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RPTR BAKER

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

INTERVIEW OF: BERNADETTE MEEHAN

FRIDAY, DECEMBER <sup>18</sup>~~16~~, 2015

Washington, D.C.

The interview in the above matter was held in Room  
HVC-205, Capitol Visitor Center, commencing at 10:04 a.m.

1        Appearances:

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5        For the SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI:

6

7        DANA CHIPMAN, CHIEF INVESTIGATIVE COUNSEL

8        CRAIG MISSAKIAN, DEPUTY CHIEF COUNSEL

9        SHERIA CLARKE, COUNSEL

10       SUSANNE SACHSMAN GROOMS, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR/GENERAL

11       COUNSEL

12       HEATHER SAWYER, MINORITY CHIEF COUNSEL

13       PETER KENNY, MINORITY SENIOR COUNSEL

14       DANIEL REBNORD, MINORITY PROFESSIONAL STAFF

15       ERIN O'BRIEN, MINORITY DETAILEE

16

17       For BERNADETTE MEEHAN:

18

19       JAMES WALSH, Associate White House Counsel

20       NICHOLAS MCQUAID, Deputy White House Counsel

21       ZAID ZAID, Associate White House Counsel

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1           Mr. Missakian. Ms. Meehan, my name is Craig Missakian.  
2 I'm one of the lawyers for the majority staff on the House  
3 Select Committee on Benghazi. Before we begin the  
4 questioning, I'm just going to go over some ground rules.  
5 First, we're conducting this transcribed interview pursuant  
6 to resolution of Congress, and I just wanted to make sure  
7 that you understand when you're answering our questions or  
8 answering questions from Members of Congress, that you're  
9 subject to the penalties provided for in 18 U.S.C. 1001 that  
10 requires to provide truthful testimony, and if you don't, you  
11 could be subject to criminal penalty. Do you understand  
12 that?

13           Ms. Meehan. I do.

14           Mr. Missakian. Is there any reason why today you can't  
15 give us your best, most truthful testimony?

16           Ms. Meehan. No reason.

17           Mr. Missakian. Now, this is going to be a little  
18 different, and I don't know if you've ever had your  
19 deposition taken before, but it is going to be a little  
20 different than a deposition would occur in the context of a  
21 Federal District Court proceeding, for example. Here, there  
22 are no objections other than for privilege. To the extent  
23 that an objection is raised for privilege and we can't  
24 resolve it here, it will then go to the chairman of the  
25 committee, Trey Gowdy, and it will be resolved at that level.

1 So just to clarify, are you represented here today by  
2 counsel?

3 Ms. Meehan. I am accompanied today by members of the  
4 White House counsel staff. I do not have personal counsel  
5 here.

6 Mr. Missakian. So to the extent that Mr. McQuaid or the  
7 other lawyers here from the White House counsel staff intends  
8 to raise objections based on privilege, we can deal with  
9 those as they come up.

10 Ms. Meehan. Okay.

11 Mr. Missakian. The ground rules for this interview,  
12 it's also a little different than a deposition. What happens  
13 is the majority staff will begin the questioning, and we will  
14 go for an hour. Then once we're finished, the lawyers from  
15 the minority staff will step in, and they will go for another  
16 hour; and we'll go back and forth until everyone is finished  
17 asking all their questions.

18 If at any time in the middle of an hour or at the end of  
19 an hour if you want to take a break for any reason or no  
20 reason, just let us know, and we'll do our best to  
21 accommodate that. Have I left anything out?

22 Mr. Chipman. Perhaps if you could get a record of those  
23 who are in attendance.

24 Mr. Missakian. Yes. Typically we go around the room  
25 and introduce people. As I said, I am Craig Missakian from

1 the majority staff.

2 Ms. Clarke. Sheria Clarke from the majority staff.

3 Ms. Sachsman Grooms. I'm Susanne Sachsman Grooms from  
4 the minority staff.

5 Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer from the minority.

6 Ms. O'Brien. Erin O'Brien, minority.

7 Mr. Walsh. James Walsh, White House counsel's office.

8 Mr. Zaid. Zaid Zaid, White House counsel's office.

9 Mr. McQuaid. Nick McQuaid, White House counsel's  
10 office.

11 Ms. Meehan. And Bernadette Meehan, witness.

12 Mr. Chipman. Dana Chipman with the majority staff.

13 EXAMINATION

14 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

15 Q Let's begin. Ms. Meehan, let's start with where  
16 did you work and what was your title in September of 2012?

17 A In September of 2012, I was a foreign service  
18 officer on detail to the White House National Security  
19 Council. My title was assistant press secretary in the  
20 National Security Council Press Office.

21 Mr. Missakian. For the record, we just had two  
22 additional people join us. Gentlemen, could you state your  
23 name for the record.

24 Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny for the minority staff.

25 Mr. Rebnord. Dan Rebnord for the minority.

1 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

2 Q And when did that detail begin?

3 A My detail began in July of 2012.

4 Q How long did it last?

5 A I was a member of the NSC press team until June of  
6 2015, though my position within the NSC press office changed  
7 over those 3 years.

8 Q How did it change?

9 A I eventually became the deputy spokesperson and  
10 then eventually the spokesperson for the National Security  
11 Council.

12 Q When did that first change in your title occur?

13 A I became the deputy at some point in 2013, summer  
14 of 2013, I think.

15 Q And when were you promoted to be the spokesperson  
16 of the National Security Council?

17 A In the summer/fall of 2014.

18 Q I've see the National Security Council referred to  
19 sometimes by a different acronym, NSS, sometimes NSS,  
20 sometimes NSC. What do you prefer? What is it?

21 A It is currently NSC staff. When I started it <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~  
22 NSS staff, but it has since gone back to being officially  
23 called NSC staff.

24 Q So if I refer to it as NSC, we'll all know what  
25 we're talking about?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Prior to becoming a detailee to the NSC in July of  
3 2012, what were you doing at the State Department?

4 A I began my career as a Foreign Service officer in  
5 2004. I served a 2-year assignment as the U.S. Embassy in  
6 Bogota, Colombia, from 2004 to 2006. In 2006, I volunteered  
7 to serve in Iraq. So from September 2006 until September  
8 2007, I was at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq. I, then,  
9 returned to Washington and studied Arabic full-time at the  
10 Department of State's Foreign Service Institute in Virginia.  
11 That was ~~been~~ <sup>about</sup> 10 months. I, then, was deployed to the U.S.  
12 Consulate General in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates. That  
13 was from the summer of 2008 until the summer of 2010.

14 In the summer of 2010, I returned to Washington and  
15 began a detail, or an assignment, I should say, in the  
16 Department of State's Executive Secretariat. That was  
17 approximately 10 months. I, then, became the Foreign Service  
18 officer filling a special assistant position in the Secretary  
19 of State's office. I did that for approximately 15 months,  
20 until I was detailed over to the National Security Council in  
21 July of 2012.

22 Q And once you got to the National Security Council  
23 in July of 2012, what were your duties?

24 A My responsibility, at that particular point in  
25 time, was to handle press inquiries related to administration

1 policy in the Middle East and North Africa.

2 Q Could you give us a little bit of an idea what the  
3 structure of the office looked like?

4 A Sure. At that point in time, we were four press  
5 officers on detail from various national security agencies.  
6 We reported to both the spokesperson at the time, and the  
7 deputy national security advisor for strategic  
8 communications.

9 Q Who was the spokesperson at the time?

10 A At that time, it was Tommy Vietor.

11 Q Tommy Vietor was the spokesperson for the National  
12 Security Council?

13 A That's correct.

14 Q And the deputy spokesperson you mentioned, who was  
15 that?

16 A The deputy spokesperson at the time was Caitlin  
17 Hayden.

18 Q Can you spell her name, please?

19 A C-a-i-t-l-i-n, and her last name is H-a-y-d-e-n.

20 Q Was Ben Rhodes employed at the NSC at that point?

21 A He was. He was the Deputy National Security  
22 Advisor that I referred to.

23 Q Oh, okay. And where was Ben Rhodes in your chain  
24 of command?

25 A I reported both to Tommy and to Ben. So ~~Tommy~~<sup>Ben</sup> was

1 <sup>Tommy's</sup>~~Ben's~~ direct boss, and the four press officers in the NSC  
2 press office reported to Tommy and to Ben.

3 Q Physically, where were you all located?

4 A At this particular point in the time, the four  
5 press officers were in the Executive Office Building, the  
6 Eisenhower Executive Office Building. Tommy and Ben were  
7 located <sup>in the</sup> West Wing.

8 Q Did that change?

9 A When I became the spokesperson of the National  
10 Security Council, I, then, took a desk in the West Wing where  
11 Tommy used to sit.

12 Q Focusing on September of 2012, were you in the Old  
13 Executive Office Building at that point?

14 A I was.

15 Q And what was your relationship, if any, to Denis  
16 McDonough at that point in time?

17 A At that point in time, Denis McDonough was the  
18 Deputy National Security Advisor handling policy, as opposed  
19 to Ben Rhodes, who did strategic communications. So I would  
20 see him in meetings. He was obviously sort of the deputy of  
21 the overall NSC, so I would see him in meetings, but no  
22 direct reporting line to him.

23 Q Give us an idea of your day-to-day life in  
24 September of 2012 prior to the attacks.

25 A Sure. Well, I had been there for approximately 7

1 or 8 weeks at that point in time, so was still new to the  
2 NSC. We would field requests from reporters, both domestic  
3 and international, throughout the day. We were also  
4 responsible for coordinating press guidance throughout the  
5 interagency to help prepare any of the spokespeople at  
6 national security agencies that would hold daily press  
7 briefings. That would include, at the time, Jay Carney, the  
8 spokesperson for the White House, Toria Nuland at the State  
9 Department, George Little at the Department of Defense, and  
10 attend meetings as required to help fulfill those duties.

11 Q Did anybody sit you down and explain the process of  
12 coordinating the interagency messaging that you just talked  
13 about?

14 A So generally, when someone joined the press office,  
15 we had a few days with our predecessor, so I had time to  
16 shadow that individual, and then we have time, obviously,  
17 with the other members of the office. It's often a staggered  
18 start, so I was the only person starting at that particular  
19 point in time, and was able to work with the other members of  
20 the office to understand how we were expected to carry out  
21 those duties.

22 Q Okay. What did you learn?

23 A Well, I learned how we coordinate, usually on a  
24 daily basis, with other national security agencies to try and  
25 determine what we feel will be, quote-unquote, news of the

1 day, that may be raised in any of the daily press briefings  
2 across the interagency. We coordinate across the interagency  
3 press offices to work on incoming stories. There's usually  
4 multiple equities involved and multiple agencies will have a  
5 part of what a reporter is inquiring about, so we want to  
6 ensure that every agency that has an equity is aware of that  
7 and is working together to respond to an inquiry. So that is  
8 generally what I was taught when I came in.

9 Q In the process of coordinating a message with the  
10 interagency, does somebody have the final word on the  
11 message?

12 A It's a case-by-case basis. It depends on what the  
13 topic is, whether the inquiry is, what the various equities  
14 are of each of the agencies, so it would be a collaborative  
15 process among the interagency to determine who will field  
16 that inquiry and what input other agencies will have into it.

17 Q Can you give us an example of something in practice  
18 that might shed some light on who has the final word on a  
19 particular issue?

20 A Sure. So, you can look at multiple scenarios that  
21 would, perhaps, be different, but an example would be if  
22 there is military action going on in Iraq, for example, and a  
23 reporter has an inquiry, they may have an inquiry that has  
24 multiple parts. They may say, for example, can you discuss  
25 what targets were struck in a particular military action, and

1           how does that relate to the President's overall strategy to  
2           combat ISIS in Iraq.

3           We would then coordinate among the different agencies  
4           and say, DOD, you would be best placed to handle inquiries  
5           about what the military targets were, what the military  
6           action was in that instance; whereas, the White House would  
7           be most appropriate, from the NSC staff, to handle questions  
8           related to the President's overall policy with regards to  
9           combating ISIS in Iraq. And if there was a role for the  
10          State Department, we would draw them into that as well.

11          Q       Okay. Aside from who would be the best agency to  
12          address an issue, would it be fair to say that NSC has the  
13          final word on the content of a message, or is that going too  
14          far?

15          A       It's dependent. It's a case-by-case basis again.  
16          You know, the military would be best placed to make a final  
17          decision on how they're going to characterize military  
18          action, for example. The intelligence community would be the  
19          provider and the final decisionmaker on anything related to  
20          an intelligence assessment, for example. Generally the NSC  
21          would have the final word on anything that is characterizing  
22          the President's feelings, thoughts, or policy. So, again,  
23          it's a case-by-case basis.

24          Q       Speaking of the intelligence community, how would  
25          you describe the relationship between the NSC and the

1 intelligence community?

2 A Well, I can only speak to the communications part,  
3 since that was the channel that I worked in.

4 Q Yes.

5 A But we had an excellent relationship. They were a  
6 part of the daily coordination that we had across the  
7 interagency for news-of-the-day items. I was in daily  
8 contact usually with my counterparts at both the CIA and the  
9 DNI.

10 Q Were there any other members of the intelligence  
11 community that you had this daily contact with, besides CIA  
12 and DIA?

13 A On occasion, NCTC. At this particular time related  
14 to Benghazi, there were no other agencies that I was in  
15 direct contact with the spokespeople. I can't speak to what  
16 the coordinating role of the DNI and the CIA were in that.

17 Mr. McQuaid. Craig, I think you said DIA. I'm not sure  
18 if that's the same.

19 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

20 Q I'm sorry. You said DNI.

21 A DNI.

22 Q I did say DIA. Thank you. Who were your contacts  
23 at CIA? This was in September of 2012.

24 A Right. I can't recall who the spokesperson was at  
25 that particular time at CIA.

1 Q In talking about the CIA, are we talking about the  
2 office within CIA that has the acronym OPA?

3 A Yes, that would be correct, the Office of Public  
4 Affairs.

5 Q Within the Office of Public Affairs, there was,  
6 obviously, a spokesperson whose name you can't recall. Is  
7 that the person you dealt with on a daily basis?

8 A It would be, generally from CIA, each member of  
9 their team would participate in daily coordination. They had  
10 a relatively small team.

11 Q Do you remember the name of anybody on the team?

12 A At that particular time, there was an individual  
13 named Preston who was working there at the time. He's the  
14 one that comes to mind. I don't recall who the other members  
15 of that team were at that time.

16 Q Do you recall dealing with anybody in particular on  
17 the issue of the attacks in Benghazi?

18 A On CIA, I don't. Most of the coordination was done  
19 through the DNI, on the intelligence side.

20 Q In communicating with Preston or anybody else in  
21 the CIA, OPA shop, was that done by phone or was it done by  
22 email?

23 A Both.

24 Q Both. And with regards to DNI, did they have their  
25 own press office?

1 A They did.

2 Q Do you recall the names of anybody in the DNI press  
3 office?

4 A I do. The spokesperson at the time was Shawn  
5 Turner, and he generally was the person that we coordinated  
6 anything related to intelligence with.

7 Q Was there anybody else in that press shop that you  
8 recall?

9 A There were other members of the press shop. Shawn  
10 was my primary point of contact. At that point in time, I  
11 don't recall who was working with him.

12 Q Do you recall dealing with Shawn with regard to the  
13 attacks in Benghazi?

14 A I do.

15 Q Why don't we just go into that a little bit. What  
16 do you recall about your interaction with Shawn Turner with  
17 regard to the Benghazi attacks?

18 A He was a member, as I said, of the interagency  
19 communications team, so I remember on a daily basis he was  
20 part of any meetings that the interagency communicators  
21 convened, whether it was email chains, SVTCs, conference  
22 calls; and he was, as I said, our conduit <sup>for</sup> ~~to~~ information that  
23 the intelligence community felt was relevant as we formulated  
24 a public response to the attack.

25 Q Do you recall anything specific about your

1 interactions with Shawn Turner, or do all those meetings and  
2 email exchanges and conversations just blend together?

3 Mr. McQuaid. Can we go off the record for one second?

4 [Discussion off the record.]

5 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

6 Q During the off-the-record discussion, I want to  
7 make it clear to the witness that the questions I'm asking  
8 you are really focused on the period around the September 11,  
9 2012 attack. To the extent you remember events that occurred  
10 on a specific day, you can provide that information to us.  
11 To the extent you don't and you just have a generalized  
12 recollection of events during that time period, the time  
13 period of the attack or the immediate aftermath, that's fine  
14 to provide that information as well. But I'm not asking for  
15 your recollection of events about Benghazi that may have  
16 occurred more recently. We're just focused on that time  
17 period. Is that clear?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Okay. So back to the question about Shawn Turner,  
20 do you recall any specific interaction you had with him  
21 during that September 11, 2012 time period?

22 A This is obviously more than 3 years ago at this  
23 point. I remember lots of interactions with him. I am happy  
24 to answer questions if there are questions about specific  
25 interactions, but I would sort of need a little bit more

1 context to be able to answer the questions.

2 Q Let's go in. What specific interactions do you  
3 recall, and we'll start there?

4 A Well, again, I remember that Shawn was a  
5 participant on daily conference calls that we would have,  
6 even prior to Benghazi as a general rule that we held across  
7 the interagency to determine what would news-of-the-day  
8 topics be that spokespeople or other agencies would need to  
9 deal with. During the time period that we're discussing,  
10 Benghazi obviously was the focus of most of the press during  
11 that time, so I do recall that Shawn was the DNI  
12 representative on those calls.

13 Q Let me jump in to make it a little easier. I want  
14 to ask you if you have any specific recollection. An example  
15 of that would be on such-an-such a day, you remember getting  
16 on the phone with a Shawn Turner and discussing a specific  
17 topic. I know this was a few years ago, so it may be  
18 difficult to recall that, but if you have any recollections  
19 of any conversations that stick out in your mind or any  
20 meetings that may stick out in your mind or any email  
21 exchanges, where you can, not word for word, but give us the  
22 essential substance of what was discussed, that's kind of  
23 what I'm asking for now. Does anything stick out in your  
24 mind during that period, or does it all kind of blend  
25 together in a more general way?

1           A     It all kind of blends together in a more general  
2     way.

3           Q     Okay. That's fair, so we'll try to get at it in a  
4     different way. A couple background questions. At the time,  
5     did you have a security clearance?

6           A     I did.

7           Q     To what level?

8           A     TS/SCI.

9           Q     And in your office, did you have a secure computer  
10    system in your own office?

11          A     I did.

12          Q     Was there also a SCIF in the area where you worked?

13          A     There was.

14          Q     And during the period between 9/11, 2012 and the  
15    attacks and the end of that week, do you recall reading any  
16    classified information?

17          A     I don't recall specific classified information, but  
18    as a general rule, I would have access to classified  
19    information during that time, yes.

20          Q     As you sit here today, you can't recall anything  
21    specific that you read? And I'm just talking about physical  
22    pieces of paper that you read.

23          A     I do not recall specifically what classified  
24    information I was reading at that time, no.

25          Q     Do you recall if you read any classified

1 information, other than your general practice?

2 A Again, as I sit here today, I couldn't say with  
3 certainty.

4 Q Do you recall having any classified briefings  
5 during that period?

6 A I don't recall having any classified briefings by  
7 the intelligence community, for example. I would, as a  
8 general rule, have been involved in meetings where classified  
9 information was discussed.

10 Q As a general rule, that may have occurred, but  
11 during that period, do you recall anything specifically where  
12 you participated in a classified briefing?

13 A I recall that in that period, there would have been  
14 communicator SVTCs that are not necessarily classified in and  
15 of themselves, but would have been held in a secure facility  
16 in the WHSR at a TS/SCI level, and it is possible that  
17 classified information would have been discussed in those  
18 meetings, yes.

19 Q Do you recall any of those SVTCs in particular?

20 A I don't.

21 Q We have seen evidence that there was a SVTC at 7:30  
22 p.m. on the night of the attacks on September 11. Did you  
23 take part in that? Do you recall?

24 A I don't recall as I sit here today.

25 Q Do you recall taking part in any specific SVTC

1 during that week?

2 A Specifically I don't. I know that I did, but if  
3 you're asking for a specific sort of date, time, and topics,  
4 I don't recall.

5 Q When you say you know that you did, is that just  
6 based on your own understanding of your own general practice,  
7 or does something specific stand out in your mind? For  
8 example, did you review a calendar prior to this interview  
9 today that jogged your memory?

10 A I did not review any calendars in preparation for  
11 my appearance here today. It's a combination of as general  
12 practice, we would hold those types of meetings among the  
13 interagency, classified SVTCs, and I do recall that there  
14 were communicator SVTCs that were held that week. I don't  
15 recall specific dates and times.

16 Q Did you review any documents prior to the interview  
17 here today to prepare?

18 A I was shown less than 10 documents by the White House  
19 counsel in preparation for this appearance today, documents  
20 that they thought might be raised during the questioning that  
21 they wanted me to familiarize myself with, but, no, beyond  
22 that, I did not.

23 Q Let's talk a little bit about the night of the  
24 attacks on September 11. Do you recall how you first heard  
25 about the attacks?

1           A     I do not.

2           Q     Do you recall whether somebody told you, whether  
3 you saw it on the news, whether you got an email, anything?

4           A     I don't, unfortunately. I'm sorry.

5           Q     Do you recall where you were at the time when you  
6 heard?

7           A     I was at the NSC.

8           Q     Do you recall about what time you heard?

9           A     I do not.

10          Q     Do you recall any discussions with anybody, and I'm  
11 not talking about the whole night. I'm just talking about in  
12 relationship to your first hearing about what had occurred?

13          A     I can't say whether this is the first I heard, but  
14 I do specifically remember receiving an email from Toria  
15 Nuland, who was the spokesperson at the State Department at  
16 the time, wanting to ensure, on her part, that I was aware  
17 that something was happening, and asking that we remain in  
18 close touch as the situation developed in anticipation of  
19 press inquiries.

20          Q     In response to that email, did you do anything?

21          A     I don't recall.

22          Q     Take us through the night, as best you can  
23 reconstruct it now a few years later, from the point where  
24 you heard about the attacks until you went home that night.

25          A     I recall being in contact with the State

1 Department, Department of Defense, the intelligence  
2 community, conversations with Ben and Tommy. I would have  
3 been in touch also with policy members of the NSC who had  
4 responsibility for Libya as well. I don't recall what time I  
5 left that evening, but I know it was quite late, and when I  
6 returned home, I continued to work for a good portion of the  
7 night on BlackBerry.

8 Q Let's start with the conversations you may have had  
9 with people at the NSC that night. I think you mentioned Ben  
10 Rhodes and Tommy Vietor. Aside from those two, did you speak  
11 to anybody else about the attacks that you recall?

12 A I don't recall specifically. As a general matter  
13 when there is something that occurs that I will need to be  
14 prepared to respond publicly to, I would be in touch with  
15 whoever the policy person is at the NSC that has  
16 responsibility for that particular issue.

17 Q Who was that?

18 A At this time, it would have been Ben Fishman, who  
19 was the director for Libya.

20 Q During that night, can you say how many  
21 conversations you had with Ben Rhodes?

22 A I don't recall.

23 Q Was it one, a dozen?

24 A I really couldn't say. I don't remember.

25 Q Do you have a best estimate? Was it at the point

1 where you were talking to them constantly, or were they all  
2 blending together?

3 A I wouldn't want to speculate.

4 Q That's fair. What, if anything, do you recall  
5 about any of the conversations you had with Mr. Rhodes that  
6 night?

7 A I recall letting him know that I was in touch with  
8 my counterparts at the various national security agencies,  
9 that I was working with MENA, which was the Middle East-North  
10 Africa Directorate at the NSC, the policy side, which was  
11 customary and standard practice, and discussing with him how  
12 we were going to work with the interagency to determine what  
13 the press response, the public response, to this would be.

14 Q And how did you first communicate with him? Was it  
15 by email, by phone? Did you walk over to the West Wing? How  
16 did you do it?

17 A I don't recall.

18 Q When you had your first conversation with  
19 Mr. Rhodes, did you get the sense that he was aware of the  
20 attack?

21 A I don't recall that first conversation, so I  
22 couldn't say.

23 Q Do you recall whether you told him about the attack  
24 or whether he was already aware of it?

25 A Again, unfortunately as I don't remember the first

1 conversation, I wouldn't want to speculate as to who told  
2 who.

3 Q As best you can recall, what did he say to you  
4 during that evening about the attacks?

5 A I don't recall specific conversations. As a  
6 general matter, it would have been conversations about what  
7 the public response would have been. That would have been  
8 the responsibility of the press team and the rest of the  
9 communicators in the interagency, so discussions would have  
10 centered around that topic.

11 Q You phrased your answer by saying what would have  
12 occurred. I don't want you to speculate. If you don't have  
13 a specific recollection, that's fine, but do you recall,  
14 generally, anything that he said that night?

15 A I do not.

16 Q So as you sit here today, you can't recall anything  
17 that he said?

18 A On that specific day, no, I could not with  
19 certainty.

20 Q What about Tommy Vietor, did you have any  
21 conversations with him the night of the attack?

22 A I don't recall specific conversations. Again, as a  
23 general matter, he would have been involved in helping to  
24 determine what the public response was.

25 Q Generally, do you recall anything that he said to

1 you that night?

2 A I do not.

3 Q Do you recall anything that Mr. Fishman, Ben  
4 Fishman, said to you that night?

5 A I do not.

6 Q I believe you said that you communicated with the  
7 State Department as well. Who at the State Department other  
8 than Victoria Nuland, who you already identified?

9 A I was in touch with press counterparts in the  
10 Department of State's Bureau of NEA Affairs. Specifically, I  
11 recall being in touch with [REDACTED] throughout that day.  
12 He was a press officer.

13 Q What do you recall discussing with Mr. [REDACTED]?

14 A I recall that [REDACTED] was the first person that  
15 morning to inform me of an incident outside the U.S. Embassy  
16 in Cairo early in the morning Washington time, having  
17 discussions with him about that, and being in touch with him  
18 throughout the day as we were waiting for more information  
19 about what was happening in Benghazi.

20 Q What did he tell you about Cairo?

21 A To the best of my recollection, he told me that  
22 there had been an incident in Cairo outside the Embassy with  
23 individuals who were protesting the production of an  
24 anti-Muslim video, and that there were attempts to reach the  
25 compound walls.

1 Q What, if anything, did you do with regard to Cairo?

2 A Me personally?

3 Q Yes.

4 A I told him to keep me apprised. I asked him if the  
5 State Department had already issued a comment. And to my  
6 recollection, they had already publicly spoken and addressed  
7 what was going on in Cairo.

8 Q The State Department, or the Embassy in Cairo?

9 A The State Department said that the State Department  
10 had responded, whether that referred to the Embassy in Cairo  
11 or the Main State Department, I couldn't say.

12 Q Okay. Did you have any conversations with Tommy  
13 Vietor or Ben Rhodes about what was occurring in Cairo?

14 A Not that I can recall at that point in time. I do  
15 recall that what had happened in Cairo certainly came up once  
16 we were aware that there was an incident outside of the  
17 facility in Benghazi, but I don't recall speaking to them in  
18 the morning about it as a separate matter.

19 Q Okay. So you do recall there was a time between  
20 what occurred in Cairo and what occurred in Benghazi? They  
21 were not happening at the same time?

22 A That is my recollection, yes.

23 Q And what, if anything, do you recall discussing  
24 about the relationship, if any, between what was occurring in  
25 Cairo and what was occurring in Benghazi?

1           A     I don't recall the specifics of those  
2           conversations, simply that there was a discussion that there  
3           had been an incident in Cairo earlier in the day as we were  
4           learning about what was unfolding in Benghazi.

5           Q     Beyond that, do you recall anything else that was  
6           said?

7           A     I do not.

8           Q     Did you do anything with regard to Cairo? In other  
9           words, did you prepare a draft message or anything like that?  
10          Did you do anything?

11          A     To the best of my recollection, before I was aware  
12          of what was happening in Benghazi, we deferred to the State  
13          Department to address what was happening in Cairo, which  
14          would have been standard practice at that point.

15          Q     It sounded like your conversation with Mr. [REDACTED]  
16          was focused on Cairo. He was giving you a heads up on that  
17          incident. Is that fair?

18          A     That's my recollection, yes.

19          Q     Did you have any conversations with Mr. [REDACTED] or  
20          anybody else at the State Department about Benghazi?

21          A     I do recall that I was in touch with [REDACTED] and his  
22          office, the NEA press office, again, as we became aware that  
23          there was an incident in Benghazi, yes.

24          Q     Was it just Mr. [REDACTED] that you communicated with or  
25          was it other people in his office?

1           A     I don't recall specifically. Generally it would be  
2 more than one person in that office.

3           Q     And you've told us what you and he discussed about  
4 Cairo. Do you recall what you and he discussed about  
5 Benghazi?

6           A     I do not.

7           Q     Did you take any notes of any of your conversations  
8 with him that we could look at, anything like that?

9           A     I don't recall taking notes. I, generally, as a  
10 practice, wouldn't. Most of my conversations with him  
11 probably took place over email.

12          Q     Do you recall any of your conversations with  
13 anybody else at the State Department besides Ms. Nuland and  
14 Mr. ██████ about Benghazi, the night of the attack?

15          A     Specifically September 11?

16          Q     Yes.

17          A     I do recall later that night, very late that night,  
18 emailing Jake Sullivan to ask him whether Chris Stevens was  
19 dead.

20          Q     Did you ever have any conversations, like phone  
21 conversations, with Mr. Sullivan?

22          A     I don't recall whether I did on that day.

23          Q     Do you recall generally having any conversations  
24 with him that week? Or in the immediate aftermath of the  
25 attack, that general period of September 2012?

1           A     I do recall having one phone conversation with him.  
2     I don't know whether it's in the scope of the 4 to 5 days  
3     that we're discussing.

4           Q     Okay. What was discussed in that conversation?

5           A     He raised that he had been unaware before Matt  
6     Olsen testified on the Hill, that Matt Olsen was going to  
7     make a link publicly to Al Qaeda in reference to the Benghazi  
8     attack.

9           Q     Why did he raise that issue with you?

10          A     I can't say why I was the individual that he  
11     called. I don't know.

12          Q     Did he ask you to do anything?

13          Mr. McQuaid. Craig, as I think you're aware, I think  
14     that is postdating what we were here to talk about.

15          Mr. Missakian. No, it's not. Let's go off the record.

16                 [Discussion off the record.]

17          Ms. Sachsman Grooms. Let's go on the record for the  
18     conversation.

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

20          Mr. McQuaid. So on the record, we had a very clear  
21     understanding that's memorialized in an email that we were  
22     here to talk about September 12 through the 16, and that what  
23     you're talking about, again, Ms. Meehan wouldn't know those  
24     exact dates, but I know from being aware of the record of the  
25     investigation, that it's the 18th, so I'd ask you to, again,

1 direct your questions to the 12th through the 16th.

2 Mr. Missakian. Can we go off the record.

3 [Discussion off the record.]

4 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

5 Q All right. Let's go back to the list of people you  
6 communicated with that night. You also mentioned you  
7 communicated with the Department of Defense, I believe?

8 A Correct.

9 Q Describe that for us.

10 A That would have been George Little and/or other  
11 members of his team that would be the press office at the  
12 Department of Defense, again, as part of the interagency  
13 coordination efforts to determine what the initial press  
14 posture would be.

15 Q Again, you say it would have been George Little  
16 and/or. I'm just asking you about what you recall. If you  
17 don't recall who you communicated with, that's fine. That's  
18 an acceptable answer. So do you recall specifically  
19 communicating with anybody from the Department of Defense  
20 that night?

21 A I do not recall specific conversations, no.

22 Q So would it be fair to say that the communications  
23 you had with DOD were email communications where they may  
24 have been on an email chain?

25 A Certainly, email would have been one method of

1       communications, yes.

2               Q     Do you recall having phone conversations with  
3       anybody at the Department of Defense?

4               A     I recall that we had an interagency conference  
5       call. DOD was a party to that call. I don't remember who  
6       specifically represented DOD on that call.

7               Q     Do you recall when that conversation occurred?

8               A     I do not.

9               Q     What do you recall about that interagency phone  
10       call?

11              A     Again, only that it was to coordinate what the  
12       initial press response would be.

13              Q     What do you recall generally about what was  
14       discussed?

15              A     I don't want to speculate, per your instructions.  
16       I don't recall specifically what that conversation was.

17              Q     Okay. Do you recall anything generally?

18              A     It would have been a determination. It was a  
19       determination of which agencies had equities, and that it was  
20       basically a decision about whether the State Department or  
21       the White House would be the first to speak about what was  
22       occurring.

23              Q     What do you recall about how that decision was made  
24       as to whether or not it should be the State Department or the  
25       White House to speak initially?

1           A     I don't recall specifically.

2           Q     What do you recall generally?

3           A     Generally, I recall that Toria Nuland had drafted  
4 holding lines that she recommended on behalf of the State  
5 Department. I couldn't speak to who was involved in that  
6 decision at the State Department, but that Toria, in  
7 communicating it to us, recommended that the State Department  
8 put out initially as holding lines.

9           Q     What is a holding line?

10          A     A holding line is generally information that we put  
11 out to the press when there's great interest in a particular  
12 issue, and we don't have a complete understanding of what is  
13 occurring at a particular point in time, but there is a need  
14 to provide a response, so that is generally something that  
15 acknowledges what the issue is, and saying that as we have  
16 more information, we will make it available.

17          Q     And do you recall when during the evening that  
18 phone call occurred?

19          A     I do not.

20          Q     Was there any information that was being provided  
21 back and forth about what was going on in Benghazi during  
22 that call?

23          A     I don't recall.

24          Q     As best you can recall, how did you get the  
25 information about the attack that you had that night?

1           A     Again, I don't recall how I initially found out  
2     about the attack.

3           Q     Now I'm going to break my own rule. How would you  
4     have learned about it?

5           A     There are multiple possibilities. It's possible  
6     that I heard from someone internal to the NSC. It's possible  
7     that I heard, first, from someone at the State Department who  
8     knew about it directly from the Mission in Benghazi, but I  
9     just don't recall who it was that first told me.

10          Q     Okay. If you had received information that was  
11     being passed from the Mission in Benghazi or the Embassy in  
12     Tripoli, how would that chain have looked?

13          A     So without saying that that's what occurred --

14          Q     Sure.

15          A     -- generally, on matters that contain information  
16     that's coming from a post overseas, I would receive that  
17     through the communicators office at the State Department.  
18     That was my primary channel of communication, so it would  
19     have come either through Toria Nuland in the spokesperson's  
20     Office of Public Affairs, or through the press office in the  
21     NEA Bureau.

22          Q     And sitting here today, as best you can recall,  
23     what did you personally believe had occurred in Benghazi on  
24     the night of September 11?

25          A     As I recall, there was a great deal of confusion

1       about what was occurring in Benghazi. I remember that there  
2       were questions in my mind about whether this was related to  
3       what had happened earlier in Cairo, which was a result of  
4       protests based on this video that we knew had been put out in  
5       the public sphere.

6               So I recall, you know, when I went home and went to  
7       sleep that night not having a clear understanding really of  
8       what had happened.

9               Q     How did you come to the conclusion that the  
10       protests in Cairo occurred over the video?

11              A     As I recall, that was publicly stated by people  
12       that were protesting and acting out against the Embassy at  
13       the time.

14              Q     So you were relying on open media reports?

15              A     Well, certainly there were open media reports  
16       stating that, and that, as I am a press officer, is something  
17       that I would be watching throughout the day, yes.

18              Q     But would you have relied on that, in other words,  
19       accepted it as truthful?

20              A     I would not have made any public comment without  
21       receiving information about a U.S. Government assessment, no.

22              Q     Why is that?

23              A     Because as a general rule, we don't speculate when  
24       we speak to the public. We rely on an assessment developed  
25       by members of the interagency community to provide facts. We

1 are driven in any public response by factual information, not  
2 speculating on what we personally think may have happened in  
3 a particular instance.

4 Q So would it be fair to say that if you read  
5 something in an open media news report, you would not have  
6 relied on it because it may not be true?

7 A That's correct.

8 Q Do you have a specific or general recollection of  
9 anything you discussed with anybody at the Department of  
10 Defense, either that night or that week up to the 16th?

11 A I do not.

12 Q I think you also mentioned that you had  
13 communications with the IC or the intelligence community.  
14 Tell us what you meant by that?

15 A So during that broader period that we're  
16 discussing, the 12th through the 16th, the IC was responsible  
17 for feeding into the drafting of press items that would be  
18 used by members of the U.S. Government in public response,  
19 and they would have been responsible for providing us the  
20 assessment of what the U.S. Government believed to have  
21 happened in the attack in Benghazi.

22 Q So you would have been interacted with them for  
23 them to provide the assessments that would have then been  
24 used in, I think you said, statements by members of the  
25 U.S. Government?

1           A     They would have fed in information to the press  
2 guidance that was then provided to people like Jay Carney,  
3 for example, Victoria Nuland, Department of Defense  
4 spokespeople, others in the U.S. Government who would be  
5 speaking publicly about the attack, yes.

6           Q     So to specifically focus on your interaction with  
7 the intelligence community, what do you recall about that?

8           A     So I recall that in the days that we are speaking  
9 about, I played my standard role of coordinating the  
10 interagency communicators group, so I would have been one of  
11 the repositories for gathering inputs from different agencies  
12 related to their equities and their responsibilities as it  
13 relates to what occurred in Benghazi. And I recall  
14 interacting with Shawn Turner at DNI in that regard,  
15 receiving information from him that represented the  
16 assessments of his building and others that DNI would have  
17 coordinated with, and feeding that into the overall press  
18 guidance package that would have been provided.

19          Q     Can you remember any specific days when you  
20 received an assessment from the DNI or the CIA?

21          A     I can say that the DNI and the CIA, every single  
22 day, would have been part of the drafting, clearing, and  
23 approving process of press guidance. Whether they were  
24 providing new material each day, I can't say specifically.

25          Q     Tell us a little bit about that. How does the NSC

1 work with the DNI and the CIA to review, vet, and approve  
2 press guidance? How does that work?

3 A So as a general rule, the NSC helps to coordinate  
4 among the interagency, so on a case-by-case basis, depending  
5 on what the issue or the topic is, there are various people  
6 who would have a hand in drafting press guidance. Because  
7 there were so many equities involved in what had happened in  
8 Benghazi, there would have been original inputs coming from  
9 multiple agencies, so the NSC generally takes on the role as  
10 compiling those and circulating them to ensure that any  
11 agency that has an equity in what happened has an opportunity  
12 to provide input into the drafting, has an opportunity to  
13 review during the clearance process, and ultimately gives a  
14 final approval before that is used by any member of the  
15 U.S. Government publicly.

16 Q Let me give you an example that might give a little  
17 more context. Let's say both the DNI and the CIA provide an  
18 assessment of what occurred in Benghazi. Do those  
19 assessments come to you, to the NSC, initially?

20 A Are you talking about press guidance or the actual  
21 intelligence itself?

22 Q Right. My understanding of what you said, and I  
23 may have misunderstood was the intelligence community, the  
24 DNI, the CIA, they provide intelligence assessments. That  
25 information is then used to provide press guidance. That

1 press guidance is, in turn, then sent back to the DNI or the  
2 CIA to review and approve?

3 A Uh-huh.

4 Q Is that the process? In other words, are they  
5 doing the press guidance first then sending it along with the  
6 assessment, or do you, at the NSC, take the assessment and  
7 use that to prepare the press guidance, which you then send  
8 back?

9 A I wish it was a linear process. The truth is, it's  
10 not, and that's not just in the case of Benghazi. It's often  
11 the scramble of just how the interagency works when we're  
12 responding to queries. It's not linear in the sense that  
13 it's not that DNI provides something, CIA provides something,  
14 State Department provides something. Often those agencies  
15 are working simultaneously on various parts of press  
16 guidance. It would come together in one document, and  
17 oftentimes be circulated multiple times before we have a  
18 clear product. It's not something that would sort of come  
19 over once and then be cleared.

20 To answer your more specific question, anything that we  
21 use publicly that refers to an intelligence assessment would  
22 use the exact language that the intelligence community  
23 provided. We would not generally fiddle with that type of  
24 language. We may put context around it, but the intelligence  
25 community would provide what they believe to be an

1 unclassified assessment suitable for public use.

2 Q So the intelligence community would have the final  
3 word on that language; are we talking about the analyst side  
4 at the CIA, or are we talking about the press shop at the  
5 CIA, if you know?

6 A I do not know. My counterpart, obviously, is in  
7 the press shop. They would be responsible for sending me a  
8 DNI- or a CIA-cleared product, but what their internal  
9 process is for clearing that with policy folks and senior  
10 leadership, I couldn't speak to that.

11 Q Let's try to dig in a little bit on the specifics  
12 of how it played out with regard to Benghazi. Do you recall  
13 receiving any specific intelligence assessments from the DNI?

14 A So are you asking about press guidance related to  
15 intelligence assessments or actual?

16 Q No, actual intelligence.

17 A I don't recall that I had access to those.

18 Q Do you recall if you had access to the actual  
19 intelligence assessments provided by the CIA?

20 A I don't recall.

21 Q Did anybody, to your knowledge, at the NSC, receive  
22 it and review the actual intelligence assessments that were  
23 being provided during this period?

24 A I wouldn't want to speak to what access other  
25 people had at the NSC.

1 Q So you don't know?

2 A I don't know.

3 Q But you did not -- well, it sounds like you would  
4 have had access, but you don't recall if you actually  
5 reviewed it that week?

6 A That's correct. It is possible that I would have  
7 had access. I can't say either way, because I don't recall.

8 Q And when you said for use by members of the  
9 U.S. Government, I mean, there's been a lot of talk about the  
10 CIA talking points that were prepared ostensibly for use by  
11 the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. In  
12 your answer, when you referred to the members of the  
13 U.S. Government, were you including those talking points and  
14 HPSCI as well?

15 A Yes, that would go through the same review process  
16 that press guidance for members inside the administration  
17 itself would use, yes.

18 Q We'll get into that a little more specifically  
19 later. I'm sure you said this already, but who was your  
20 contact at the DNI?

21 A Shawn Turner.

22 Q Shawn Turner, okay. You did say that. Thank you.  
23 Did you ever have any conversations with Ben Rhodes or Tommy  
24 Vietor about the content of any of the intelligence  
25 assessments that were being provided about the attack in

1           Benghazi during that period?

2           A     I do recall that I did ask Tommy and Ben to review  
3           the press guidance as part of the clearance process, and the  
4           intelligence assessments that were cleared for public use, if  
5           you will, as part of the press guidance, would have been part  
6           of what they reviewed.

7           Q     Do you know one way or the other whether they  
8           reviewed the actual assessments, like the raw assessments  
9           that were coming from the intelligence community about the  
10          attacks?

11          A     I don't know.

12          Q     Did you have any interaction with the White House  
13          situation room on the night of the attacks?

14          A     We did convene an interagency conference call. I  
15          can't recall whether we used WHSR to set up the call or not.

16          Q     What is WHSR?

17          A     Sorry. The White House situation room.

18          Q     If you had used it, would the call have occurred in  
19          the situation room?

20          A     Yes, it would have been a SVTC. It would have been  
21          a video screen SVTC.

22          Q     Do you recall having any conversations with anybody  
23          in the situation room that night about what had occurred in  
24          Benghazi?

25          A     No.

1 Q Is that something you would have done?

2 A No.

3 Q Take us through the process of how you personally  
4 collected information about the attacks in Benghazi?

5 A During this period of time, I would have had  
6 several channels that I would work through. One would have  
7 been the communicators at each agency who are receiving  
8 information from multiple sources within their own buildings  
9 on the policy side generally, about what had occurred. We  
10 often shared information within that channel with each other.  
11 I would have had conversations, and I recall having  
12 conversations with Ben Fishman, who would have been the  
13 person responsible, or one of the people responsible for  
14 dealing with Libya policy within the NSC.

15 And the ~~other~~<sup>others</sup> would have been Tommy Vietor and Ben  
16 Rhodes, because both were more senior to me at the time and  
17 sat in the West Wing. It would not be uncommon that they  
18 would have more information from other channels that I was  
19 not privy to, so I would check in with them to ensure that I  
20 was, in any of my work, had access to the most updated  
21 information and the most accurate information. Those would  
22 be the general three channels.

23 Q That night, do you recall receiving any information  
24 from Ben Rhodes or Tommy Vietor that was new information to  
25 you, that you had not heard from those other channels you

1 just described?

2 A I don't recall.

3 Q Do you recall, generally, that they were,  
4 essentially, on the same page with you when it came to  
5 understanding what had occurred in Benghazi?

6 A I do.

7 Q And if I understood you correctly, that was just  
8 confusion about what had occurred?

9 A In the early hours of the attack, yes, absolutely.  
10 And as people gathered more information, people, you know,  
11 the thinking sort of advanced with the information as it was  
12 collected.

13 Q Describe that process for us, going from confusion  
14 to collecting more information to the evolving understanding.  
15 Over what period of time did that play out, what did you  
16 learn? How did the assessments change?

17 A Well, that's a process that went on for several  
18 days, if not weeks. I couldn't say specifically, but as a  
19 general rule, and this was the case with Benghazi as well,  
20 when there was updated information from any agency, that was  
21 fed in through the communicators at each agency, so that  
22 press guidance could be updated to ensure that anything that  
23 we were saying publicly represented the most factual  
24 assessment at that given point in time. We also tried to  
25 make clear that initial information in these situations is

1 frequently incorrect or incomplete, and that it was likely  
2 that assessments would evolve over time as more information  
3 was available.

4 Q Focusing on the night of the attacks, do you recall  
5 the understanding of what had occurred in Benghazi evolving  
6 that night, or was it essentially confusion from the  
7 beginning to when you left that night?

8 A Well, I can only speak for myself, and obviously,  
9 I'm not privy to all of the information that policymakers and  
10 senior leadership would have had access to, so I can only say  
11 that when I went home that night, there was still confusion  
12 about exactly what had occurred. When I left the NSC to go  
13 home, I still was not aware that Chris Stevens had been  
14 killed, nor that others had been killed. So it is accurate  
15 to say that when I left, there was not a full understanding  
16 in my mind of what had occurred. I can't speak for what  
17 anyone else was thinking at that point.

18 Q So your best recollection as you sit here today is  
19 you learned of Mr. Stevens' death after you had left for the  
20 day?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Did you work on anything? I think you said you  
23 were working <sup>on</sup> your BlackBerry throughout the night. What were  
24 you working on?

25 A I was, as I said, in touch with Jake Sullivan,

1 asking if he knew whether Chris had been killed. So that was  
2 one particular chain that stands out in my mind, and in  
3 communication with Ben and Toria Nuland at various points to  
4 see if there was any change in posture and to begin preparing  
5 for the next day.

6 Q Do you recall taking part in any statements that  
7 were issued by the State Department on the night of September  
8 11?

9 A I don't recall specifically.

10 Q Do you recall generally?

11 A I don't. I mean, as a general matter, I would be  
12 on chains related to the clearance of such statements, but I  
13 don't recall specifically whether I provided edits or other  
14 comments on those.

15 Q Do you recall any discussions about any military  
16 response to the attacks in Benghazi the night of the attacks?

17 A I don't recall being party to any such discussions.

18 Q Were you a party to a discussion about whether or  
19 not the State Department should issue a statement about  
20 Benghazi and issue a statement about Cairo? Let me be more  
21 specific. Eventually, the State Department issued a  
22 statement a little after ten o'clock that night, and the  
23 statement covered both -- we'll get to the statement. I  
24 don't want to characterize it. Did you ever recall any  
25 discussions about issuing two statements, one about what had

1 occurred in Benghazi, and one about the video?

2 A I don't recall specific conversations. As I said  
3 earlier, there was, when we became aware of the attack in  
4 Benghazi, of course, discussion about whether it was related  
5 to what had occurred in Cairo, given that there had been a  
6 large protest and an attempt to breach that compound that  
7 same day.

8 Q What do you recall about that discussion, about  
9 whether it was connected to Cairo?

10 A Well, I recall that that was a discussion that was  
11 simply that, a discussion about whether it was possible that  
12 those two events were related, that it would seem  
13 irresponsible to not consider the possibility given what had  
14 occurred in Cairo earlier that day.

15 Q Were there people just speculating. I wonder if  
16 these two are connected; obviously there's a relationship in  
17 time, or were they discussing specific items of fact from  
18 which you might draw an inference that there was a  
19 connection?

20 A I cannot speak to what policymakers or intelligence  
21 officials were discussing. I was not a party to those  
22 conversations. On the press side --

23 Q Yes.

24 A -- we were certainly discussing how we would have  
25 questions about both, and certainly, it was pretty obvious

1 that the press would likely ask about whether there was a  
2 connection, so we would have to be prepared to answer that  
3 question. But, again, we would not be the ones to provide  
4 the answer to that question. That would come from others  
5 inside the interagency.

6 Q I'll show you a document that I'll mark as exhibit  
7 1 to your interview transcript.

8 [Meehan Exhibit No. 1  
9 was marked for identification.]

10 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

11 Q Okay. Now this is an email from you sent at 9:32  
12 p.m. on September 11 to a number of people. Do you recall  
13 sending this email?

14 A As I sit here today, I don't recall sending it, but  
15 I certainly don't doubt the authenticity of it.

16 Q Is this one of the emails you reviewed in  
17 preparation for your interview here today?

18 A It is not.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1           RPTR DEAN

2           EDTR ROSEN

3           [11:05 a.m.]

4                       BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

5           Q       Now to focus first on the first paragraph, it says,  
6           the second sentence there, The State Department will release  
7           a statement tonight regarding the events and we ask that  
8           sentence. Seeing that, does that refresh your memory at all  
9           regarding the discussion about who would be issuing a  
10          statement that night about the attacks, the White House, the  
11          State Department, anything like that?

12          A       It does not. Only that there were conversations  
13          throughout the day that Toria earlier had sought approval for  
14          the use of holding lines, while we were figuring out what  
15          sort of the more formal response would be, but no, not beyond  
16          that.

17          Q       And the folks in this recipient list, there are a  
18          number of them. Did you select this list at the time or is  
19          this a list that existed in your Outlook address book?  
20          Looking at it, who are these people and how did they end up  
21          on this email?

22          A       Sure. So would you like me to go individually?

23          Q       You don't have to go individually. Let's start  
24          with, did you compile this lists on the spot, or is this  
25          something that existed at the time?

1           A     This, from what I can tell from looking at this  
2           now, would have been a list of the primary communicators  
3           within the interagency. I would have, in compiling this  
4           list, pulled from a larger list based on the agencies that  
5           had an equity. So for example, Treasury is often included on  
6           interagency communicator emails. I don't, at first glance  
7           here, see Treasury listed, and that would be because there  
8           wasn't necessarily a Treasury link at this point in time. So  
9           it would have been culled from a bigger list.

10          Q     Take a look at the second paragraph, it begins on  
11          "an important note." And ~~the~~<sup>the</sup> last sentence there says,  
12          "Please do not refer anyone to the Embassy Cairo statement,  
13          which is causing significant negative backlash." Do you  
14          recall the statement that you are referring to this in this  
15          email?

16          A     I do generally, yes.

17          Q     What do you recall?

18          A     I recall that Embassy Cairo released a public  
19          comment. I cannot recall what the format of that was. And  
20          this was, again, going back to what I said earlier what [REDACTED]  
21          [REDACTED] had apprised me of earlier in the day.

22          Q     And what did you mean by significant negative  
23          backlash?

24          A     As I recall from where I am sitting today, that  
25          statement made -- used language that some folks construed to

1 be the United States Government apologizing -- apologizing  
2 for a video that the U.S. Government had not produced, and it  
3 had generated some negative backlash.

4 Q Do you recall how you became aware of that negative  
5 backlash?

6 A From [REDACTED], who was my point of contact on  
7 the press response and anything related to Embassy Cairo  
8 throughout the day.

9 Q What did Mr. [REDACTED] tell you?

10 A Again, that there had been some negative response  
11 to what was released by embassy Cairo, the statement in  
12 whatever form that was released. That there was some concern  
13 about it within the State Department and that it had not been  
14 cleared by the State Department before the embassy released  
15 it.

16 Q Did you have any conversation with either  
17 Mr. Vietor or Mr. Rhodes about the negative backlash that the  
18 Embassy Cairo statement had caused?

19 A I don't recall specific conversations.

20 Q All right.

21 Mr. McQuaid. Just for ease of record, do you want to  
22 just put the Bates number or something about the document,  
23 the time stamp, things like that.

24 Mr. Missakian. Sure. For the record, this document has  
25 a document control number of C05390724.



1 don't -- if there is something that Craig asks you that  
2 you -- otherwise you would not have had a recollection but  
3 you do have a more recollection because you had seen the  
4 document that has shaped, kind of influenced that  
5 recollection, then you should reference that that is part of  
6 what your memory is based on is the document.

7 Ms. Meehan. Okay.

8 Ms. McQuaid. Or represent whatever the role that had  
9 and that is appropriate.

10 Ms. Meehan. Okay.

11 Mr. Missakian. Is that understood?

12 Ms. Meehan. Yes.

13 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

14 Q So let's get back to exhibit No. 2. This is a  
15 series of emails. The first one at the bottom is from  
16 Victoria Nuland on September 11th, 6:10 p.m.; you are one of  
17 the recipients. Can you tell us what we are looking at in  
18 that bottom email?

19 A Sure. So for the record, I don't recall this email  
20 chain. I certainly don't doubt its authenticity. So my  
21 answer will be based on the context as I read it now, versus  
22 a recollection of sending the chain at the time.

23 So from the context of this, this is from Victoria  
24 Nuland who was the spokesperson at the State Department at  
25 the time. These would have been some of the holding lines

1 that I referred to earlier, based on numerous inquiries  
2 seeking sort of an initial response to what was unfolding in  
3 both Cairo and Benghazi at the time.

4 Q When you say these are the hold lines, you are  
5 referring to the statements in the bottom email? And I will  
6 just read them into the record. "We can confirm that our  
7 office in Benghazi, Libya, has been attacked by a group of  
8 militants, we are working with the Libyans now to secure the  
9 compound. We condemn, in the strongest terms, this attack on  
10 our diplomatic mission." And then below a series of dash  
11 lines. It says, "In Cairo, we can confirm that Egyptian  
12 police have now removed the demonstrators who had entered our  
13 embassy grounds today." And then below that, another series  
14 of dashes "For press duty guidance, if pressed whether we see  
15 a connection between these two."

16 Then below that, the sentence reads, we have no  
17 information regarding a connection between these two  
18 incidents.

19 A Correct.

20 Q So what are the hold lines in what I just read?

21 A So the hold lines would have been the sentence that  
22 begins with we can confirm.

23 Q Okay.

24 A And ends with the second sentence, "we condemn in  
25 the strongest terms." The second hold line would be the

1 sentence that begins with "in Cairo" and ends at the end of  
2 that sentence. The third sentence that you read with the  
3 instruction for press duty guidance would not have been  
4 something that was proactively put out with the other two,  
5 but would have been in response to that specific question, if  
6 asked.

7 Q Okay. Do you have any understanding of why that  
8 last sentence, the third sentence, would not have been  
9 included in the hold lines above?

10 A I don't recall what the conversation was regarding  
11 that at this time, no.

12 Q And to the best of your recollection, did the  
13 statements made in this email, were they accurate as  
14 of 6:10 p.m. that night?

15 A These would have been accurate, yes. This would  
16 have reflected the best information that the U.S. Government  
17 had at that time regarding what we understood to be the  
18 situations in those locations at that particular moment in  
19 time.

20 Q Did you get any information, either that night or  
21 later that week to call into question the truth of the  
22 statement, we have no information regarding a connection  
23 between these two incidents?

24 A Can you repeat that?

25 Q Sure. Focusing on the third sentence, we have no

1 information regarding a connection between those two  
2 incidents.

3 A Uh-huh.

4 Q Assuming that you believe that statement to be true  
5 as of September 11th at 6:10 p.m., did you get any  
6 information later that night or later that week to call into  
7 question the truth of that statement?

8 A I don't recall as I sit here. If we did, we would  
9 have amended the statement to update -- to reflect an update  
10 in the assessment that was presented here.

11 Q So if there was no amendment, can we conclude from  
12 that that there was no information to call into question that  
13 statement?

14 A If there was no publicly updated information, you  
15 can draw the conclusion that the U.S. Government assessment  
16 had either not changed, or the information that was available  
17 in an unclassified setting and was therefore usable with the  
18 public had not changed.

19 Q Let's move up the chain a little bit, Victoria  
20 Nuland, in the second email from the top says, and I will  
21 quote, "We are holding for Rhodes clearance, BMM please  
22 advise ASAP." I gather the BMM is you?

23 A From the context of this email, yes.

24 Q You don't recall being referred to by those  
25 initials back in September of 2012?

1           A     Generally, I prefer not to use my initials, so, no,  
2     but it is not uncommon. I have a long name and I know Toria  
3     well, so.

4           Q     So you gave her a pass.

5           Then at the very top you write back, "Ben is good with  
6     these and is on with Jake now too." Having read that, does  
7     that refresh your memory at all as to the interaction between  
8     the NSC and the State Department with regard to these hold  
9     lines?

10          A     Again, I do recall that there was coordination  
11     throughout the day on what the public response would be, but  
12     no, it does not jog any more recollection of what the  
13     specifics of those conversations were, only that there were  
14     frequent conversations between the agencies on how we  
15     would -- how we would make the first public comment.

16          Q     So the fact that you are saying that Ben is good  
17     with these and is on with Jake now too, I assume, tell me if  
18     I am wrong, that when you said Ben is on with Jake, that they  
19     are on the phone together?

20          A     From the context of this email, yes, that is how I  
21     interpret this.

22          Q     How do you think you knew that if you were in one  
23     building and Mr. Rhodes was in another building? Is it  
24     possible at this point in the evening, you were in the same  
25     location in the West Wing with Mr. Rhodes?

1           A     No, because I wouldn't have access to email if I  
2     was in the West Wing, so it could be that I emailed Ben and  
3     he said I am on the phone with Jake. It could be that I  
4     called down to Ben's office, and his secretary answered the  
5     phone, and he said he's on the phone with Jake, he can't take  
6     your call. It could be that Tommy told me that he was on the  
7     phone with Jake. There are multiple reasons I could have  
8     known that, but I don't recall specifically how I knew.

9           Q     Do you have any understanding of what the two  
10    discussed, Mr. Jake Sullivan and Mr. Ben Rhodes?

11          A     I do not recall.

12          Q     Going back down to the bottom portion, did you get  
13    any information to call into question the truth of any of the  
14    statements made in the press hold lines that are reflected  
15    there?

16          A     Again, I don't remember the specific discussions  
17    around these lines. What I can say is as a general matter,  
18    we would not release anything to the public that we did not  
19    believe should be truthful or accurate at the particular time  
20    that we released it.

21          Q     A few questions ago you said that if there was no  
22    amended public statement, that we could take from that either  
23    that the information did not change, and the statements were  
24    still true, or there might be some classified information  
25    that could be shared publicly. Would that analysis hold true

1 with these two statements at the bottom as well?

2 A Yes, it would. We, as a rule, would go back on any  
3 issue, and Benghazi was no exception, multiple times  
4 throughout the day, when we are answering inquiries, to  
5 ensure that any agency that has new information or feels that  
6 press guidance should be updated for any reason, that that  
7 agency has an opportunity to weigh in and make the  
8 appropriate edits so the press guidance reflects the most  
9 updated and accurate information at that point in time.

10 Q Thank you. You can put that aside.

11 [Meehan Exhibit No. 3  
12 was marked for identification.]

13 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

14 Q Ms. Meehan, I just handed you a document that has  
15 been marked as exhibit 3. It is a one-page document with  
16 document control number C05578215. Once you have had a  
17 chance to review it, please let me know.

18 A Okay.

19 Q Do you recall this email?

20 A As we sit here today, I do not recall this email  
21 chain, but, again, I certainly don't doubt its authenticity.

22 Q The bottom of email chain contains what I believe  
23 to be a draft of the statement that the State Department  
24 issued at about 10 o'clock p.m. on September 11th. Were you  
25 involved at all in the drafting or the review of the

1 statement that was essentially put out by the State  
2 Department?

3 A I was involved in reviewing it. I am a party to  
4 the second part of this email chain asking for a review of  
5 this statement.

6 Q And do you recall anything specific about that  
7 review process?

8 A I do not.

9 Q Do you recall having discussions with anybody  
10 inside the NSC, outside the NSC, anywhere, about the content  
11 of this statement?

12 A I do not recall specific discussions about this  
13 statement, no.

14 Q Now this statement, in the second to last  
15 paragraph, refers to inflammatory material originating in the  
16 United States, which I believe to be the video that you  
17 referred to earlier. Do you recall any discussion about  
18 putting out two statements, one essentially condemning the  
19 video, and one explaining or condemning or addressing the  
20 attacks in Benghazi?

21 A I do not recall any such conversations.

22 Q Do you recall any conversation either with  
23 Mr. Vietor or Mr. Rhodes about the content of this statement?

24 A I do not recall any specific conversations at this  
25 time.

1 Q Do you recall generally?

2 A I do not, again, other than to say I was in  
3 communication with them throughout the day and the evening  
4 regarding public response, but specific comments about this  
5 statement I do not recall.

6 Q As you sit here today, did you have any role that  
7 you can recall in drafting the statement issued by the State  
8 Department?

9 A Not that I recall, no.

10 Q Did you take part in drafting any statement that  
11 was issued about Benghazi? For example, on the morning of  
12 the 12th, the very next day, the White House issued a written  
13 statement. And then after that statement went out, the  
14 President made some remarks in the Rose Garden. Do you  
15 recall that?

16 A I do.

17 Q Were you involved in drafting, reviewing,  
18 commenting on the initial written statement issued by the  
19 White House?

20 A I recall being involved in the clearance process  
21 for that statement. I do not recall whether I had a drafting  
22 role.

23 Q How did you participate in the clearance process?

24 A The clearance process would have been done, or was  
25 done, I should say, over email. It would have been

1       circulated to relevant parties within the NSC who would have  
2       had some knowledge that would have been brought to bear in  
3       ensuring what the President was going say was accurate as we  
4       understood it to be at that point in time.

5             Q     Were you receiving information about what had  
6       occurred so you could take that information and then marry it  
7       up to the statement? I mean, how were you analyzing the  
8       accuracy of the statement?

9             A     Well, again, consistently and continuously  
10      throughout those days, I was in contact with my counterparts  
11      at other agencies.

12            Q     Let me stop you right there, if you want to finish,  
13      you can.

14            A     Sure.

15            Q     I just want to make this is an efficient as  
16      possible. You said throughout those days, I am really just  
17      focused now on the next morning, September 12. There was the  
18      written statement by the White House, and then the Rose  
19      Garden remarks that the President, which were also in  
20      writing, but the President delivered orally.

21            From that night, from the moment you left your job the  
22      night before on the 11th, to the moment that the first  
23      statement went out from the White House, I mean, were you  
24      receiving information about the attacks in Benghazi that you  
25      would then use to evaluate against the accuracy of the

1 statement or, were you just essentially reading the statement  
2 for grammar?

3 A Again, I don't recall specific conversations or  
4 email chains from that specific, very, very precise period of  
5 time, as it was more than 3 years ago at this point. So if  
6 you are looking for a specific answer as to who I had  
7 conversations with, or what email chains I was on, and what  
8 information was contained in those email chains, I couldn't  
9 say, because I don't recall.

10 Q Well, it would be fair to say that you weren't  
11 receiving any classified information on your BlackBerry, if  
12 that's how you were getting information. And I assume you  
13 don't have a secure telephone at your residences?

14 A That is correct.

15 Q Do you recall making any trips to a SCIF that night  
16 to receive information about what had occurred?

17 A Well, again, are we talking about the night of  
18 September 11th?

19 Q Yes. Into the morning of the 12th?

20 A I was there quite late and would have returned very  
21 early the next day, but, no, I would not have made separate  
22 trips back to the office after I left and before I arrived  
23 the next day.

24 Q Do you recall getting any classified information  
25 prior to your review of that first White House statement?

1 A I don't recall.

2 Q And what<sup>do</sup> you recall, specifically or generally,  
3 about the review process of that first statement?

4 A Again, I don't recall.

5 Q Do you recall conversations with people? Do you  
6 recall making specific changes? Take us through the process  
7 of what you, personally, did to review the statement?

8 Ms. McQuaid. When you ask the question, please let her  
9 finish the answer. You keep stepping on it.

10 Mr. Missakian. That is fair.

11 Ms. Meehan. Again, as I said, I don't recall specific  
12 email chains or conversations from that morning regarding  
13 this statement, this written statement and verbal statement  
14 that the President delivered that you asked about.

15 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

16 Q Do you recall anything that you did with regard to  
17 that first statement?

18 A I do not.

19 Q Do you recall the second statement that the  
20 President read from the Rose Garden?

21 A I recall the statement, yes.

22 Q And there is one part of it that I want to ask you  
23 about. I read both statements, unfortunately I don't have  
24 them here, but it has been well -- well, not reported, but in  
25 the second statement that the President read in the Rose

1 Garden, he used the phrase "act of terror." Do you recall  
2 that?

3 A I do.

4 Q Now that phrase does not appear in the first  
5 written statement. Do you recall any discussion about  
6 including that statement in the second Rose Garden statement?

7 A Again, I don't recall specific conversations  
8 related to these two statements.

9 Q Do you have any understanding of how that phrase  
10 made it into the second statement?

11 A I do not.

12 Q Do you know who put it in?

13 A I do not.

14 Q Do you know when it was put in?

15 A I do not.

16 Q Do you know anything about that second statement?

17 A Again, if you are asking me to recount specific  
18 <sup>conversations</sup> ~~conversation~~, how it was cleared, what my role was, the  
19 answer is, as I sit here, no, I don't recall the specifics of  
20 that.

21 Q Do you recall generally anything? Like, for  
22 example, were you at your job when you were reviewing it?  
23 Were you still at home doing it on your BlackBerry, anything  
24 about it?

25 A I do not recall.

1 Q You can put that aside.

2 [Meehan Exhibit No. 4  
3 was marked for identification.]

4 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

5 Q Just so we are clear here, not your lawyer, but  
6 Mr. McQuaid asked me to allow you to finish your answers. I  
7 cut you off at one point. Was there anything you wanted to  
8 add to that answer that you weren't able to?

9 A No. I am fine with what I have said.

10 Q It happens occasionally, where we will talk over  
11 each other. It is not intended to cut you off, it is just  
12 intended to make sure that you understand the question.

13 A Yes, no problem, thank you.

14 Q All right. What I have given you is a multipage --  
15 a 2-page document with document control number C05578242.  
16 Once you have had a chance to review it, please let me know.

17 A Okay.

18 Q Let's kind of start with the basics here. We have  
19 got a couple of emails, actually three that are part of this  
20 2-page document. The first one from you on September 14,  
21 2012, at 3:46 p.m. to Benjamin Rhodes and Tommy Vietor, the  
22 subject is "Libya for Toria." What is the purpose of this  
23 email?

24 A So I will start by saying in regards to the earlier  
25 conversation, that this is one of the emails that I did

1 review in preparation for my appearance here. So my memory  
2 has been jogged by having the opportunity to see that. It is  
3 not otherwise an email chain that I recall. So if you could  
4 just repeat the question.

5 Q Sure. What was the purpose of the first email that  
6 appears at the bottom where the subject is "Libya for Toria"?

7 A So as I look at this today, through the context of  
8 the email, the purpose of this would have been, as I  
9 mentioned earlier, one of the responsibilities of the NSC  
10 press office is to help coordinate press guidance throughout  
11 the interagency, especially as it relates to press briefings  
12 that different agencies may give. The White House, for  
13 example, has a daily press ~~pressing~~<sup>briefing</sup>, as does the State  
14 Department, and Toria was the spokesperson for the State  
15 Department at the time.

16 So it would be normal for Toria to reach out before she  
17 briefs to ensure she has the most recent and updated  
18 information, and it would be the NSC that would generally  
19 have that collated from among the interagency.

20 So from the context of this email, it looks like, based  
21 on the timing of it, that Jay Carney would have briefed  
22 probably at his normal time in the middle of the day, and  
23 Toria was gagging at 4:30, which would have been later in  
24 the day than usual for her. And her office would have either  
25 reached out to me to ensure they have the most updated, or I

1 proactively wanted to ensure that she had the most updated.

2 So this represents the press guidance from that day  
3 related to this topic. And I sent it to Tommy and Ben to  
4 ensure that there was no information that they had through  
5 channels that perhaps I was not privy to that would have  
6 necessitated an update of the press guidance.

7 Q And did you draft the body of the very first email  
8 on page 1?

9 A I don't recall who the drafter of that information  
10 was.

11 Q Having read through it, do you have an idea whether  
12 you drafted it, does it have your style?

13 A So I would say this press guidance is often a  
14 compilation of inputs from across the interagency. So there  
15 are certain things I would have drafted. For example, I can  
16 tell the third paragraph where it makes reference to a  
17 conversation that the President had with President Hadi, that  
18 would have come from me, because I would be responsible for  
19 drafting something that refers to the President. And the  
20 rest, likely a compilation of other agencies.

21 When I look at, for example, on the second page, the  
22 first question on the second page, the second question  
23 overall, where it talks about intelligence 48 hours in  
24 advance of the Benghazi attack having been ignored. That  
25 would have been provided by the intelligence agency, because

1       it represents a comment on intelligence received in an  
2       intelligence assessment, so that language would have been  
3       provided by the intelligence agency.

4             Q       When you say "the language would have been  
5       provided," you are talking about the answer to the question?

6             A       That is correct. Where it says "We are not aware  
7       of any actionable intelligence indicating that an attack on  
8       the U.S. mission in Benghazi was planned or imminent. We  
9       also see indications that this action was related to the  
10       video that has sparked protests in other countries."

11            Q       Who came up with the question? Let's use that one  
12       as an example. Your best belief is that statement came in  
13       some form from the intelligence community?

14            A       Uh-huh.

15            Q       I assume it is possible that it could have been  
16       revised at the NSC?

17            A       The NSC generally would not revise anything related  
18       to an intelligence assessment. It is certainly possible that  
19       the NSC added the first phrase, this story is absolutely  
20       wrong, but we would, as a rule, generally not tweak language  
21       provided by the intelligence community related to an  
22       intelligence assessment.

23            Q       And, I mean, if we were to go look at all the  
24       emails out there, would we expect to find an email from  
25       someone in the intelligence community that has that language

1 in it, beginning with we are not aware of, that would have  
2 come from someone in the intelligence community; is that your  
3 best belief?

4 A Yes, that is my best belief. And may I just go  
5 back and answer your other question also, about where the  
6 questions came from?

7 Q Yes.

8 A So this is part of the process that I described  
9 earlier where the interagency coordinates throughout the day,  
10 not only in press guidance, but in sharing information about  
11 what we believe will be questions related to news of the day.  
12 So someone in the interagency was likely contacted by the  
13 ~~I~~ independent, or would have seen that story and flagged for  
14 the rest of the interagency that this is something that we  
15 are likely to be asked about.

16 Q So not only the information that goes into  
17 answering the questions could have been the end product of  
18 the interagency process, but the questions as well?

19 A That is correct.

20 Q As you sit here today, you can't really tell one  
21 way or the other where any of the questions or information  
22 came from, other than what we spoke about specifically where  
23 you said it came from the intelligence community?

24 A And again, references in the first question and  
25 then in the question on the second page, can you explain to

1 us again the President's comments about why Egypt was not an  
2 ally? That would have been likely drafted by me, because,  
3 again, it is characterizing the President's comments and that  
4 is generally something the NSC would have the lead on. There  
5 are other answers here that look to me like they reflect  
6 State Department input in addition to NSC input.

7 Q Let's go to the very first paragraph of your email  
8 to Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Vietor. I will read into the record,  
9 "I think a lot has been spinning down there that I might not  
10 be looped into, especially after the discrepancy between  
11 Jay's points and the Hill comment, Toria gaggles at 4:30, so  
12 I want to make sure she is on point with us."

13 Let's break that down a little bit. First who is the  
14 Jay that you refer to in that sentence?

15 A From the context of this email, I believe that  
16 would refer to Jay Carney, who was the White House  
17 spokesperson at the time.

18 Q Do you know any other Jays that it might refer to?

19 A I do not.

20 Q What points were you referring to when you referred  
21 to Jay's points?

22 A I don't recall specifically. My best guess from  
23 the context of this is that it refers to comments made by Jay  
24 Carney during the White House press briefing that day.

25 Q This would have been on Friday, September 14th?

1           A     It could have been that day, it could have been the  
2     day previous, I can't tell, which it would have referred to,  
3     but generally, it would have referred to the White House  
4     press briefing.

5           Q     And I know you said this, but what time does he  
6     typically do his press briefing?

7           A     He typically briefs sometime between 12:00 and 2:00  
8     p.m., it would depend on whether the President was traveling.  
9     If the President was traveling, it is possible that they  
10    gaggled instead of having a full briefing earlier in the  
11    morning, or a little bit later in the information. I don't  
12    know where they were on that particular day.

13          Q     And what did you mean when you said the Hill  
14    comments?

15          A     I do not know which comments that refers to. I  
16    don't recall.

17          Q     What did you mean when you said the discrepancy  
18    between Jay's points and the Hill comments?

19          A     From the context of this email, that there  
20    obviously was a discrepancy, as I wrote, between something  
21    that Jay Carney said, and something that someone on the Hill  
22    said, but I don't recall specifically what that was.

23          Q     When you say "someone on the Hill said," what do  
24    you mean by that?

25          A     Well, Members of Congress are out in the media

1 quite frequently, so it could have been something that  
2 someone, a Senator or a Representative said in an interview,  
3 or in comments to the press.

4 Q Is it possible that you could have also been  
5 referring to a briefing provided by somebody to Members of  
6 Congress? For example, we have information to suggest that  
7 Patrick Kennedy gave a briefing about the Benghazi attacks on  
8 the evening of September 12th.

9 A Uh-huh.

10 Q Do you recall knowing about that?

11 A I do not recall that briefing, no.

12 Q So as you sit here today, you are not, if I  
13 understand you correctly, you are not sure what you meant by  
14 the Hill comment?

15 A That is correct.

16 Q Is there anything you could review to help you  
17 remember what you meant?

18 A No. I mean, I would have to look back over any  
19 public comment, or testimony, or anything related to the Hill  
20 over a period of several days to be able to make a judgment  
21 on that.

22 Q If somebody had given a briefing to the Hill, for  
23 example, Mr. Kennedy, would you have been aware of that  
24 possibly?

25 A Possibly, yes.

1 Q How would you have become aware of it?

2 A It depends, it's a case-by-case basis. I generally  
3 am made aware when there is going to be open testimony on the  
4 Hill, because we want to ensure that spokespeople are  
5 prepared to handle questions about what is discussed in an  
6 open session. Generally, if there is a closed session, I am  
7 made aware in case there are leaks from a closed session on  
8 the Hill, and the press has inquiries about that as well.

9 Q What role, if any, would the NSC play in preparing  
10 for a Hill briefing? Would that be based on the subject  
11 matter? Would that automatically involve someone like  
12 Mr. Rhodes or Mr. Vietor? Was there any pattern or practice  
13 to that?

14 A Well, again, I can only speak to the role that the  
15 press office plays. If there is preparation on sort of the  
16 policy or the leg side, that is not something I can speak to.

17 Q I apologize, I meant on the press side.

18 A But on the press side, it is common practice that  
19 we would receive a copy of an opening statement, for example,  
20 to act as the logistical coordinator to clear those remarks  
21 within the NSC with policy folks, legal folks, leg folks as  
22 appropriate.

23 Q Aside from an opening statement that would be  
24 typically given at a formal congressional hearing, would the  
25 NSC be involved in reviewing or vetting any other information

1 that another agency would be providing to Congress?

2 A Generally, from the press point of view, in my  
3 experience, not related to Benghazi, but other general  
4 experience at the State Department, individuals who go up to  
5 testify up on the Hill often have a hard Q&A packet, or most  
6 recent press guidance, things like that. So that would often  
7 be pulled in part, if not wholly, from products coordinated  
8 from among all the agencies, sometimes through the press  
9 office.

10 Q As you sit here today, you don't remember anything  
11 specifically about the attacks in Benghazi and any statements  
12 that may or may not have been to Members of Congress about  
13 the attacks?

14 A As it relates to this particular email, that is  
15 correct.

16 Q Just putting the email aside, do you recall any  
17 information about the statements that were made, either by  
18 the White House, the NSC, anybody in your interagency about  
19 the attacks to Congress?

20 A I recall that there was the provision of what is  
21 commonly known to as the HPSCI points from the CIA, I  
22 believe, to Members of Congress who requested them.

23 Q We will get into that in a little bit. But beyond  
24 that, during this period from September 11th through that  
25 weekend, do you recall anything about providing information

1 to Congress about the attacks?

2 A During this period of time, no.

3 Q Let's work our way up to the next one. This is an  
4 email from Tommy Vietor to you and Benjamin Rhodes, September  
5 14th, at 3:50 p.m. Mr. Vietor says, "No changes. Jay leaned  
6 further into the premeditated stuff." Do you have any  
7 understanding of what Mr. Vietor meant by the second sentence  
8 in that email?

9 A No, I do not recall.

10 Q Do you recall any discussion involving whether or  
11 not the attacks in Benghazi were either spontaneous or  
12 premeditated during that period of time?

13 A Generally, yes. Can I recall specific  
14 conversations? No. But generally, yes. As I said earlier,  
15 there were questions about whether this could have been  
16 related to what had occurred earlier on the morning of  
17 September 11th in Cairo. I think generally in conversations,  
18 people were ~~being~~ looking at all possibilities as they sought  
19 to figure out what had happened.

20 Q Do you recall there ever being a resolution of that  
21 issue during that period about whether or not the attacks in  
22 Benghazi were spontaneous, or whether they were premeditated?

23 A Well, I recall initial assessments indicated, as  
24 you've seen in some of the other materials that you have  
25 provided to me, were that this was a protest that had grown

1 out of a reaction to what had occurred earlier that day in  
2 Cairo, yes, and that that assessment evolved over time.

3 Q What document, just so the record is clear, what  
4 document are you referring to?

5 A So I think from some of these earlier -- for  
6 example, deposition exhibit 3, where it refers to, in this  
7 statement from the State Department, "Some have sought to  
8 justify this suspicious behavior as a response to  
9 inflammatory material." It references our commitment to  
10 religious tolerance. And then in the holding statement in  
11 deposition exhibit 2, where Toria is putting out information,  
12 or the State Department is putting out information related to  
13 the attacks in Benghazi and the attacks in Cairo.

14 Q Let's flip to page 2 in the exhibit you have in  
15 front of you. The paragraph that begins "Fourth," the last  
16 sentence of that paragraph says, "The President has  
17 personally spoken to the leaders of Egypt, Libya, and Yemen  
18 and also sent a personal message to Prime Minister Erdogan."  
19 Assuming this is something that would have come from the NSC  
20 because it involves statements by the President. Do you  
21 recall any detail about how you obtained this information if  
22 you are, in fact, the person who wrote that portion of it?

23 A Sure. So when the President has spoken to a  
24 foreign leader, the press office is generally aware that such  
25 a conversation has taken place, either so we can prepare a

1 written readout, or provide a readout to the press and the  
2 public, or if that is a conversation that is not going ~~to~~ to  
3 be made public, we are aware of it in case it happens to leak  
4 so that we are aware that the conversation has taken place.

5 I will say that I do recall, if you look at the date of  
6 this particular press guidance -- this is Friday, September  
7 14th -- and just sort of give a little clarity around why we  
8 would have felt it was important to include that the  
9 President had spoken to these leaders.

10 Q You know, just for the clarity of the record,  
11 anything you write on the document is going to end up in the  
12 record, because this is the actual exhibit. You can do it,  
13 but I just want to let you know --

14 A Okay, thank you.

15 Q -- that it will be preserved for all of all time.

16 A Thank you, I appreciate it. So just to provide a  
17 little context, this press guidance was compiled on September  
18 14th, and at that particular point in time, we had seen  
19 following the incident in Cairo on September 11th, the  
20 incident in Benghazi on September 11th, that there were  
21 violent attacks against multiple diplomatic outposts, and  
22 against personnel, in, off the top of my head, remembering  
23 Tunisia, in Yemen, in Sudan, a protest in Pakistan. So this  
24 press guidance does not solely address what occurred in  
25 Benghazi or Cairo for that matter. It reflected, on

1 September 14th on that Friday, a series of attacks against  
2 diplomatic facilities overseas, and a very real worry that we  
3 had that on that particular Friday, that there would be more  
4 violence in that region in particular, in the Middle  
5 East-North Africa region, since Friday after prayers is often  
6 a time when we see increased demonstrations and violence in  
7 the region.

8 So just for the context of it, I wanted to make clear  
9 that the reason we would have included calls that the  
10 President made to those leaders is because we were incredibly  
11 worried about attacks against diplomats in multiple areas,  
12 not just what had happened in Benghazi at the time.

13 Q Just to clarify the statement, was intended to  
14 include Benghazi as well?

15 A This press guidance addresses what occurred in  
16 Benghazi, but it is broader than that. So it also takes into  
17 account what we had seen in terms of violence against  
18 multiple diplomatic facilities throughout the region.

19 Q Okay. I think I know the answer to this, but in  
20 that next section, the paragraph that begins the story is  
21 absolutely wrong. The last sentence there said, "we also see  
22 indications that this action was related to the video that  
23 has sparked protests in other countries." Do you have any  
24 idea what indications are being referred to in that  
25 statement?

1 A I do not.

2 Q You can put that aside.

3 [Meehan Exhibit No. 5

4 was marked for identification.]

5 Ms. McQuaid. I will give Bernadette a non exhibit copy  
6 that she can doodle on.

7 Ms. Meehan. That is my inclination is to highlight.

8 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

9 Q Ms. Meehan, I have just handed you a 2-page  
10 document, the control number is C05562051. It is a series of  
11 emails. Once you have had a chance to look it over, please  
12 let me know?

13 A My second page is blank.

14 Q So is mine. I am not sure why that is, but my best  
15 belief is the document is complete.

16 A Okay.

17 Q Let's start at the top this time. So you have got  
18 an email from you to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]  
19 [REDACTED], this is your reaction to receiving the tragic news  
20 about Ambassador Stevens. And this is -- you have an 11:07  
21 response to Mr. [REDACTED] 11:07 email, 11:07 p.m. Does this  
22 help you place in time where you were on that night, because  
23 I believe you said you were already at home when you heard  
24 the news?

25 A I don't know where I was when I received this

1 email. I do know that I was at home when I received the  
2 email from Jake Sullivan confirming that Chris was dead.

3 Q So in your mind, you had pegged the time you were  
4 at home versus at the office based on Mr. Sullivan's  
5 information. Do you believe that information came before?  
6 It seems like it would come after.

7 A I believe it came after, yes.

8 Q Okay. So then looking at this, you can't tell  
9 where you were at this point in the evening?

10 A I cannot by looking at this, no.

11 Q You may have still have been at the office?

12 A It is possible, yes.

13 Q Let's look at the email you sent. This is 11:04  
14 p.m., and I will quote, "Just the opening of what I think we  
15 will get tomorrow, there is a SVTC at 7:00 a.m. As I  
16 mentioned earlier, we will need fully State-cleared guidance  
17 here by about 9:00 a.m." And then there is a series of lines  
18 that begin with a Q: And they appear to be a series of  
19 questions that you, or somebody, is anticipating getting from  
20 the press about Benghazi and Cairo. Is that a fair  
21 characterization of what we are looking at here?

22 A Yes, it is.

23 Q Looking at this now, do you recall whether or not  
24 you were the person that drafted these questions?

25 A I don't recall specifically. But it is likely that

1 I probably drafted these questions, yes.

2 Q Let's drop down to the fourth question. Is the  
3 U.S. repositioning U.S. military assets in response to the  
4 attacks in Benghazi? Do you recall why you included that  
5 question?

6 A Because this is a question, one of the first  
7 questions we would get from the press. They often ~~require~~<sup>inquire</sup>  
8 about military action when there is a threat against  
9 embassies.

10 Q And the next question is, "Were the attacks in  
11 Cairo and does Benghazi link/coordinated," and the next  
12 question is "Can you confirm reports that Egyptian ~~copts~~<sup>Copts</sup> were  
13 involved in the projection of the video?"

14 A Uh-huh.

15 Q And you are sending this email to [REDACTED],  
16 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Why were you sending the  
17 questions to them?

18 A [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were press officers  
19 in the Department of State's Bureau of -- NEA Bureau, so they  
20 would have been my primary contacts into that bureau at the  
21 State Department; and [REDACTED] at this particular  
22 point in time, was one of Toria Nuland's deputies in the  
23 spokesperson's office, and would have been one of my points of  
24 context there if I wasn't going directly to Toria.

25 Q Did you view Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED] as subject

1 matter experts in the area of Libya and Benghazi?

2 A [REDACTED] was a foreign service officer who had  
3 served in the region, but no, they would have been my  
4 contacts because they were press officers, and they would  
5 have been responsible for circulating this to policy and  
6 substantive experts within the State Department as they saw  
7 it to be appropriate.

8 Q I guess what I am trying to understand is why were  
9 you including Mr. [REDACTED] -- I'm sorry, Mr. [REDACTED] and  
10 Mr. [REDACTED] both in the NEA Bureau at the State Department?

11 A Correct.

12 Q Why were you including this versus sending this  
13 straight to Victoria Nuland's office?

14 A Because press guidance within the State Department  
15 isn't generally compiled by the spokesperson's office; it is  
16 compiled by the bureaus who have responsibility for the  
17 policy that is being discussed. So they would be the action  
18 officers on circulating this for drafting, clearing, and  
19 approving within the State Department.

20 Q Where did you get the information about the  
21 Egyptian Coptic Christians as referred to in the question  
22 that I read? Do you recall?

23 A I do not recall.

24 Q Do you recall any discussions generally about that  
25 video and trying to get YouTube to take it down?

1           A    I do recall, generally, that there were discussions  
2 related to concerns of the outbreak in violence in Cairo,  
3 yes.

4           Q    And you refer here to SVTC at 7:00 a.m., I assume  
5 that means the morning of the 12th, do you recall attending  
6 or participating in that SVTCs?

7           A    I don't recall that specific SVTCs, but I would  
8 have been there, yes.

9           Q    You can put that document aside. We talked a  
10 little bit about what we both refer to as the HPSCI talking  
11 points, the talking points that were prepared primarily by  
12 the CIA for purposes of distribution to the House Permanent  
13 Select Committee on Intelligence. Have you ever reviewed  
14 those talking points?

15          A    At the time, I do recall being on email chains  
16 during the drafting, clearing process, yes.

17          Q    Have you reviewed them since then?

18          A    I have, in preparation for this appearance here  
19 today, reviewed one document related to that email chain,  
20 yes.

21          Q    Just take us through your role in preparation,  
22 review, and circulation of those HPSCI talking points.

23          A    My recollection, as I sit here today, is that the  
24 CIA had the lead on drafting those talking points, but they  
25 were circulated within the interagency for input review

1 clearance. I remember in this particular instance, Tommy  
2 Vietor having more of a lead role at the NSC than I did on  
3 this particular set of points, but that I was on many of the  
4 email chains related to, as I said, the drafting of the  
5 clearance.

6 Q How did you first hear that the talking points were  
7 in the works?

8 A I don't recall.

9 Q And do you recall having any discussions with  
10 Mr. Vietor about the talking points?

11 A I don't recall.

12 Q And whenever I use the term "talking points," I am  
13 referring to the HPSCI talking points, just so we are clear.

14 A Understood.

15 Q What was the nature of Mr. Vietor's role with  
16 regard to the talking points?

17 A As I recall today, Tommy took the lead on the NSC  
18 side in clearing them in our building, with people who would  
19 have had an equity in taking a look at ensuring that the  
20 information was accurate and factual as we understood it to  
21 be at that point in time.

22

23

24

25

1        RPTR MCCONNELL

2        EDTR ROSEN

3        [12:14 p.m.]

4                    BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

5            Q        Okay. And do you have any understanding of how  
6        Mr. Vietor took the talking points and ensured that they were  
7        accurate?

8            A        From what I recall, in terms of email chains, he  
9        would have circulated them, or he did circulate them on  
10       email. Whether there were other channels of communication he  
11       had with people in the NSC, I don't know.

12           Q        Okay. Do you know if he reviewed any documents in  
13       the process of ensuring the talking points were accurate?

14           A        I don't know.

15           Q        Did you have any conversations with anybody in the  
16       Office of Public Affairs at the CIA about the talking points?

17           A        I don't recall.

18           Q        Do you recall having any conversations, putting  
19       aside email, about the talking points with anybody during  
20       that period of time?

21           A        I don't recall.

22           Q        Do you recall having an understanding of what the  
23       purpose was of the talking points?

24           A        I do. My recollection is that members of the HPSCI  
25       had requested points from -- from the U.S. Government, in

1       this case, directly the CIA, for use when they spoke to the  
2       public or the media about what had transpired in Benghazi,  
3       and that is not an unusual request. We get requests from the  
4       Hill on a frequent basis for -- for requests like that.

5             Q     Can you give me any other examples of such request?

6             A     Outside of that timeframe, yes. One example would  
7       be during the Iran deal, we would frequently receive requests  
8       from Members of Congress for talking points that they might  
9       use when discussing the deal publicly or in TV interviews.  
10       Cuba would be another example where we would have Members of  
11       Congress reach out to ask for press guidance or talking  
12       points that they could use to discuss the administration's  
13       position on that particular policy.

14            Q     Are these requests coming to the NSC, or those  
15       requests are going directly to the CIA as in this instance?

16            A     It depends. It depends on who the Member of  
17       Congress is, it depends on what the policy is. It's a  
18       case-by-case basis.

19            Q     Okay, do you recall being part of any discussion  
20       about the talking points in any way?

21            A     Aside from remembering that I was on emails, email  
22       chains related to the clearance of the HPSCI talking points,  
23       no, I don't remember any specific conversations.

24            Q     Do you have any understanding of whether or not  
25       those talking points were used by Ambassador Rice to prepare

1 for her appearances on the Sunday talk shows?

2 A I can say that press guidance that would have been  
3 provided to Secretary -- or to Ambassador Rice at that time  
4 would have been based on press guidance developed throughout  
5 the week and updated at the time that it was presented to  
6 her. And as the HPSCI points would have reflected what the  
7 administration was saying publicly, yes, those would have  
8 been part of the same process for creating the points that  
9 eventually went to Ambassador Rice.

10 Q Okay. So if I understand you correctly, it sounds  
11 like you are saying as a general practice, you believe that  
12 HPSCI talking points would have ended up in a package given  
13 to Ambassador Rice. Is that fair?

14 A They would have been part of the process, but they  
15 would have been -- I can't recall what date the HPSCI talking  
16 points were provided to the HPSCI, versus the date that  
17 Ambassador Rice received her press guidance. But whatever  
18 Ambassador Rice received would have reflected the press  
19 guidance that was updated and accurate at the point in time  
20 she received it. And if the HPSCI points were before that,  
21 yes, they would have been part of that package. But I don't  
22 recall the specific dates.

23 Q Right. So as you sit here today, you don't know  
24 one way or the other whether or not Ambassador Rice ever saw  
25 those HPSCI talking points?

1           A     I do not.

2           Q     Were you involved in any way in preparing  
3 Ambassador Rice for her appearances on the Sunday talk shows?

4           A     I was, again, part of the interagency process that  
5 compiled press guidance that would have been used in a  
6 preparation package for her as she prepared for the Sunday  
7 shows.

8           Q     Okay. Let's break it down a little bit. Do you  
9 have any firsthand knowledge, again, not what would have been  
10 done, but do you have any firsthand knowledge of the stack of  
11 information that Ambassador Rice received to prepare for the  
12 Sunday talk shows?

13          A     Yes. The package of press guidance that she  
14 received was the product of interagency coordination and  
15 reflected the updated talking points at that point in time as  
16 cleared by all agencies with an equity.

17          Q     Okay. So now I'm a little bit confused. I thought  
18 you said you don't know one way or another whether or not  
19 Ambassador Rice received the HPSCI talking points?

20          A     That's right.

21          Q     I think you just said, unless I misheard you, that  
22 the talking points, the updated talking points would have  
23 been -- were included in the material she received?

24          A     So let me take a step back.

25          Q     Please.

1           A     I am not familiar with what date the HPSCI talking  
2 points were finalized and provided to the HPSCI. Secretary,  
3 or Ambassador Rice, received press guidance that was worked  
4 through the interagency, and cleared by any agency that had  
5 an equity in what had occurred in Benghazi on September 11.  
6 Those points that Ambassador Rice received would have  
7 overlapped in some way, if not have been identical to the  
8 HPSCI talking points, depending on when they were developed.  
9 I don't know what the difference in dates was, so I can't say  
10 with certainty whether they were the same or different.

11           I have no idea whether Ambassador Rice received the  
12 final HPSCI talking points in that form. I have no idea.  
13 But she did receive press guidance that would have been  
14 developed the same way the HPSCI talking points were, and  
15 would have reflected the same information, but updated for  
16 the date that she received them.

17           Q     How do you know how the HPSCI talking points were  
18 developed?

19           A     Well, as I have been saying, I was on the email  
20 chain where they were cleared and drafted.

21           Q     But you said HPSCI talking points followed the same  
22 process as all of the other press guidance that we -- how do  
23 you know that? I mean, how do you know what the CIA did to  
24 prepare those talking points?

25           A     I was on the interagency chain.

1           Q     Right.  Sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt you.  Go  
2 ahead.

3           A     I was on the interagency chain for the clearance of  
4 press guidance used by Toria Nuland, by Jay Carney, by George  
5 Little, by others in the administration during that week.  I  
6 was also separately on the chain where the HPSCI talking  
7 points were going through drafting and clearance.  That was a  
8 similar process, meaning that any agency that had an equity  
9 was involved in drafting and/or clearing, and/or approving  
10 any public points that were provided on the topic of  
11 Benghazi.

12          Q     You would agree with me, wouldn't you, that the  
13 process of drafting and revising HPSCI talking points, I  
14 mean, only a portion of that, maybe a very small portion of  
15 that is reflected in the email exchange is about it.  And  
16 much of that work may have occurred within the four walls of  
17 the CIA.  Is that fair?

18          A     Yes, absolutely.  The same way with --

19          Q     Okay, how did you --

20          A     -- with press guidance --

21          Q     I'm not finished with my question.

22          A     -- is developed inside an agency, and then once an  
23 agency has a compiled answer or product to provide, it's then  
24 fed into the interagency process.

25          Q     I understand that, but you said HPSCI talking

1 points were developed using the same process as the press  
2 guidance. How do you have an insight into what was going on  
3 at the CIA with regard to the HPSCI talking points?

4 A I don't. I can only talk to the interagency  
5 process writ large, and the interagency process was the same  
6 in both cases.

7 Q And going back to Ambassador Rice. It sounds like  
8 you know exactly the documents she was given to prepare. Is  
9 that true, or am I just --

10 A I am familiar with one of the documents that she  
11 received. If she received other materials from her  
12 spokesperson as part of her preparation, I would not be privy  
13 to that.

14 Q Okay. What is the one document that you know she  
15 received?

16 A It was the compiled press guidance that was the  
17 result of the interagency clearance process. I recall that  
18 it also had top lines that were added in at the end of that  
19 process to give it sort of an overall frame.

20 Q And how do you know she received that?

21 A Because I received -- was forwarded in an email  
22 that contained that press guidance.

23 Q Was she included on that email?

24 A It was the email that went to her spokesperson. I  
25 can't recall if Susan specifically was on that email

1 personally.

2 Q So do you have any -- I will just ask this: Were  
3 you in the room when she was prepared for her talk shows  
4 appearances?

5 A I was not.

6 Q So you don't know, one way or the other, what  
7 document she actually reviewed, or the people that prepared  
8 her were using to prepare her, you just know what was sent to  
9 her?

10 A Correct.

11 Q Did you have any discussions with anybody about  
12 that preparation?

13 A I don't recall.

14 Q Okay. Did you have any discussions with anybody  
15 about her appearance and the statements she made on the  
16 Sunday talk shows?

17 A Following her appearance?

18 Q Yes.

19 A I don't recall.

20 Q You don't recall any such discussions?

21 A I don't. You're asking me to recall discussions on  
22 a specific day more than 3 years ago, and I don't recall  
23 those discussions now.

24 Q No, I'm certainly not doing that. I'm asking you  
25 if you recall any discussions about her appearance on the

1 talk shows, whether it occurred on that Sunday, or another  
2 day. Do you recall any conversations?

3 A I don't recall specific conversations, no.

4 Q Do you recall generally anything that was discussed  
5 about her appearances on the talk shows?

6 A Well, we would, as a general rule, on a Monday,  
7 have to prepare Jay Carney and Toria Nuland and others  
8 spokespeople across the U.S. Government for their daily press  
9 briefings. And we would anticipate that appearances of U.S.  
10 Government officials on Sunday shows would often be asked  
11 about in those press briefings, so yes.

12 Q I don't want to get into like the next day, because  
13 that's outside the timeframe that was discussed. I'm just  
14 talking about conversations about her appearance on that  
15 Sunday.

16 A Right, and I'm sorry if I'm unclear, but as I've  
17 said, I don't recall specific conversations on that day about  
18 Susan's appearances.

19 Q Again, I'm not talking about that day. I'm talking  
20 about her appearance on that day.

21 A Uh-huh.

22 Q So we understand she appeared on the Sunday talk  
23 shows. She made certain statements about Benghazi?

24 A Uh-huh.

25 Q Do you recall generally any conversations about

1 statements she made, whether you had the conversation on that  
2 day, or another day, we are not going to know that because  
3 you can't remember. But do you recall the conversations?

4 A No, as I've said, I do not recall specific  
5 conversations related to Ambassador Rice's appearance on the  
6 Sunday shows.

7 Q Do you recall anything generally that was said in  
8 conversation about the appearance?

9 A I do not.

10 Q Do you recall being involved in any way in  
11 preparing the President for his appearance, his interview  
12 with Steve Kroft on September 12?

13 A I do not recall being part of any of that  
14 preparation, no.

15 Q Okay. Who would have been involved in that?

16 A Generally, Ben Rhodes from the NSC press side. I  
17 can't speak to who from other offices would have been  
18 involved.

19 Q Do you recall that appearance, that interview with  
20 Steve Kroft on the 12th?

21 A I do not.

22 Q Do you recall any discussions about statements Jay  
23 Carney made during that week from September 12 to the end of  
24 the week?

25 A Specific discussions, no.

1           Q     Do you recall that week being informed that the FBI  
2 had opened up an investigation into the attacks in Benghazi?

3           A     As a general rule, I'm aware that the FBI always  
4 opens an investigation into a suspicious death of an American  
5 citizen abroad. I was familiar with that from my time at the  
6 State Department, so --

7           Q     So as you sit here today, you don't recall a  
8 specific investigation being opened that week?

9           A     Again, I would -- I have that general knowledge, so  
10 I don't -- I don't know whether I was informed specifically  
11 with regards to Benghazi, or whether that's just something I  
12 would have assumed.

13          Q     Fair enough. Do you recall being told by anybody  
14 that in light of the FBI investigation that you should or  
15 should not say anything about the Benghazi attacks, in other  
16 words -- that was a bad question.

17          In other words, were you told by anybody that the  
18 pendency of the investigation should, I think, affect, in any  
19 way, the public statements about the attacks?

20          A     I do recall, at least one email chain where either  
21 someone from the FBI or DOJ did ask whether folks within DOJ  
22 and/or FBI were involved in clearing guidance because of  
23 equities related to the investigation, yes.

24          Q     Do you recall ever being told that you could not  
25 make a statement about the attacks in Benghazi because of the

1 pendency of the FBI investigation?

2 A I don't recall.

3 Mr. Missakian. I understand I'm at the end of my hour.  
4 I just have one last document. Should I mark it and question  
5 her and then I can turn it over to you?

6 Ms. Sachsman Grooms. That's fine with us. Are you  
7 okay?

8 Ms. Meehan. I'm okay, yeah.

9 [Meehan Exhibit No. 6  
10 was marked for identification.]

11 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

12 Q Ms. Meehan, I have just marked as exhibit No. 6, a  
13 multi-paged document, with document control number C05415285.  
14 Once you have had a chance to review it, just let me know.

15 Mr. McQuaid. You are not marking the one that is the  
16 exhibit.

17 Ms. Meehan. No. Okay.

18 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

19 Q Okay?

20 A Yep.

21 Q All right. Let's start with the basics. We are  
22 looking at what appears to be one email. Well, no, multiple  
23 emails. Start at the back and work our way forward. The  
24 email beginning on the second to last page, this is an email  
25 from [REDACTED], dated September 14, 2012, at 7:11 p.m. I

1 don't see you being a recipient on this email. Having read  
2 it, do you recognize it as something you received back then?

3 A I can see that I'm not a party to the email. I do  
4 recall being forwarded a copy of this email from one of the  
5 recipients, but do not recall ever being added in as a  
6 participant on the chain.

7 Q Okay. Do you recall being forwarded a copy of  
8 Mr. [REDACTED] email?

9 A Of the overall email in some form or another.

10 Q Okay. And how do you recall that?

11 A In my preparation to appear today, I was provided a  
12 copy of an email that appears to be this email that was  
13 forwarded to me by one of the recipients of the email, if  
14 that makes sense.

15 Q It does make sense. Who forwarded the email to  
16 you?

17 A Erin Pelton.

18 Q And do we have that email?

19 Mr. McQuaid. I don't know.

20 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

21 Q And did you have any conversation with Ms. Pelton  
22 about the email prior to you receiving it?

23 A Prior to her forwarding me the email?

24 Q Yes.

25 A Not that I recall, no.

1 Q Do you know why she sent it to you?

2 A My recollection, my recollection based on the  
3 context of the email, as I was able to review it, was that  
4 she noticed that I was not included on the email and was  
5 forwarding it for situational awareness.

6 Q I see. All right, let's go through the sender and  
7 the recipients here in a little more detail. This email --  
8 now we are on the first page. This email is coming from Ben  
9 Rhodes on September 14, 2012, at 8:09 p.m.

10 A Uh-huh.

11 Q And let's just go through the recipient list. Who  
12 is [REDACTED]?

13 A [REDACTED] was a member of the White House  
14 communications staff who was the liaison between the White  
15 House and the networks as it related to things like Sunday  
16 shows appearances and interviews.

17 Q And then there is what appears to be a title or  
18 possibly a group, NSC Deputy Press Secretary. Who is that?

19 A At this particular point in time, I believe that  
20 would have been Caitlin Hayden.

21 Q Is there a reason why her name wouldn't appear, as  
22 opposed to her title?

23 A That's a technical question. I don't know.

24 Q And who is David Plouffe?

25 A David Plouffe at the time was a member of the White

1 House staff. I didn't have any interaction with him and  
2 don't know what specifically his job was.

3 Q Did you have any interaction with him at all  
4 regarding Benghazi during the period we have been talking  
5 about?

6 A I did not.

7 Q We know who Jay Carney is. Jennifer Palmieri, who  
8 is that?

9 A At this point in time, she was the Deputy  
10 Communications Director within the White House Communications  
11 Office.

12 Q And Joshua Earnest, what was his title at the time?

13 A At the time, he was Deputy Press Secretary.

14 Q Okay. And then the next name, and I'm sure I will  
15 mispronounce it, [REDACTED].

16 A Yes, that's actually spot on. At the time, [REDACTED]  
17 was Ben Rhodes's administrative assistant.

18 Q And [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

19 A At the time, I believe that [REDACTED] was Jay Carney's  
20 administrative assistant.

21 Q And [REDACTED]?

22 A I don't know who that is.

23 Q [REDACTED]?

24 A I don't know who that is.

25 Q And we know who Erin Pelton is, and [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]?

2 A [REDACTED], I believe at the time, was one of  
3 the administrative assistants in Denis McDonough's office.

4 Q To your understanding, what are we looking at in  
5 this email from Mr. Rhodes?

6 A Well, again, just for the record, I'm not a party  
7 to the email. But based on the context, it appears to be the  
8 press guidance that would be provided to Ambassador Rice to  
9 use as the basis for preparation for her appearance on the  
10 Sunday show.

11 Q And you're basing that on the fact that the subject  
12 line reference to "prep call with Susan Saturday at 4 p.m.  
13 Eastern"?

14 A Yes, and the context of what is included in the  
15 email, and the originating email from [REDACTED] which  
16 includes all of the logistical information for her appearance  
17 on the Sunday shows.

18 Q Do you have any insight as to how Ambassador Rice  
19 was selected to appear on the Sunday talk shows as opposed to  
20 Secretary Clinton or anybody else?

21 A I do not. I do not believe I was a party to those  
22 discussions.

23 Q Do you recall reviewing this document at the time?  
24 I mean, you recall it being forwarded to you, but do you  
25 recall doing anything with it once you received it?

1           A     I certainly don't recall doing anything with it  
2     once I received from it Erin Pelton, no.

3           Q     And prior to this going out, would there have been  
4     a discussion with Ambassador Rice about the types of  
5     questions that she could be expected to receive on the Sunday  
6     talk shows, or was that just assumed based on the course of  
7     events that week what would be talked about?

8           A     I wasn't part of any prep that Susan did, so I  
9     can't say specifically, but generally, when we are prepping  
10    for the Sunday shows, yes, we would, much like I had  
11    described in the process earlier, when coming up with and  
12    compiling press guidance, we would discuss what we think are  
13    likely questions to be asked.

14          Q     Would those, the likely questions that would be  
15    asked, would those be informed by the actual questions, for  
16    example, Jay Carney had been receiving at his press  
17    conferences during the week?

18          A     They could be, yes.

19          Q     So you folks would be aware of what he was asked  
20    and what he was saying, and would you all have transcripts of  
21    those press conferences?

22          A     Transcripts are available. Whether Ambassador Rice  
23    had them, I couldn't say.

24          Q     In the first section, "goals," is this a typical  
25    format for this type of document where you have goals and I

1 know you had used the term "top lines" previously in the  
2 interview. And then you've got Q&A that follows. Is this a  
3 typical format that the NSC press office would follow in this  
4 kind of circumstance?

5 A Yes, it is.

6 Q Okay. So what does the "goal" section mean?

7 A So, generally, goals would be the purpose of why  
8 the individual is appearing on the Sunday shows, what sort of  
9 the end goal is of the appearance, and what you're trying to  
10 convey.

11 Q And what are the top lines? How do you define top  
12 lines?

13 A So top lines, the best way to describe them is to  
14 also reference the Q&A. Q&A would be specific questions that  
15 we think an individual may be asked. Top lines are more  
16 general, sort of context for the overall issue at large.

17 Q And let's look at the goals section. One part of  
18 this that has received quite a lot of attention is the second  
19 bullet point there. And I will quote it: "To underscore  
20 that these protests are rooted in an Internet video, and not  
21 a broader failure of policy."

22 Do you have any understanding of what Mr. Rhodes meant  
23 to convey by that statement?

24 A I certainly don't want to speak for Ben. I can say  
25 more generally, looking at the date, this was Friday,

1 September 14, and looking, again, as I reviewed the press  
2 guidance here, that the context of this particular point in  
3 time is that, again, we had seen multiple outbreaks of  
4 violence against multiple diplomatic facilities in Cairo, in  
5 Benghazi, in Tunisia, and Yemen, and Sudan, and Pakistan, and  
6 elsewhere, so this would have been -- this entire package  
7 would have been designed to address not only what had  
8 happened in Benghazi specifically, but the administration  
9 response to these outbreaks of violence and threats against  
10 American citizens more broadly across the region.

11 Q And from the context, do you have any understanding  
12 what he was referring to when he says "and not a broader  
13 failure of policy"?

14 A Again, from the context of this, yes, that this  
15 would have been to say that there was a specific reason that  
16 there was an outbreak of violence in these particular areas.  
17 And that it was not a broader failure of the President's  
18 policies in the region.

19 Q Okay, what policies do you believe he was referring  
20 to? In other words, for example, this could be referring to  
21 the policy behind going into Libya in the first place. It  
22 could be the policy relating more generally to the war on  
23 terror. Do you have a sense of what policy he was referring  
24 to here?

25 A I don't want to speculate because I don't know what

1 Ben was referring to in particular.

2 Q Okay. Thank you. I don't have any further  
3 questions on this document. And if you give me a moment to  
4 go over my notes, I may be done completely.

5 A Sure. Of course.

6 [Discussion off the record.]

7 BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

8 Q Just one followup question. My colleague wanted me  
9 to clarify something, and it's a good point. I believe you  
10 testified that you know for certain that Ambassador Rice at  
11 least received one document for her preparation for the talk  
12 shows. Is this what we have marked as exhibit 6, that one  
13 document you know she received?

14 A So to clarify, to the point that you and I  
15 discussed, I can confirm that Erin Pelton, who was her  
16 spokesperson, received this document. In looking at the  
17 document, I do not see Ambassador Rice personally listed in  
18 the recipient line. And Rexon, who was also on her staff,  
19 obviously received this document, as he is the person that  
20 produced it. So I can't say whether this was presented to  
21 her, but I would have a hard time believing that this  
22 wouldn't have been passed on to her by her staff.

23 Q Okay. Thank you. Anything else?

24 Ms. Clarke. No.

25 Ms. Sachsman Grooms. Off the record.

1 [Discussion off the record.]

2 EXAMINATION

3 BY MS. SACHSMAN GROOMS:

4 Q Let's go back on. Just to reintroduce myself, my  
5 name is Susanne Sachsman Grooms. I'm with the minority  
6 staff, and we wanted to thank you for coming in voluntarily  
7 for the transcribed interview.

8 I want to start by going through a couple of these  
9 exhibits that you have already been through.

10 A Okay.

11 Q So let's start with exhibit 3.

12 A Okay.

13 Q And for the record, exhibit 3 contains an email  
14 from Jacob Sullivan to Ben Rhodes, you, and various others  
15 from September 11th of the night of the attacks at 9:32, with  
16 a statement which was a proposed statement for Secretary  
17 Clinton for that evening.

18 A Uh-huh.

19 Q I want to call your attention to the language that  
20 was discussed in the previous round. "Some have sought to  
21 justify" -- and I'm quoting -- "Some have sought to justify  
22 this vicious behavior as a response to inflammatory material  
23 originating in the United States. The United States deplores  
24 any intentional effort to denigrate the religious beliefs of  
25 others. Our commitment to religious tolerance goes back to

1 the very beginning of our Nation."

2 When Secretary Clinton testified before the committee on  
3 October 22, she testified about that language, which was  
4 included both in that statement the night of the attacks, and  
5 in the following day. And she said, and I quote -- and I  
6 will just quote a long thing. "During the day on  
7 September 11, as you did mention, Congressman, there was a  
8 very large protest at our Embassy in Cairo. Protesters  
9 breached the walls, they tore down the American flag, and it  
10 was of grave concern to us because the inflammatory video had  
11 been shown on Egyptian television, which has a broader reach  
12 than just inside Egypt. And if you look at what I said I  
13 referred to the video that night in a very specific way. I  
14 said, quote," -- and she is quoting -- "'Some have sought to  
15 justify the attack because of the video. I used those words  
16 deliberately not to ascribe a motive to every attacker, but  
17 as a warning to those across the region that there was no  
18 justification for further attacks.'"

19 Is Secretary Clinton's explanation consistent with your  
20 understanding of the time -- at the time of what that  
21 statement was meant to mean?

22 A It is.

23 Q Okay. And what did you think the purpose of the  
24 language was, and what do you think it conveyed?

25 A I think, as I sit here today and recall, it was in

1 response to the fact that there had not only been the attack  
2 against the facility in Benghazi, but a large and frightening  
3 attack against our Embassy in Cairo. There was also, as I  
4 recall it now, a great deal of worry inside the  
5 administration that there would potentially be further  
6 attacks, or protests, or incidents outside of other  
7 diplomatic facilities in the region. It's, obviously, a very  
8 volatile region. And part of what we were doing in our  
9 public language was seeking to tamp down inflammatory  
10 rhetoric in the region and do everything we could to ensure  
11 that there was an environment that would not lend itself to  
12 further attacks based on this video or people using this  
13 video as an excuse.

14 Q I'm going to move off of that exhibit.

15 A If I could just note one thing for the record.

16 Q Sure.

17 A You know, as we sort of discussed in one of the  
18 earlier sessions, I think that was somewhat prescient in the  
19 sense that there were, in fact, quite violent attacks against  
20 multiple other diplomatic facilities in the region as that  
21 week went on, and that was, you know, always a concern in our  
22 mind was how do we<sup>do</sup> everything that we can to ensure that  
23 there wasn't further loss of life, you know, of American life  
24 in these other areas.

25 Q Let's talk for just a couple of minutes and I know

1 we have gone through it in great detail, about the night of  
2 the attack. I understand that you don't have specific  
3 recollection at this point of detailed conversations, but can  
4 you give us a sense of the feeling that was in the building  
5 on the night of the attacks, and sort of the sentiment, your  
6 primary focus, the focus of your colleagues?

7 A Sure. So I will sort of break that down into a  
8 couple of separate answers. My responsibility and my primary  
9 responsibility was to help coordinate among the interagency  
10 what the public response would be to incoming inquiries from  
11 the press, and then as time went on and it became clear how  
12 serious the situation was, at that point, it becomes not an  
13 issue of simply responding to incoming inquiries, but, you  
14 know, the need for the President and others to proactively go  
15 out and address the American people.

16 So my primary role would be to interact with my  
17 counterparts at various national security agencies that had  
18 an equity in what was occurring, and to work with others  
19 internally to ensure that as there were public products, that  
20 the appropriate people had the opportunity to review them.  
21 With regards to the sentiment overall, you know, there was a  
22 lot of anguish and sadness.

23 There was a lot of confusion in the sense that you have  
24 a lot of information coming in. You had two Foreign Service  
25 officers who were unaccounted for for a period of time,

1       trying to track down where they were and what had happened to  
2       them. For me personally, you know, I interact, obviously,  
3       with the press secretaries at the State Department. Those  
4       were individuals who worked in the same bureau as the two  
5       Foreign Service officers who were killed. So there was a lot  
6       of sadness, anxiety, confusion, anger on that end as well.

7             Q       Was there -- and perhaps your role was really more  
8       on the communications side, but was there a sense of urgency  
9       within the building to make sure that the United States, as a  
10      whole, responded in a way that was quickly to save the people  
11      who were there and to protect human life?

12            A       Yes, absolutely. I can say that as I noted  
13      earlier, I don't recall specific meetings and conversations,  
14      but I do recall very clearly that the sentiment passed down  
15      from Ben was that everything that could be done was being  
16      done; that there was an urgency, again, in not only trying to  
17      resolve the situation in Benghazi, but doing everything that  
18      we could as a government to look across the region to see if  
19      there were other facilities that would be in need of  
20      assistance, and doing everything we could to ensure that we  
21      would not be faced with the same situation, you know, at  
22      other diplomatic facilities across the region.

23            Q       And we saw your emails from the night of the  
24      attacks. They -- it's clear that the deaths impacted you  
25      personally, emotionally. I don't want to go into that in

1 detail. But is that a fair description?

2 A Yes.

3 Q And once you learned of those things, you, despite  
4 an emotional reaction, you continued to work. Is that right?

5 A That's correct.

6 Q And I know there ~~was~~<sup>were</sup> a lot of questions about what  
7 time you went home. Certainly, we saw emails from you well  
8 into the night and the early morning until maybe 12:42 a.m.  
9 on September 12, and then it looks like the email traffic  
10 started back up again around 5:00 a.m. on September 12. Does  
11 that sound right?

12 A Yes, I don't recall specific times, but yes, the  
13 general timeframe sounds accurate.

14 Q So I don't want there to be a misimpression that  
15 you weren't, you know, still working. You were working very  
16 hard and diligently that night. Is that accurate?

17 A That is accurate, and thank you, yes. I think it  
18 was part of the difficulty in recollecting specific  
19 conversations and affixing them to certain moments in time is  
20 that there was very little sleep across, you know, an  
21 extended period of days, as I mentioned. There was a lot of  
22 concern and a lot of action being taken to prevent similar  
23 occurrences at other places across the region. So it was  
24 pretty much a nonstop effort for an extended period of time,  
25 and that tends to bleed together when you look back 3 years

1 ago.

2 Q And you're speaking for yourself on that, but was  
3 that sort of a shared feeling that you have about all of  
4 the -- all of your colleagues?

5 A Based on, you know, what I observed, yes. That  
6 would be accurate.

7 Q I want to shift to exhibit 4. And exhibit 4 is,  
8 just to remind the record, is an email from you on Friday,  
9 September 14 at 3:46 to Ben Rhodes and Tommy Vietor with  
10 Libya -- subject line, "Libya for Toria." We spent a lot of  
11 time on this before, so I don't want to belabor the point,  
12 but there, in that first sentence you say, "I think a lot has  
13 been spinning down there that I might not be looped into." I  
14 know sometimes people hear the word "spinning" and they start  
15 wondering what exactly that means. Can you maybe explain to  
16 us what you meant by that?

17 A Sure, in looking at this now from the context what  
18 I was referring to, as I said earlier, Ben Rhodes and Tommy  
19 Vietor, to whom this email is addressed, both sat in the West  
20 Wing, whereas I sat in the EEOB, you know, sort of across the  
21 street, if you will. So, by nature, of both of their  
22 positions and their physical location, they would have had  
23 access to information, people perhaps stopping by their  
24 office that I would not have had access to. So when I said I  
25 think a lot has been spinning down there, that simply means

1 meetings, information, conversations that they would be aware  
2 of that I wasn't. And wanting to ensure that before any  
3 information was passed back to the State Department, that I  
4 had done my diligence in ensuring that people who had access  
5 to information that I may not have had access to, had an  
6 opportunity to review this to ensure that there was nothing  
7 that, based on their prerogative, needed to be updated.

8 Q And there is a line in here that says "Especially  
9 after the discrepancy between Jay's points and the Hill  
10 comments." I understand you can't remember what exactly  
11 that's about. I'm going to show you a document. We will see  
12 if this refreshes your recollection, or if it's not the right  
13 thing. We are marking this exhibit 7.

14 A Okay.

15 [Meehan Exhibit No. 7

16 was marked for identification.]

17 BY MS. SACHSMAN GROOMS:

18 Q And for the record, exhibit 7 is State Department  
19 document number C5579559.

20 A And just so I am clear for the record, the second  
21 page is blank.

22 Q Yes.

23 A Okay.

24 Q I believe we will never fully understand all of the  
25 State Department's document production, but it does seem to

1 have some kind of a --

2 A Identifying number.

3 Q Something on it, yes. Gibberish language.

4 A Okay.

5 Q This is an email from Kimberly Dozier from AP to  
6 Shawn Turner at ODNI on Friday, September 14, at 10:34 a.m.  
7 The subject line is: "Representative Jeff Duncan, R-North  
8 Carolina said State Department had warnings of the attack  
9 48 hours."

10 And it appears that it gets forwarded to you by Shawn  
11 Turner at DNI, as well as some other individuals. The  
12 question from AP was, and I'm quoting, "Hey there -- at a  
13 hearing on Fort Hood just now, Rep. Jeff Duncan, R-N.C., said  
14 State Department had warnings of the attack 48 hours --  
15 apparently repeating the claim in the Independent, but he  
16 didn't source it to the Independent -- just said it as if it  
17 were fact. Can you clarify again?"

18 It says, underneath that, "Also, I understand you guys  
19 reached out to Matt Lee last night telling him the  
20 Independent report was wrong. Unfortunately, that didn't get  
21 to me until I wasted some time chasing it, so please loop me  
22 in too." And then that was sent on to you by Shawn Turner  
23 "FYI," he says, "Trying to find out where this is coming  
24 from."

25 So this appears to me to be a reference to a statement

1       that Representative Jeff Duncan had said repeating the claim  
2       in the Independent story about the State Department having  
3       warnings of the attack 48 hours beforehand. Does that seem  
4       right?

5             A     Yes, that's an accurate characterization of the  
6       email, yes.

7             Q     Does this refresh your recollection as to what you  
8       were talking about when you referenced Hill comments?

9             A     Unfortunately, it does not. I don't -- I truly  
10       don't recall what I was referring to. It's possible this was  
11       it, but I just don't remember.

12            Q     The --

13            A     I would say that it does appear that in the email  
14       chain that you're referring to, the one where I emailed Ben  
15       and Tommy, there is a question in that press guidance that  
16       does specifically address the email chain from the AP  
17       reporter.

18            Q     Yeah, so in exhibit 4, in that press guidance below  
19       where you say "Especially after the discrepancy between Jay's  
20       points and the Hill comments." There is a question, and the  
21       question is: "What's your response to the Independent story  
22       that says we have intelligence 48 hours in advance of the  
23       Benghazi attack that was ignored?"

24            A     And then answer, and I believe you said in the previous  
25       round, that you would have obtained the answer to that

1 question from DNI?

2 A That's correct.

3 Q Okay. I'm going to -- we spent a fair amount of  
4 time in the previous round talking about the HPSCI talking  
5 points, so I just want to introduce exhibit 8, which is on  
6 that vein.

7 [Meehan Exhibit No. 8  
8 was marked for identification.]

9 BY MS. SACHSMAN GROOMS:

10 Q Exhibit 8 is a long chain of emails. I'm mostly  
11 going to point to the beginning ones, but why don't you read  
12 through the whole thing.

13 A Okay.

14 Q It is Bates Stamped STATE-SCB65819.

15 A Okay. Thank you.

16 Q And so this is, at its beginning, an email from  
17 [REDACTED], Chief of Media Relations from  
18 the CIA Office of Public Affairs to Tommy Vietor, Ben Rhodes,  
19 you, Caitlin Hayden, cc'ing Shawn Turner. The subject is the  
20 "Revised HPSCI Talking Points for Review." It was sent at  
21 5:09 p.m., and it has HPSCI talking points with a line, "The  
22 currently available information suggests that the  
23 demonstrations in Benghazi were spontaneously inspired by the  
24 protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, and evolved into a  
25 direct assault against the U.S. consulate and subsequently

1       its Annex."

2               In a subsequent chain, Tommy Vietor sends an email  
3 around at 6:21. His statement is: " [REDACTED] I know you're  
4 trying to move these fast, so here's an initial round of  
5 edits. One small tweak in sentence 3 of bullet 1 for added  
6 clarity. Denis would also like to make sure the highlighted  
7 portions were fully coordinated with the State Department in  
8 event that they get inquiries." And it -- and then the  
9 response from the CIA is: "Thanks very much for your prompt  
10 response. Tommy, we will send over to State." And then the  
11 exchange continues.

12              When you were discussing in the previous round that  
13 Tommy Vietor took the lead on the NSC side in clearing the  
14 HPSCI talking points for the building to ensure that they  
15 were accurate and factual at that time, is this what you were  
16 referring to?

17              A     Yes, it is. And for the record, per the early  
18 agreement, I did see a version of this email chain in advance  
19 of this hearing.  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 RPTR BAKER

2 EDTR HOFSTAD

3 [1:17 p.m.]

4 BY MS. SACHSMAN GROOMS:

5 Q And so, from this, it appears that what happened  
6 was that Tommy Vietor got in a version at 5:09 and then that  
7 he edited it, and that was his initial round of edits at  
8 6:21. Is that an accurate reading?

9 A Yes, it is.

10 Q The email exchange goes on. And, at some point,  
11 Ben Rhodes, now on the first page, at 9:34 p.m., sends an  
12 email around that says, "All, sorry to be late to this  
13 discussion. We need to resolve this in a way that respects  
14 all of the relevant equities, particularly the  
15 investigation." And, at that point, they decide to loop in  
16 Department of Justice on this email.

17 Is that a good description of what the NSC's role was in  
18 this process?

19 A Yes. In fact, the first line that Ben writes --  
20 well, the second line -- "We need to resolve this in a way  
21 that respects all of the relevant equities, particularly the  
22 investigation." The NSC takes a coordinating role to ensure  
23 that anyone throughout the interagency who, as I said  
24 earlier, has an equity is able to review, to provide input,  
25 to clear on it.



1       its annex."

2               My read is that the sentence was cribbed in some version  
3 of the first sentence from that HPSCI talking points. Does  
4 that look right to you?

5               A     Yes, it does. Uh-huh.

6               Q     And that wasn't the final version of the talking  
7 points, but it was, in fact, the one that was the most recent  
8 one at the time.

9               A     That's correct, yes.

10              Q     And is that the process that you've been basically  
11 explaining to us throughout the day, right? You would get in  
12 additional information from different agencies that was  
13 substantive, and you would then add that additional cleared  
14 information into whatever was the most recent updated version  
15 of the guidance that was going out?

16              A     Yes, that's absolutely correct. We would  
17 incorporate any updated information from anyone in the  
18 interagency who had relevant information and requested to  
19 make an update. And it would be our responsibility to ensure  
20 that that information is included in any of the multiple  
21 versions of press guidance or talking points that are being  
22 circulated at any given point in time.

23              Q     And once information like a talking point gets  
24 cleared through the interagency, do you then need to reclear  
25 it every time you use it, or do you just use the cleared

1 information until you have an update?

2 A So, in an instance like this where there's rapidly  
3 changing information, we would clear, certainly, at a  
4 minimum, on a daily basis before each of the daily press  
5 briefings. That would be recirculated to everyone within the  
6 interagency that had a role in initially drafting, editing,  
7 or clearing, even if they did not provide inputs the last  
8 time around because they may now have information that's  
9 relevant. And, generally, before individuals are doing an  
10 appearance, for example, the Sunday shows, that's information  
11 that we would ensure is up to date before someone uses it in  
12 that capacity, yes.

13 Q Now, I'm going to assume that there were very often  
14 during this whole time period time constraints and you all  
15 were working very quickly to get out press guidance. Is that  
16 accurate?

17 A Yes, that is accurate.

18 Q And sometimes the news had stories and you were  
19 responding, and that would accelerate your timeframe?

20 A Yes, absolutely, particularly in cases like the  
21 Independent story, which was referenced earlier, where there  
22 is information that we know to be incorrect or believe to be  
23 incorrect at a certain period of time. We do everything we  
24 can to correct that so it doesn't, sort of, harden in the  
25 minds of people, when we know that it is not accurate to the

1 best of our knowledge at that point in time.

2 Q And that Independent story -- you know, we have  
3 seen email chains where DNI, Shawn Turner was pushing back  
4 very aggressively against that. Is that accurate? Does that  
5 reflect your recollection?

6 A Based on, sort of, the emails that I've seen today  
7 and my recollection, yes.

8 Q As you were working quickly, how seriously did you  
9 personally review the accuracy of the statements and the  
10 talking points that you were working on with respect to the  
11 attacks in Benghazi?

12 A Well, I take my work very seriously. It's  
13 ultimately my responsibility to ensure that anyone who has  
14 knowledge or an equity has an opportunity to review it. So,  
15 certainly, I do a close review, but I rely on policy experts,  
16 on intelligence experts, substantive experts, to ensure that  
17 the underlying substance of whatever we're saying publicly is  
18 accurate and factual.

19 Q And so is it fair to understand that your role is  
20 not in personally determining whether the information is  
21 accurate but instead in making sure the information gets to  
22 the relevant agency so that they can check on whether the  
23 information is accurate?

24 A Yes, to an extent. Certainly, if I see things  
25 within a statement or a press guidance that contradicts

1 information I've seen in another area, it would be my  
2 responsibility, not necessarily to be the arbiter of that,  
3 but to raise the contradiction to someone's attention and  
4 say, there appears to be a difference of opinion, or, this  
5 does not appear to have kept up with changes I've seen in  
6 other documents. And someone would need to ultimately weigh  
7 in and provide a decision based on their substantive  
8 knowledge.

9 Q So you would flag things, but would you rely on the  
10 agencies that were providing the information pursuant to  
11 their, sort of, substantive areas for the overall substance  
12 of the information ultimately?

13 A Yes. Each agency would be responsible for clearing  
14 whatever the overall package is. That does include  
15 substantive experts from the NSC who would have an  
16 opportunity to weigh in on it, as well. But, yes, there  
17 would have to be clearance from each of those relevant  
18 agencies.

19 Q Did you have a concern or any concern that anyone  
20 else at the NSC was not adequately concerned about ensuring  
21 the accuracy of any statement or speech that was related to  
22 the attacks in Benghazi?

23 A Absolutely not. In fact, every sort of instruction  
24 that we received -- you know, the instruction always when  
25 we're dealing with the public is that information needs to be

1 factual, it needs to be accurate. If we think that things  
2 might influence what an assessment is leading to a change, we  
3 should be up front and say that this is likely to change as  
4 we gather more information.

5 But I do recall, on that particular day and in the days  
6 after, there was a sense of not only urgency with regards to  
7 what was happening on the ground but also, sort of, an  
8 extra-meticulous look at everything that we were putting out.  
9 Because there was a lot of information coming in; you know,  
10 there were contradictory press reports, information coming  
11 from all sorts of sources. And we had a particular  
12 responsibility to ensure that what we were putting out was an  
13 accurate reflection of what the U.S. Government believed to  
14 have happened and not, sort of, based on open sources and  
15 other information.

16 Q In any of the statements and the talking points  
17 related to the attacks in Benghazi that you cleared on or  
18 drafted, did you ever intentionally insert information that  
19 you knew to be inaccurate or misleading?

20 A No.

21 Q Were you ever asked or ordered to intentionally  
22 insert information that you thought would be inaccurate or  
23 misleading?

24 A No.

25 Q Did you ever remove any accurate information that

1       you knew caused the remaining information to be inaccurate or  
2       misleading?

3             A     No.

4             Q     Were you ever asked or ordered to remove any  
5       inaccurate information that you knew caused the remaining  
6       information to be inaccurate or misleading?

7             A     No.

8             Q     It's been alleged that the administration created a  
9       false narrative, that the YouTube video mocking the Prophet  
10      Mohammed played a role in the attack in Benghazi. What's  
11      your response to that allegation? Did the administration  
12      create a false narrative?

13            A     No, absolutely not. I can say that, from my time  
14      working there, you know, this was a situation where you had a  
15      lot of information coming in; there were a lot of emotions.  
16      You had had a large demonstration and penetration of the  
17      compound wall in Cairo. As the days went on, there were, as  
18      I said, violent attacks against multiple other diplomatic  
19      facilities in the region.

20            And this was a group of people throughout the  
21      interagency, across multiple agencies, doing their best to  
22      provide accurate information, updating that information as  
23      new information became available. And to the extent that  
24      there were comments that needed to be updated based on new  
25      information, that was a result of the situation and certainly

1 not any deliberate attempt to mislead. Nothing could be  
2 further from the truth, in fact, based on what I saw.

3 Q And with specific respect to Ben Rhodes and his  
4 role in messaging around the attack, there have been  
5 allegations that he crafted a false narrative or tried to  
6 mislead the American public. From your communications with  
7 him the night of the attack and the days following, can you  
8 speak to that?

9 A Sure.

10 I would say, as a general matter, I've worked for Ben  
11 for 3 years and have never, in any experience on any issue  
12 I've worked on, had him ask me to do anything other than  
13 produce accurate, factual information.

14 I can also say that, specific to Benghazi, the  
15 information that was provided regarding the assessment of  
16 what had occurred in Benghazi was information that was  
17 provided by the interagency, specifically the intelligence  
18 community, as a result of their efforts. What information  
19 they put into that I can't speak to, but Ben Rhodes was not  
20 the creator or the origin of that information. So any  
21 allegation that Ben was creating a narrative that was false  
22 or misleading, it just doesn't hold up.

23 Q And you were at the NSC, but you are a career  
24 Foreign Service officer. Is that right?

25 A That's correct. I was on detail to the NSC from

1 the State Department at the time.

2 Q So you are not a political appointee for this  
3 administration?

4 A I am not.

5 Q I'm going to keep belaboring the point. Did you or  
6 anyone else -- that's what we do here. Did you or anyone  
7 else you worked with on any statement, talking points, or any  
8 other remarks about the Benghazi attacks make any changes  
9 that were known at the time to be false?

10 A No.

11 Q Did anyone ever pressure you to make any changes to  
12 any statement, talking points, or other remarks about the  
13 Benghazi attacks that you believed to be false?

14 A No.

15 Q And did anyone else working on any statement,  
16 talking points, or other remarks about the Benghazi attacks  
17 ever tell you that they had been pressured into making  
18 changes that they believed to be false?

19 A No.

20 Q Do you have any reason to believe that anyone,  
21 yourself included, working on any of the speeches, talking  
22 points, or remarks about the Benghazi attacks did anything  
23 other than convey as clearly and completely as they could the  
24 facts based on the best available information at the time?

25 A No.

1           Q     At this point, I'm going to switch over to asking  
2     you a series of questions that we ask every witness that  
3     comes in. As you know, this is the eighth congressional  
4     investigation into the Benghazi attacks, and there have been  
5     a number of allegations about the attacks. Since we continue  
6     to investigate them, we continue to ask these questions to  
7     everyone and see if they have any evidence to support them.

8           There is a long series of them, so I'll apologize in  
9     advance and ask you to bear with me. If you don't have any  
10    evidence, then you can just say that; we'll move on. If you  
11    have any, obviously, please speak up.

12          A     Okay.

13          Q     It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton  
14    intentionally blocked military action on the night of the  
15    attacks. One Congressman has speculate that, and I quote,  
16    "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end  
17    quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not  
18    sending more assets to help in Benghazi.

19          Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton  
20    ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the  
21    night of the attacks?

22          A     No.

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

1           A     No.

2           Q     It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
3 personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to  
4 Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim  
5 and gave it Four Pinocchios, its highest award for false  
6 claims.

7           Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
8 personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security  
9 resources to Libya?

10          A     No.

11          Q     Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was  
12 personally involved in providing specific instruction on the  
13 day-to-day security resources in Libya?

14          A     No.

15          Q     It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
16 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
17 by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for  
18 military operations in Libya in spring 2011.

19          Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
20 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
21 by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for  
22 military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

23          A     No.

24          Q     It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in  
25 Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to

1 other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House  
2 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote,  
3 "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to  
4 Syria," end quote, and they found, quote, "no support for  
5 this allegation," end quote.

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

9 A No.

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

13 A No.

14 Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily  
15 delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special  
16 Mission Compound, and there have been a number of allegations  
17 on the cause of and the appropriateness of that delay.

18 The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan  
19 report concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote,  
20 "stand down," end quote, but that, instead, there were  
21 tactical disagreements on the ground over how quickly to  
22 depart.

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

1 A No.

2 Q And putting aside whether you personally agree with  
3 the decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right  
4 decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or  
5 improper reason behind the temporary delay of the CIA  
6 security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the  
7 Special Mission Compound?

8 A No.

9 Q A concern has been raised by one individual that,  
10 in the course of producing documents to the Accountability  
11 Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or  
12 scrubbed out of that production.

13 Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
14 Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the  
15 materials that were provided to the ARB?

16 A No.

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

21 A No.

22 Q I'm going to ask the questions also for documents  
23 that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence  
24 that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed  
25 damaging documents from the materials that were provided to

1 Congress?

2 A No.

3 Q It has been alleged that the CIA Deputy Director,  
4 Michael Morell, altered unclassified talking points about the  
5 Benghazi attacks for political reasons and that he then  
6 misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the  
7 CIA, quote, "faithfully performed our duties in accordance  
8 with the highest standards of objectivity and  
9 nonpartisanship," end quote.

10 Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike  
11 Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to  
12 Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

13 A No.

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

17 A No.

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

23 A No.

24 Q It has been alleged that the President of the  
25 United States was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief on the

1 night of the attacks and that he was missing in action.

2 Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that  
3 the President was virtually AWOL as commander in chief or  
4 missing in action on the night of the attacks?

5 A No.

6 Q It has been alleged that a team of four military  
7 personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were  
8 considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were  
9 ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease  
10 all operations. Military officials have stated that those  
11 four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in  
12 Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance to their  
13 current location.

14 A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed  
15 Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no  
16 stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli  
17 who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote.

18 Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of  
19 the House Armed Services Committee that there was no  
20 stand-down order issued to the U.S. military personnel in  
21 Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

22 A No.

23 Q It has been alleged that the military failed to  
24 deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have  
25 saved lives.

1           However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck"  
2           McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services  
3           Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he  
4           stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the  
5           thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we  
6           probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote.

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

9           A     No.

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

14          A     No.

15          Q     Thank you very much. Let's go off the record.

16          [Discussion off the record.]

17          BY MR. MISSAKIAN:

18          Q     Ms. Meehan, I just have a few followup questions  
19          based on what you were just asked. Let's start with  
20          exhibit 3, if you could find that somewhere.

21          Counsel asked you a series of questions about this  
22          document, which began with her reading you a portion of  
23          Secretary Clinton's testimony from her recent hearing before  
24          Congress. And, in that testimony, Secretary Clinton offered  
25          an explanation of the purpose for this statement. And I

1 think you were then asked about your understanding of the  
2 purpose, and you gave one.

3 What is your understanding of the purpose of this  
4 statement based upon? Did you have a conversation with the  
5 person who drafted it, Jake Sullivan?

6 A I don't recall having a conversation with Jake  
7 Sullivan, but, certainly, it is indicative of the general  
8 sense of purpose of what we were trying to convey in those  
9 initial remarks.

10 Q Okay. And this general sense of purpose, where did  
11 you get that from? Was it in a phone conversation the night  
12 of the attacks? Was it in a meeting? Where did that come  
13 from?

14 A It would have been a --

15 Q Again, not "would have been." Do you have a  
16 specific recollection?

17 A It was a compilation of what we had been working on  
18 throughout the day. I could not point to any specific  
19 conversation or any specific individual who would have said  
20 it in these exact terms. As I said, I don't believe that I  
21 was a party to drafting the specific language. But,  
22 certainly, it is an accurate reflection of what I recall to  
23 be the sentiments at that point in time.

24 Q Right. And I understand the sentiment that is  
25 expressed in the document. But you were asked about the

1 purpose of issuing the statement that included that language.  
2 What is your understanding of the purpose based upon?

3 Like, for example, the person that drafted the statement  
4 may have had a purpose in his mind at the time he was  
5 drafting it. Do you have any insight into the purpose that  
6 Jake Sullivan had in his mind at the time?

7 A I certainly can't speak to what was in Jake  
8 Sullivan's mind. But, as I have said several times  
9 throughout this interview, something that was in the back of  
10 all of our minds at that time, following on not only what had  
11 happened in Benghazi but, again, the attack or the protest,  
12 the incident at the embassy in Cairo earlier that day, was a  
13 concern that there was the potential for further violence and  
14 a spreading of this violence to other facilities in the  
15 region and that there was a general need to do anything we  
16 could to tamp down the rhetoric and prevent that from  
17 happening in the region.

18 Q Okay.

19 You were also asked some questions about whether or not  
20 you believe that the United States Government or Ben Rhodes  
21 perpetuated a false narrative about the attacks, and you said  
22 that you didn't believe that occurred.

23 A Correct.

24 Q In my mind, in order to reach the conclusion that  
25 you reached, you would have to know everything that Ben

1 Rhodes knew about the attack or you would have to know  
2 everything that the State Department knew about the attack to  
3 reach that conclusion. Were you privy to all the information  
4 about the attacks?

5 A So I would say a couple things about that.

6 Number one, I don't know whether I was privy to all the  
7 information about the facts because I don't know what that  
8 universe of all the information is, so it would be impossible  
9 for me to say.

10 Certainly, it is accurate to say Ben would have been  
11 privy to conversations and briefings that I may not have been  
12 privy to. But I would also say that, again, my  
13 responsibility as one of the coordinators of the interagency  
14 means that I would see anything that was being provided by  
15 other agencies. So when we received assessments from the  
16 intelligence community, that was given from their public  
17 affairs officer directly to me. That's not something that  
18 ~~when~~ <sup>went</sup> from Shawn Turner to Ben Rhodes and then I received a  
19 version from Ben Rhodes. I saw those direct inputs from the  
20 agencies.

21 So I don't see any circumstance that would make it  
22 feasible for Ben Rhodes or anyone else, frankly, at the NSC  
23 or the White House to have made up information or modified  
24 information in a way that you're suggesting.

25 Q I don't believe I suggested that. If you heard

1 that, then you misunderstood what I was saying. I'm not  
2 suggesting that anyone made up information.

3 I'm just saying you reached a conclusion that neither  
4 Ben Rhodes nor the U.S. Government had perpetuated a false  
5 narrative. And, in my mind, maybe not in yours, in order to  
6 draw that conclusion, you would have to know all of the  
7 information that Ben Rhodes had or that the U.S. Government  
8 had. And I'm asking you if you were privy to all that  
9 information. You said you don't know.

10 A Uh-huh.

11 Q Okay. Let's focus on some specific items.

12 Were you privy to all of the information that was being  
13 conveyed from the facility in Benghazi to the Embassy in  
14 Tripoli and then back to the State Department?

15 A I have no way to know.

16 Q Were you privy to any of that information?

17 A I was certainly privy to information that was  
18 incorporated in talking points and press guidance and other  
19 materials that would have been passed to me by my  
20 counterparts at the State Department.

21 Q Okay. So would it be fair to say that the  
22 information you were privy to would be circumscribed by the  
23 information you were receiving via email?

24 A I would have received it via email; perhaps during  
25 the SVTCs that we've referred to in the past, where the

1 interagency communicators gather on the same SVTC just for  
2 ease of process; or phone conversations -- any of those  
3 methods.

4 Q Okay. But as you sit here today, you can't say one  
5 way or the other whether you were privy to all the  
6 information known about the attacks in Benghazi.

7 A Correct.

8 Q And you were asked some questions in the litany of  
9 questions at the end about the President's actions the night  
10 of the attack. Do you have any firsthand knowledge of the  
11 President's actions or movements the night of the attack?

12 A The only firsthand knowledge I have is that he, if  
13 I remember correctly, conducted a very lengthy phone call  
14 with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel that evening.

15 Q This is on the evening of September 11.

16 A I believe, to the best of my recollection.

17 Q Okay. Were you present for that conversation?

18 A I was not, but I was responsible for helping to  
19 coordinate the drafting of the public readout of that  
20 conversation.

21 Q Were you present to witness any of the President's  
22 movements or actions during the night of the attack?

23 A I was not.

24 Q All right.

25 Mr. Missakian. I don't have any further questions.

1           Okay. Great. Off the record.

2           [Whereupon, at 1:47 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

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Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

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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

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Date

## *Errata Sheet*

### **Select Committee on Benghazi**

The witness' White House counsel on behalf of the witness reviewed the accompanying transcript and certified its accuracy by providing the following corrections. These corrections are reflected in the transcript as identified below.

<b><u>PAGE</u></b>	<b><u>LINE</u></b>	<b><u>ALL CORRECTIONS MADE BY WITNESS' COUNSEL</u></b>
1	Date	The date of this transcript was erroneously transcribed as "Friday, December 16, 2015." The correct day for the interview was "Friday, December 18, 2015."
2	19-21	Added titles as appropriate.
6	21	Replaced "is" with "was."
7	11	Replaced "been" with "about."
8	25	Replaced "Tommy" with "Ben."
9	1	Replaced "Ben's" with "Tommy's."
9	7	Replaced "located West Wing" with "located in the West Wing."
15	22	Replaced "to" with "for."
20	18	Deleted "a."
42	15	Replaced "other" with "others."
44	23	Replaced "working your BlackBerry" to "working on your BlackBerry."
49	11	Replaced "then" with "the."
49	13	Added quotation marks after "backlash."
63	2	Replaced "What you" with "What do you."
64	18	Replaced "conversation" with "conversations."
66	13	Replaced "pressing" with "briefing."
69	13	Capitalized "independent."
70	12	Added quotation mark after "us."
75	18	Deleted "being."

<u>PAGE</u>	<u>LINE</u>	<u>ALL CORRECTIONS MADE BY WITNESS' COUNSEL</u>
77	2	Deleted "it."
81	7	Replaced "require" with "inquire."
81	12	Replaced "cops" with "Copts."
107	22	Replaced "we everything" with "we do everything."
110	6	Replaced "was" with "were."
132	7	Replaced "who considering" to "who were considering."
136	18	Replaced "when" with "went."