

While some have asserted that the president and his senior advisers may have exaggerated or manipulated prewar intelligence on Iraq's WMD programs, Dr. Kay reached the following conclusion, which I think is different.

As you stated recently, quote, "We have to remember that this view of Iraq (prewar assessment of WMD capabilities) was held during the Clinton administration and did not change in the Bush administration. It is not a political got-you issue. Often estimates are different than reality. The important thing is when they differ to understand why," end quote.

That's precisely why I called this meeting, Dr. Kay, to continue the work of this committee in developing a body of fact from which reasonable people, at the conclusion of that collection of facts, can reach their own objective thoughts and conclusions. It's been a difficult process but the ISG work is not completed.

Now, you have stated that you believe there did not exist large stockpiles of biological and chemical weapons. But I hope that you will, in your testimony, indicate that since work is not completed, since Iraq is as big as California and Baghdad approximates the sprawling territory of Los Angeles, that we could find caches and reserves of weapons of mass destruction, chemical or biological or even further evidence about their nuclear program.

WARNER: We also would hope that you'd address the question of whether or not Saddam Hussein had some kind of, quote, "breakout capability" for quickly producing chemical or biological weapons, and was this not a basis for constituting a conclusion that there was an imminent threat from Saddam Hussein and his military?

Why were the Iraq WMD records systematically looted or destroyed? And why do scientists in custody today continue not to be forthcoming if there was nothing to hide or nothing substantial existed?

The work of the Iraq Survey Group has shown that Saddam Hussein had WMD intentions, had WMD programs that did survive, and did outwit for 12 years the United Nations Security Council and the resolutions—indeed, the inspections, in large measure.

If ultimately, the findings of the Iraq Survey Group do differ from the prewar assessments of our intelligence community, differ from assessments of the United Nations, differ from assessments of intelligence services of many other nations, indeed that is cause for concern. But we are not there yet in terms of the totality of fact on which to draw such serious conclusions.

Today and tomorrow, our policy-makers must be able to rely on the intelligence they are provided. The safety and security of the men and women of the armed forces are dependent on intelligence and, indeed, the security of our Nation.

So collectively, all of us—the Congress, the executive branch and other nations—we must vigorously continue to pursue the collection of the facts, as the ISC is doing, and upon that completion, then draw our conclusions and take such corrective measures as may be necessary.

WARNER: As we speak, over 1,400 individuals—military and civilian—are on the ground in Iraq seeking the facts about Iraq's WMD programs. I have confidence in the commitment and the ability of General Dayton, Mr. Duelfer, your successor, and representatives from our coalition partners to complete this mission. They have some of the best and brightest of our military and our intelligence community to complete this task. And Congress has provided the necessary means, a very substantial appropriation of recent.

We remain committed to providing the resources that are necessary for the completion of the ISG work.

Dr. Kay, I thank you for your public service once again.

BELARUSIAN AUTHORITIES CONTINUE TO STIFLE DEMOCRACY

Mr. CAMPBELL. Mr. President, as co-chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, I want to update colleagues on developments in the Republic of Belarus, a country with the poorest human rights record of any country in Europe today. In the last year, Belarusian dictator Lukashenka's assault on civil society has steadily intensified, with the liquidation of NGOs, violence against opposition activists, and repression of the independent media and trade unions. The situation in Belarus continues its downward spiral with daily reports of growing repression and new human rights violations.

Since the beginning of the still relatively new year, NGOs such as the Belarusian Language Society and the Belarusian Helsinki Committee have stepped up harassment. The Minsk City Court has ordered the liquidation of the Independent Association of Legal Research. Leaders of the opposition "Five Plus" bloc, who are in Washington this week, were recently detained and searched by customs officials at the Polish-Belarusian border. The officials were reportedly looking for printed, audio or video materials that could "damage the political and economic interests of the country." Human rights activists or independent journalists such as Natalya Kolyada, Nina Davydovskaya, Iryna Makavetskaya, Aksana Novikava and Aleksandr Silitsky continue to be subjected to threats, detentions or heavy fines. Others, including activists of the youth group ZUBR, have been arrested for holding an unauthorized picket demanding a thorough investigation of the disappearances of three democratic opposition members Yuri Zakharenka, Victor Gonchar, Anatoly Krasovskiy, and journalist Dmitri Zavadsky.

Independent media outlets also continue to feel the wrath of the powers that be, including libel proceedings against Narodnaya Volya, Belarus' largest independent daily; the confiscation of Asambleya, a bulletin of the Assembly of the Belarusian Democratic NGOs; the refusal by the Belarusian Postal Service to distribute the independent newspaper Regionalniye Novosti; the confiscation of copies, in the town of Smorgon, of the independent newspaper, Mestnaya Gazeta; and the censoring of the independent newspaper Volnaya Hlybokaye in the Vitebsk region. Several Jewish cemeteries are being destroyed, Baptist congregations are being fined and Krishna followers detained.

In an unusual step, the International Labor Organization, ILO, has established a commission of inquiry—only

the eleventh time in the body's 84-year history—to examine violations of trade union rights in Belarus. Meanwhile, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights unanimously ratified a report on political disappearances in Belarus. The just-released report severely criticizes the Belarusian authorities, stating that "steps were taken at the highest level of the State actively to cover up the . . . disappearances" of several high-profile members of the opposition in 1999 to 2000 and that senior Belarusian officials may be involved.

Last year I introduced the Belarus Democracy Act of 2003, S. 700, which is designed to help promote democratic development, human rights and rule of law in the Republic of Belarus, as well as encourage the consolidation and strengthening of Belarus' sovereignty and independence.

While some might be tempted to dismiss Belarus as an anomaly, the stakes are too high and the costs too great to ignore. It is important for us to stay the course and support Belarus in becoming a genuine European state, in which respect for human rights and democracy is the norm and in which the long-suffering Belarusian people are able to overcome the legacy of dictatorship—past and present. The Belarus Democracy Act—which enjoys bipartisan support—is an important, concrete way to exhibit our support. I urge colleagues to support this measure and look forward to timely consideration of the Belarus Democracy Act.

AMERICAN HOSTAGES IN COLOMBIA

Mr. DODD. Mr. President, it has been almost a year since three Americans—Marc Gonsalves, Keith Stansell, and Thomas Howes—were taken hostage by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, FARC. The presence of American hostages in Colombia is deeply troubling, and one can only imagine the struggles and trials that these three brave individuals have had to endure since their plane crashed in the Colombian jungle last year on February 13. I rise today to again call attention to their plight and urge the Bush administration and Colombian Government to do everything possible to gain their release.

There is no higher priority than finding a way to bring these three Americans home safely, and I know that all of our prayers remain with them and their families during these difficult times. For the families of Marc, Keith, and Tom, this past year has been a heart wrenching experience. I have a special interest in the fate of Marc Gonsalves, whose mother, Jo Rosano, is a Connecticut resident. Marc's father, George Gonsalves, is also a resident of our State.

At every opportunity, I have worked to bring about the release of these three Americans. Indeed, over the last