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U.S. Department of Justice

Federal Bureau of Investigation

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

Baghdad Operations Center  
March 19, 2004

DECLASSIFIED BY uc/baw 60324  
ON 05-21-2009

Interview Session Number: 16  
Interview Conducted by: SSA George L. Piro  
Arabic/English Translation: SSA [REDACTED]  
LS [REDACTED]

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~~(S)~~ Saddam Hussein (High Value Detainee #1) was interviewed March 19, 2004 at a military detention facility at Baghdad International Airport (BIAP), Baghdad, Iraq. Hussein provided the following information:

~~(S)~~ Prior to the start of the interview, Hussein was advised that today's discussion would include the viewing of a documentary regarding the situation in southern Iraq in 1991 in the aftermath of the first Gulf War.

~~(S)~~ Hussein provided comments before viewing the documentary. He stated that each person presents information from a certain background, based upon his beliefs and life experiences. Despite having his own opinion, a person is affected by the thoughts of others. Any person presenting information on Iraq or any other country speaks from three viewpoints. The first is a "divine scale" according to his own beliefs. The second is a scale based upon his life experiences in his own country. The third and final viewpoint is based upon what is known by the person regarding information from the United Nations (UN) and international law. Hussein then asked the interviewer, "What is your scale as you show the film?" Hussein offered that this information would enable him to comment and answer questions in the best manner.

~~(S)~~ The interviewer told Hussein that one must listen to all the facts and find the truth. Hussein asked, "How will you know the truth?" He added that the interviewer would be using western media, possibly biased, to determine the truth. Hussein stated, "Your army occupies my country. You are free. I am a prisoner." He added that one who searches for the truth must directly contact the people who were involved in the matter of concern. In the instance of southern Iraq in 1991 after the war, Hussein stated one would have to speak to "those who were

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Baghdad Operations Center

violated, such as women," by those who were sent by Iran. Those same individuals sent by Iran committed other acts in southern Iraq including looting, burning, and killing. Hussein stated that one should contact others who share his (Hussein's) opinion.

(S) Hussein opined that a documentary such as this, prepared in the west and first broadcast in America, is not a neutral film produced by neutral individuals. He added that the film is likely based upon the teachings of Christ, the laws of the United States, international law, and life in the United States. Hussein emphasized that he did not want to put the interviewer in a difficult position. He added that the interviewer must "learn the truth as it is" not as Hussein tells it, nor as the film producers tell it.

(S) The interviewer then started the approximate one hour documentary. Hussein stated that the scene showing Shias in southern Iraq "could be seen anywhere, even now." He stated that the Shias shown in Karbala in the mosque were not confined and surrounded, as depicted. In reference to the reporter's words regarding scenes showing Iraqi tanks approaching the mosque, Hussein asked, "Where are the tanks?" He added that a statement in the documentary indicating that President Bush "encouraged" the Shias to rise up against the Iraqi government is "a confession of the crime."

(S) Hussein asked various questions including the date of the documentary, the name of the commentator, and the name of the non-governmental organization for whom the reporter worked.

(S) Regarding the scene showing Shias who had fled southern Iraq and traveled to Kurdish territory in northern Iraq, Hussein stated these individuals "do not appear to be scared, they appear to be happy." He added that these individuals looked Kurdish, not Shia.

(S) After viewing approximately 23 minutes of the documentary, Hussein stated that his exercise time and prayer time had arrived. When the interviewer noted to Hussein that his exercise period could be postponed until later in the day, he replied, "I think it is enough so far." Hussein added that the documentary could be viewed another day and asked, "Why rush?"

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Baghdad Operations Center

(S) Hussein then provided several comments without further prompting or questioning. He noted that the documentary states the Shia rose up against the Iraqi government with the encouragement of President Bush. Hussein stated that the "traitors rose up at the order of a foreign country" and declared war on their own country.

(S) Hussein stated that the interview of Shia Ayatollah Khoei demonstrates a contradiction in the truth. According to the commentator, Khoei believes in the peaceful aspect of his religion. Hussein stated Khoei's reply to commentator questioning indicates he does not agree with the mixing of politics and terror/violence. According to Hussein, this is in direct contradiction to the actions of the Shia.

(S) Regarding the film's depiction of Shia conduct, Hussein reiterated "we can see this anywhere." Hussein stated that if an insurgent does not surrender his weapon, he will be confronted with force. He added that the Shia used the Imam Hussein shrine in Karbala as a headquarters for their resistance. Hussein stated that the blood shown on the inside walls of the shrine was from Iraqi "comrades" executed in the building and not from Shias killed during an Iraqi government assault.

(S) Hussein stated that the individual shown in the film whose tongue was reportedly cut out may have simply been a mute. The documentary provided no information about why or who cut his tongue, other than Iraqi military intelligence.

(S) Hussein opined that the Kurdish individuals shown walking and departing their villages may have been "migrating." He added that they may have been moving to avoid a combat zone.

(S) Hussein asked whether the commentator questioned the Shias regarding the things they lost when the "criminals came and occupied their city." He stated that he felt sorry for someone who watches this documentary and does not know the truth. Hussein asked rhetorically, "How would someone know the Shia would act this way about something that happened 1300 years ago?"

(S) Hussein agreed to continue viewing the documentary and to provide his comments at a later date.

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