

The New York Times

WASHINGTON BUREAU
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20006
(202) 862-0300

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17 Feb 05
1530

Attention: FOIA Officer
USCENTCOM/CCJ6-DM
7115 South Boundary Boulevard
MacDill AFB, FL 33621-5101



Sir or Madame:

This is a request under the Freedom of Information Act 5 U.S.C. § 552. I request the following documents be provided to me:

All briefings and associated material related to the plans known as Vigilant Guardian, Generated Start (1003V), Running Start (1003V), Hybrid (1003V), Velocity, and Operation Iraqi Freedom (COBRA II), which was presented by CENTCOM during meetings with General Tommy Franks between December 4, 2001 and March 20, 2003.

Briefing material from these dates is cited in detail by former CENTCOM Commander General Tommy Franks in his book, "American Soldier." The CENTCOM senior intelligence analyst for Iraq Gregory Hooker also cites these plans in the publication "Shaping the Plan for Operation Iraqi Freedom; The Role of Military Intelligence Assessments." They are also covered in "Plan of Attack," by Bob Woodward, who based his account on information provided to him by general Franks and other CENTCOM officials, according to Franks' staff.

These citations have also been photocopied and highlighted for your reference.

The intent of this request is to collect all records and files related to the briefings listed above in order to more fully understand the evolution of the planning process which preceded Operation Iraqi Freedom in March 2003.

In order to help determine my status to assess fees, you should know that I am the Chief Military Correspondent for the New York Times and this request is made as part of an effort to compile research for publication in a forthcoming book about the Iraq conflict. This book will also be excerpted in a series of articles in the Times.

The dates on which the briefings were given, and the general subject matter, are noted on the attached spreadsheet and photocopied documents.

The dates include December 4, 2001; December 12, 2001; December 19, 2001; December 27, 2001; December 28, 2001, January 17, 2002; February 1, 2002; February 7, 2002; March 6, 2002; March 21-22, 2002; March 29, 2002; April 20, 2002; May 10, 2002; May 11, 2002; June 19, 2002; June 27-28, 2002; August 1, 2002; August 5, 2002; August 14, 2003, September 6, 2002; September 7, 2002; September 19-20, 2002; October 4, 2002; October 29, 2002; December 19, 2002; January 9, 2003.

Please see attached spreadsheet for detailed descriptions. To expedite the release of the requested documents, please disclose them on an interim basis as they become available to you, without waiting until all the documents have been processed. Due to the urgent public interest in verifying recently published account of the events leading up to OIF, I would also like to ask that the release of all materials related to the requested material be granted a high priority.

As the FOIA requires, please release all reasonably segregable non-exempt portions of documents. To permit me to reach an intelligent and informed decision whether or not to file an administrative appeal of any denied material, please describe any withheld records (or portions thereof) and explain the basis for your exemption claims.

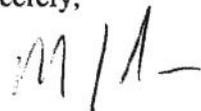
I respectfully submit that my request for material related to the attached list meetings should not be considered as intended solely for a private, profit-making commercial purpose. Disclosure of the requested information should rather be judged to be in the public interest because it is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations or activities of the government and military in planning for military intervention.

I therefore request a waiver of all fees. If this request is denied, I am willing to pay fees up to a maximum of \$150, and would like to be notified if you estimate this monetary limit is likely to be exceeded. If you estimate that fees will exceed this amount, please inform me first.

If you deny any part of this request, please cite each specific reason that you think justifies your refusal to release the information and notify me of appeal procedures available to me under the law.

I would be happy to answer any questions about this request. If you have any questions regarding the identity of the records, their location, the scope of the request or any other matters, please contact me using the information provided below. I look forward to receiving your response within the twenty day statutory time period.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M/R-G", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Michael R. Gordon
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Oakton, VA 22124
(202) 550-5445

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