall participating in the drafting of the statement at the top of the page?

A No.

Q Do you recall discussing the content of that statement with anybody?

A I do not.

Q All right, let's drop down to the next one on the page the heading is: "Statement on the Death of American Personnel in Benghazi, Libya." Below that is the date September 12, 2012. And it goes on to the next page, the top of the next page. So if you could just read that, and I will ask you a couple of questions.

A Okay.

Q Do you believe that you participated in drafting this statement?

A I do not think so.

Q Do you have an understanding of who drafted it?

A I do not.

Q Have you seen this statement before today?

A I don't remember seeing this statement before today.

Q Okay. Let's flip to the next page which has document control number 45476, beginning about a third of the way down the page the heading is, "Remarks on the Deaths of American Personnel in Benghazi, Libya." And below that the date appears September 12, 2012.

---

When you have had a chance to review that statement which goes on for two -- roughly two pages, let me know.

Go off the record for a second.

[Discussion off the record.]

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Back on the record.

A Okay.

Q Is this a statement that you took part in drafting with Jake Sullivan and the other two individuals you have identified?

A It is.

Q And let's focus specifically on paragraph 5 on the second page, the fifth full paragraph on the second page. The paragraph begins, "There will be more time later to reflect."

And having read that paragraph, does that jog your memory at all as to any discussions you had that night between the four of you about the video?

A Actually, what I'm noticing is that this language tracks with the language from the statement the day before. Actually, almost looks like we just cut and pasted and then added a few sentences at the end of the graph. So I'm concluding from that that we said, let's use the language that was in the statement earlier when we got to this section.

Q As your attorney explained, I don't want you to guess about that.

A Right. Right.

Q There may be a logical inference from what you're seeing, --

A Exactly.

Q -- but what I really want to know is if just reading that now and seeing it on paper jogs your memory about any specific or general discussions you had that night with the other three individuals?

A It really doesn't. No.

Q Now, if, in fact, what happened is what you described, that it was cut and pasted from the earlier statement, mechanically how would that have occurred? In other words, would Mr. Sullivan have brought, you know, a thumb drive that had the statement on it, cut and paste possibly. How do you think that happened?

Mr. Su. Well, I think the problem with her answering that question is, as we noted, that was --

Ms. [REDACTED]. Yeah.

Mr. Su. You don't have a recollection of that, right?

Mr. Missakian. And if you don't know, that's a fine answer.

Ms. [REDACTED]. I don't know.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q So as you sit here today, you have read both statements and they appear to be the same or similar, but you can't say one way or another whether or not they were cut and paste -- cut and pasted, I should say?

A I can't say with certainty, no.

Q Would it be fair to say that if they were, in fact, cut and pasted, that this is something that Mr. Sullivan would have brought to the attention of the group because you were not aware of that statement previously?

A Right. I don't remember this statement. I don't know if that day I knew the statement had been put out a few hours earlier. I don't know. I don't know what Mr. Sullivan would have had to tell us by way of the put-out statement or if I knew that there had been a statement. I just don't remember.

Q You can't recall any discussion about a prior statement and how to use it in this longer speech, anything like that?

A I really don't. I will say that if this had been put out already, then it was on the -- right.

Mr. Su. Wait for his question.

Ms. [REDACTED]. Fair enough.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q I assume you were going to say if this had been put out already it would have been on the State Department's Web site?

A Exactly.

Q Is that something you would have ordinarily checked on your own without being prompted by Mr. Sullivan or somebody else to do that?

A Not -- I don't have a regular habit of checking in on the State Department Web site, but so maybe. Maybe not. I don't know.

Q Anything else in the statement to refresh your memory about what was discussed that night? And by that night, I mean September 11, your meeting with the other three individuals?

A Uh-huh. No. Not really. No.

Q Have you had any discussions with anybody since the day of this speech about its contents, aside from your attorney?

A Again, I don't remember any conversation I have ever -- I have had since then about this. This was a really sad and upsetting night, so I definitely talked to my mom about it. I definitely talked to my dad about it. But I don't remember any other conversation with anyone about that evening. And I don't remember any conversation with anyone about this text, no.

Q Right. We will get to the next statement in a moment, but flip to the first page again. I just want to ask you a couple of questions about that. The very first page. The first email from [REDACTED] -- and I don't know how to spell the person's last name -- pronounce the person's last name.

A [REDACTED].

Q [REDACTED] to Jake Sullivan. The subject line is just: "Benghazi/Protest Statements Attached." And then Mr. Sullivan appears to be forwarding this compilation to Secretary Clinton a short time after it was received.

Do you recall being involved in any process by which the Secretary's statements about Benghazi were collected?

A I do not. I don't remember being a part of that, no.

Q You don't recall ever being approached by Jacob Sullivan asking you to give us the statements that were put out on Benghazi?

A I don't recall.

Q Do you recall any discussion of that being done and if so, why?

A I do not.

Q All right. Let's go back to the statements now. We are at the page marked at the bottom 45478. About a third of the way down, the heading is, "Statement on the Deaths of Tyrone S. Woods and Glen A. Doherty in Benghazi, Libya." The date is September 13, 2012.

Do you recall participating in the drafting of this speech?

Mr. Kenny. And just to clarify, I don't think -- you just characterized this as a speech.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Well, I was just going to ask you. How would you characterize this? Is this a speech or a statement? What's the difference?

A Well, it's titled "statement," so I'm guessing it's a statement and not a speech. And that actually does have meaning. Statement is usually written. And a speech is usually delivered orally.

Q Oh, I see. Okay, fair enough.

A Remarks would also be delivered orally. So, yeah. I do not think I worked on -- was that your question?

Q Yes, do you recall participating in the drafting of this statement?

A I do not recall that, no.

Q Having read through it, does anything jog your memory about anything that may have been discussed about the Benghazi attacks?

A Not really.

Q Do you recall, we know that you took part in the remarks

on September 12.

A Yes.

Q Do you recall taking part in the drafting of anything else for the Secretary that week?

A Well, again, I did work on something for when the President was coming to the State Department.

Q Right. You testified to that.

A That may not have ended up being used.

Q Anything else that you recall?

A She spoke when the coffins were brought back to Andrews Air Force Base. I was not the principal author on those remarks. That was [REDACTED]. I would have been cc'd on them, and I would have read them, but I didn't write them.

Q All right. Okay, if we go to the statement on the one that we just referred to, no recollection of participating in that one?

A No.

Q All right. Let's flip to the next page. The number is 45479. About a third of the way down, and the heading is: "Remarks at the Opening Plenary of the U.S. Morocco Strategic Dialogue." Dated September 13, 2012. When you have had a chance to read that, let me know.

A Okay.

Q Okay. Having read it, do you recall taking part in drafting it?

A No, I will tell you, I do not know who wrote this. It might

have been me. I don't know. Usually I can tell, but I can't tell if I wrote this one.

Q Okay. Let's take a look at paragraph 4. It's the paragraph that begins, "To us, to me personally, this video is disgusting and reprehensible."

Reading over that paragraph, does that jog your memory with regard to anything that was said or discussed about the video, why it should be included in remarks, statements, or speeches, anything like that?

A No.

Q Do you recall having any, just generally speaking, any discussion about the video with any of your colleagues in the Speech Writing Department?

Mr. Su. In the week after the attacks?

Mr. Missakian. At any point in time.

Ms. [REDACTED]. No.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Let's keep working our way through. Next one appears at page marked 45482, towards the bottom. The heading is: "Remarks at Reception Marking Eid ul-Fitr." I don't know if I'm pronouncing that right?

A I think it is Eid.

Q Eid. Thank you. The date is September 13, 2012.

A Uh-huh.

Q Okay. Do you recall participating in drafting of that statement?

A I do not.

Q Or those remarks, I should say?

A I do not, thanks, though.

Q You can take credit for it if you want.

Now, keep going on the next page, there is a portion that's been redacted. These are statements by Ambassador Aujali. Do you know why that would be redacted?

A I don't.

Q Now, then Secretary Clinton's name appears, and can you tell whether these are prepared remarks, or whether or not she is just speaking? Is it possible to tell? I assume they are prepared remarks, but I just want to confirm.

A I actually don't think you should assume that.

Q Okay.

A Well, the fact that it's long, perhaps it's prepared. It's hard to tell. You know, the fact that she speaks and that she passes it to someone else and then speaks again, makes -- I think it's possible this was extemporaneous, but I don't know.

Q But you do know you did not participate in drafting it if they were prepared remarks, or you can't recall?

A I don't believe -- yeah, I don't recall working on them.

Q All right. Let's keep going. Now we are at the page marked 45485. In the middle, the heading appears: "Remarks at the Transfer of Remains Ceremony to Honor Those Lost in Attacks in Benghazi, Libya." The date is now September 13, 2012. After you have had a chance to

review those remarks, let me know.

A Okay.

Q Having read through it, do you believe you took part in drafting these remarks?

A I do not.

Q Do you recall having any discussions with anybody about the remarks that Secretary Clinton gave at the return of the remains?

A I remember admiring the line that, "The people of Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Tunisia did not trade the tyranny of a dictator for the tyranny of a mob." I thought that was a good encapsulation of the situation in the region, and I remember telling ■ that I liked it. That's basically it.

Q Okay. And now we are on page marked 45487. Towards the middle of the page the heading is, "Remarks with Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations Patricia Espinosa After Their Meeting." The date is now September 18, 2012. Let me know after you have had a chance to review those. They go on for a few pages.

A Okay.

Q Do you recall having taken part in drafting any of these remarks?

A I do not recall.

Q Flip ahead to the page marked 45490. Towards the bottom two-thirds of the page the heading is, "Remarks with Indonesian Foreign Minister Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana Natalegawa --" I'm not even going to try that last one -- "After Their Meeting." The date now is

September 20, 2012.

A Okay.

Q Okay. Do you recall taking part in drafting any of these remarks?

A I do not recall.

Q Please flip ahead to page marked at the bottom 45495. At the top third of the page, the heading is, "Remarks with Pakistani Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar Before Their Meeting." The date now is September 21, 2012. If you could read that over and let me know when you are done.

A Okay.

Q Do you recall taking part in drafting any portion of these remarks?

A I do not.

Q If you would take a look at paragraph one, two, three, four, five, it's the paragraph that begins, "Yesterday afternoon when I briefed the Congress --" do you see that?

A Uh-huh.

Q The second sentence reads as follows: "What happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack and we will not rest until we have tracked down and brought to justice the terrorists who murdered four Americans."

Now, I have read through the other statements that we went through and to my reading, this is the first time we see the word "terrorist" being used in the statements that are part of this compilation, at any

rate.

Do you recall any discussion about the use of that term in any statement that the Secretary was making, whether it be remarks, or a statement, or anything about what occurred in Benghazi?

A I do not.

Q So as you sit here today, you don't recall any discussion of whether to use that term or not?

A I don't.

Q And the last statement begins on the page marked 45497. This one, again, beginning about a third down the page, the title is, "Remarks With Tunisian Foreign Minister Rafik Abdessalem Before Their Meeting." The date now is September 21, 2012. And I'm happy to give you the spelling of all of these names, obviously.

A Okay.

Q Do you recall taking part in the drafting in any portion of these remarks?

A I do not.

Q I would like to jump ahead from September 11 to September 16. This is the Sunday when then Ambassador Rice appeared on the Sunday talk shows, and I'm sure you are aware of the controversy that followed in the wake of that.

One, did you see her appearance on any of those talk shows?

A I did not.

Q Have you since read a transcript of any of those appearances?

A I don't recall doing that. I don't remember doing that.

Q Okay, do you recall having any discussion with anybody at any time about Ambassador Rice's appearance on those talk shows and what she said?

A I do not.

Q Do you recall it being a topic of discussion within the Speech Writing Department in any way, shape, or form?

A I do not.

Q Do you recall, putting aside her appearance there on the talk shows, do you recall there being a discussion about what the State Department was saying about the attacks in Benghazi versus what she had said on the talk shows?

A Do I recall there being a conversation about any discrepancy?

Q Well, not necessarily a discrepancy, just comparing the two in any way?

A I don't recall.

Q So as you sit here today, you can't recall any discussions about Susan Rice's appearance on the talk show in any way, shape, or form?

A No.

Q Do you recall having any discussions with anybody about, you know, the controversy that surrounded the statements she made on those talk shows?

A I really don't.

Q Do you recall ever coming to the point in time where your views about what occurred in Benghazi and the attack changed from what you -- it sounds like you initially believed?

Mr. Su. In terms of the video?

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Sure. We can say tie it to the video. It sounds like you initially believed that the video sparked what occurred in Benghazi. Did that opinion ever change?

A It really didn't.

Q So to this day, you are still of the mind the video sparked what occurred in Benghazi. Is it fair to say?

A Yes, I would say that I continued to believe that the video played a role in sparking those events.

Q Okay, and you earlier on testified and gave us the basis for that conclusion. Have you added any additional facts to your analysis since, you know, September 11 essentially?

A Well, there has been at least one comprehensive review done by the New York Times about a year after Benghazi about whether the video played a role and it concluded that it did. So upon reading that, my initial conclusion seemed to hold.

Q Okay, anything other than what you read in the New York Times?

A No.

Q Okay. Thank you, I don't have any other questions. So you guys want to take over?

Mr. Kenny. Let's just take a quick 5-minute break.

[Recess.]

EXAMINATION

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So we will go back on the record. The time is now 12:37. Ms. [REDACTED], on behalf of Ranking Member Cummings, all of the Democratic Members, I would just like to thank you for appearing here today; take a just a quick moment to introduce myself. I'm Peter Kenny. I'm counsel with the committee minority staff. I am joined by our staff director Susanne Sachsman Grooms. And we just wanted to reiterate at the outset here how much we appreciate your willingness to come, and look forward to concluding this as quickly and as comfortable for you as possible.

I just want to make this process easy, comfortable for you. If at any point in time you are not clear as to a question that I'm asking you, please feel free to stop me. I'm happy to either rephrase it so that you better understand it.

We ended the last round walking through a series of the Secretary's statements that were made, and I think what would be helpful, at least from our perspective, would be to take a step back and talk a little bit about the context in which some of these statements, some of the remarks were being prepared. We spent a bit of time speaking specifically about one drafting session, I believe in Mr. [REDACTED] either house or apartment. But I would like to just maybe ask for your -- ask for you to step back and just kind of describe

for us generally what this period was like for you, how challenging the circumstances were under which you and some of the other speechwriters were operating. If you could maybe just start with that for us.

A You mean when you say "this period," do you mean like this week, or --

Q Well, start with the days immediately following the attack, including the night of when you first found the first drafting session and through just the days into that next week.

A Well, it was an unusual time. I can't think of a period of time that was like it during my years at the State Department. As those statements reflect, there was a lot of other business being done still during that time. And yet, in all of those statements and remarks, even if they were about a different country, whether it was with the foreign -- not minister, but the foreign -- the equivalent of the Foreign Minister of Mexico, or Morocco, or wherever, the events of Benghazi still clearly loomed large and found their way into those remarks.

I don't remember a great deal about -- as I have explained earlier, comments I don't remember a lot about writing any specific remarks during that time. But there really was just this one thing that I was thinking about a lot, which, you know, this one -- this one night, this one incident. That was -- yeah, the very front of mind.

Q And to the extent that you can't remember whether you participated in an editing session or a drafting session with respect

to a specific statement or a speech, it has been over 3 years since the attacks and I would just like to ask for your perspective on how or whether the passage of time has had some sort of effect on your ability to recall some of those specific instances or moments?

A Yes, certainly. Thank you for asking that, yes, definitely. I remember actually very little about any specific day, or week, or set of remarks from that period, or, yeah, from a lot of my time at the State Department. I don't remember quite -- I don't remember a lot in terms of specifics or details.

Q And you recall it may have been at the beginning of the last hour I had written in my notes, you referred to a volume of work that you and the other speech writers would have prepared for the Secretary, and as we all know, the Secretary operates in a very public role, so she would issue, deliver statements or remarks fairly frequently, is that correct?

A Yes, often multiple times a day.

Q And over the course of your tenure, do you recall about how many statements, or drafts of remarks or statements you would have prepared for the Secretary?

A We did an accounting once after just the first year of her public statements, whether they were short or long, versus Secretary Rice, and Secretary Powell, who were the two preceding Secretaries of State, and she was almost double their volume. So at that point, I -- I'm sorry that I don't remember the numbers, but it was quite large. So over the 4 years that I was there, I certainly -- I wrote hundreds

of things. I may have crossed over into a thousand or more. I wrote a lot.

Q And sitting here today, if I were to show you a final version of one of those remarks, or those statements, would you be able to recall for us specific edits that perhaps you may have made to those?

A Almost certainly not. I will go further and say that if my name weren't on the top of the draft, for most of them I wouldn't know if I had been the one to actually write the first draft.

Q There was a discussion in the last hour about your belief of whether the video had played a role in the unrest in the region, to include the attacks in Benghazi. I would just like to ask, you know, there was quite a bit of focus on the video. I'd like to also ask your belief at the time to the best you can recall about whether you understood there had been a protest that took place at the Special Mission before the attacks commenced?

A That is my understanding. I'm not able to tell you where I got that understanding, but that is my understanding of what happened there, yes.

Q Okay. Were you aware of the initial assessment that the intelligence community had made regarding what had happened in Benghazi; that there had, in fact, been a protest before the attacks?

A I'm now aware of that. I don't know where I learned that. I don't know if I knew that at the time.

Q Okay. And if somebody had told you that the intelligence community had assessed that, would it have been appropriate for you

to second guess an assessment by the intelligence community?

A No.

Q Okay. Give me a moment as I review my notes here.

Returning to our discussion of the drafting session that took place at Mr. [REDACTED] house, and I believe we established that that was with respect to remarks that the Secretary issued in the treaty room on September 12?

A Yes.

Q Okay. You were asked some detailed questions about what information you had available to you at that time, what you recall knowing or learning at that time. And I would just like to ask if you have any recollection about whether you had an insufficient amount of information at that time on which to draft the statement that you ultimately wrote, or that you ultimately participated in drafting?

A Well, "insufficient" is an interesting word choice. I mean, we had to write something. She was -- we knew that she was going to do this. We had a task which was to write something. So, you know, we didn't have such insufficient knowledge that we were unable to do our task. Does that make sense?

Q Uh-huh.

A We definitely did not know a lot of what happened. We knew very few specifics about what was actually going on on the ground. So we used what we actually did have to write what we wrote.

Q And in terms of tasking, I believe you were asked about whether you recall receiving direction. But as someone who had worked

in the Speech Writers Office and had a few years, at least at this point, of experience drafting, was it your sense once you learned that these attacks occurred that you would have to draft some sort of statement for the Secretary or participate in a drafting session for her?

A My memory of what happened that night is that I, you know, learned in the same call from my colleague that what had happened in Benghazi had really spiralled far out of control, and perhaps people had died. That was the same call in which I learned that -- I don't know if it is fair to call it tasking so much as she is probably going to want to say something.

Q So I guess that's maybe what I'm trying to get at. I'm not being as clear as I should. You have a lot of experience as a speech writer. When something like this happens --

A Right.

Q -- can you anticipate that there would be this need to develop public remarks the Secretary to make?

A Certainly. Having said that before that call, I don't remember knowing that things had gone as poor -- that things had gone so catastrophically south as they had in Benghazi at that point. So I wasn't, you know, scribbling notes or coming up with ideas for something that she was going to say.

It was upon learning that -- I learned in the same conversation that things had gone very badly in Benghazi, and that we were asked to write something. So you're right that generally, if something bad goes wrong, or some breaking event happens, good or bad, you're right

that I can anticipate that probably something will have to be written.

Q When I used the term "insufficient information" before, I guess what I was trying to get at is your recollection, obviously, appeared to be limited from that evening. And if there were remarks that were prepared in a drafting session you participated in, and you felt that there wasn't a sufficient evidentiary basis for making those statements, is that something you would have remembered?

A Certainly, the idea of giving her something to read that we are not confident, is true. That's not an acceptable thing to do. You don't --

Q Accuracy is important in speech writing?

A Of course, yeah. So if you don't know that something is true -- if I didn't know that something was true, I wouldn't put it in text for a person to read.

Q Okay. And is there like a process that the speech writers would use in order to ensure the accuracy of speeches? You were asked a little bit about this earlier, but were there subject-matter experts, for instance, that you could reach out to either in the Office of Policy Planning or elsewhere in the State Department to review a speech to ensure its accuracy?

A Certainly. I don't know -- certainly, on this night, and almost always, in fact, perhaps always, something that I wrote would go through a vetting process before it reached the Secretary. I can't recall a time that I ever wrote something and just handed it to her and she walked out and delivered it. That's just not the way it works.

So that night, as with every set of remarks, a team of people would read it and weigh in on it and vet it.

RPTR KERR

EDTR HUMKE

[2:45 p.m.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And would that team vary depending on either the urgency, the timing of when a statement needed to be released, or the actual content --

A Yes.

Q -- of that speech?

A Yes.

Q So there was no fixed formal process for who the recipients would be in the vetting process?

A That's right.

Q And to the best of your recollection, did the statement, the remarks that you helped prepare on September 11th, did they undergo that vetting process?

A They did.

Q And you know that because?

A I know that because, for one, I believe I was the one that circulated the draft to a team of people, senior staff members to vet it. And secondly, I guess I'm extrapolating, but she delivered the remarks. So -- I don't know, you know, who saw them beyond the group that I circulated it to. I don't know if anyone else in the State Department was included on --

Q So there would be emails to reflect that, though?

A Yes.

Q That both the draft of whatever speech or remarks or statement, as well as the traffic relating to the vetting of that speech?

A Yes.

Q Or remarks?

A I believe almost all of it would be done over email. It's, of course, possible that someone would have handed someone a draft and said read this, but it almost always would have happened over email.

Q And you mentioned that it would be helpful to your -- or would have been helpful to you that you can recognize a particular draft as yours because your name would appear in that draft. Is that right?

A Generally, yes. We have it like a heading that you would -- one would usually -- I would usually include on my drafts.

Q Okay. You were asked a little bit in the last round about some controversy surrounding Ambassador Rice's statements on the five Sunday talk shows of September 16th. There has also been some public criticism of some of the statements made by Secretary Clinton. I would just like to ask if you have any sort of response to when you hear or see that criticism, that statements she may have been about Benghazi, statements you may have helped draft or write, that those are either inaccurate, or worse, that they may have been intentionally inaccurate?

A Well, I can say with certainty that anything that I worked on was never intentionally inaccurate and that I don't have any knowledge of anyone that I worked with intentionally being inaccurate.

Certainly not. Absolutely not.

Q Okay.

A I don't have really much to say beyond that, I don't think.

Q Uh-huh. It's been alleged that the administration had created a false narrative related to the YouTube videos specifically, that that had somehow played a role in the attack, and I'd just like to ask what your response is to that allegation that the administration created a false narrative?

A I don't believe that's true.

Q And can you give us a sense of what your basis for that belief is?

A Well, I participated in drafting at least one set of her remarks about this, and we never heard or saw, or I don't -- nothing that I saw in that process suggested to me that anyone was doing anything other than trying to put together a set of remarks that was accurate and appropriate for this really difficult moment and that reflected American policy, American values, and that did right by these men who had died.

So just at no point in any of the work that I did on this, on these remarks or just generally during that entire period of time, I saw absolutely nothing that suggested anything other than like total integrity about my colleagues.

Q So at this point we'd like to move on, and I'll preface this next section just by remarking that this is now the eighth congressional investigation into the Benghazi attacks, and it's our duty to help

ensure that it's the last.

We've been asking every witness about a series of public allegations that have been made since the attack, and it's our understanding that even where they've been answered by other investigations, our colleagues in the majority may still be pursuing these allegations, and that's why we're continuing to ask about them.

While anyone can speculate about the Benghazi attacks, plenty of people have, only a limited population or universe of people actually have actual knowledge or evidence of what happened either before, during, or after the attacks, and I'm going to ask you about a series of allegations, and what we're asking for here is not speculation or opinion but just whether you have any firsthand information. And if you don't, simply move on to the next allegation, and there's about a dozen of these, so just please I'd just ask and appreciate your patience and bear with me.

First, it has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, and this resulted in the defense department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A I do not.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night

of the attacks?

A I do not.

Q Next. It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it Four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A I do not.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A I do not.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A I do not.

Q It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and

shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A I do not.

Q Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or any other foreign country?

A I do not.

Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special Mission Compound on the night of the attack, and there have been a number of allegations about the cause and the appropriateness of that delay. The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote, "stand down," close quote, but instead there were tactical disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart.

Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand down order to CIA personnel?

A I do not.

Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the decision to delay temporarily or think that it was the right decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or improper

decision -- reason, behind the temporary delay of the CIA security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the Special Mission Compound?

A I do not.

Q Concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A I don't.

Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed to anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A I don't.

Q Let me ask these questions also for documents provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A I do not.

Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi attacks for political respects and that he then misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the high standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship.

Do you have any evidence the CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

A I do not.

Q Do you any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for political reasons?

A I don't.

Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made an intentional misrepresentation when she spoke on the Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks. Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday talk shows?

A I don't.

Q It has been alleged that the President of the United States was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief," close quote, on the night of the attack, and that he was, quote, missing in action, close quote. Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that the President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or missing in action on the night of the attacks?

A I do not.

Q It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks were considering flying on second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were ordered to, quote, "remain in place,"

close quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location.

A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of House Armed Services Committee that there was, quote, "no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote?

A I do not.

Q Almost there.

A Okay.

Q It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, quote, "given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did" close quote.

Do you any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A I don't.

Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to

deploy?

A I don't.

Q And with that, we'll go off the record.

[Recess.]

Mr. Missakian. Let's go back on the record.

I'm going to mark a second copy of exhibit 1 as exhibit 2.

[████████ Exhibit No. 2

was marked for identification.]

Mr. Missakian. And Ms. ██████████, I'd simply like you to flip to the statement that you helped draft on September 11 and September 12 with the other individuals you identified and just put your initials next to that statement so the record is clear about which statement we were referring to and which statement you were referring to.

Ms. ██████████. Of course. Thank you.

Mr. Su. And just so I understand the purpose of this exercise. By Ms. ██████████ placing her initials next to the statement, it is basically and only a confirmation that this is the statement that we have been talking about that she worked on on the night of September 11th and then, or early morning of September 12th; is that fair?

Mr. Missakian. Yes.

Mr. Su. Okay.

BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

Q Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Just so the record is accurate. That statement

begins on the page marked 45476 and continues to page 45478.

Ms. [REDACTED], I thought I heard you say that you had circulated a draft of that statement on the evening of September 11, morning of September 12th. Now, you recall doing that?

A I do, yes.

Q Okay. You did that by email?

A I did.

Q I don't recall having seen that email, maybe I just missed it, but do you recall who you sent it to?

A I don't. Specifically, I don't, no.

Q What's your best estimate of who you would have sent it to that night knowing that Mr. Sullivan was in the room with you when it was drafted?

A I would say the kind of core senior staff, so that would be Jake, Cheryl Mills. Probably Victoria Nuland as our spokeswoman. It would have been smart to include Beth Jones, who I think was the NEA assistant secretary at the time, and maybe Phillippe Reines, who is also a senior staff member. This is my best guess. Not a big group.

Q I understand. Do you recall receiving any comments about the draft?

A I don't.

Q Do you recall having any phone calls with any of the individuals you just named about the draft?

A I don't.

Q Do you recall becoming aware of any conversations, maybe

you didn't participate in them, but conversations between Jake Sullivan, for example, and any of those individuals about the draft?

A The one thing that I remember is going to work that morning, so that would be a few hours after leaving [REDACTED] office, I went home --

Q A few hours after leaving [REDACTED] --

A Apartment. So that was quite late that night. I went home, I took a shower, I went to the office, and I remember being in Jake Sullivan's office that morning. I remember Toria Nuland sitting at his desk with the document, the draft up, and I think she was reading it. I don't know if she was editing it. And I remember Secretary Clinton walking in and thanking me, basically, saying thank you for working on this last night, I think it's very good.

Q So at that point she had seen it?

A Yes.

Q Do you recall her making any other comments beyond thanking you?

A I do not.

Q All right. Thank you.

I don't have any further questions?

Mr. Kenny. And just so the record is clear, we believe that we have received that draft.

Mr. Missakian. Great.

Mr. Kenny. So we're happy to discuss --

Mr. Missakian. You mean the email circulating the draft?

Ms. Sachsman Grooms. Yes.

Mr. Missakian. Okay. Great. Very good. Thank you, thank you, appreciate it. Off the record.

[Whereupon, at 1:08 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

I have read the foregoing \_\_\_\_ pages, which contain the correct transcript of the answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

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Witness Name

---

Date

*Errata Sheet*

**Select Committee on Benghazi**

The witness' counsel on behalf of the witness reviewed the accompanying transcript, certified its accuracy, and declined to provide corrections to the transcript.