



Senate Briefing

Iran's Nuclear Threat: Impact of Sanctions: After Moscow, Now What?

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11:00 am - 1:00 pm

**Kennedy Senate Caucus Room
Russell Senate Office Building**



Panelists:

- **Patrick Kennedy**, former Rhode Island Congressman - Moderator
- **General James E. Cartwright (ret.)**, former Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Chairman
- **John Bolton**, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
- **Ed Rendell**, former Governor of Pennsylvania; DNC Chairman
- **Phillip J. Crowley**, former State Department Spokesman
- **Gen. Charles "Chuck" F. Wald (ret.)**, former Deputy Commander of U.S. European Command
- **Gen. David Phillips (ret.)**, former commandant of the Army Military Police School, commander of all police operations in Iraq, including the protection of Camp Ashraf
- **Col. Wesley Martin (ret.)**, former commander of Camp Ashraf



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Patrick Kennedy, former Rhode Island Congressman

Welcome to the Kennedy Caucus Room. For me, of course, it's a source of pride that this room which is where my uncle, President Kennedy, announced his intentions to seek the Democratic nomination in 1960. He did it from this room. When my uncle, Robert Kennedy, decided to run for president in 1968 he made his intentions known in this room. And, of course, throughout my father's long career in the United States Senate, this was the room where he hosted many events, consistent with his work to be a steward for his brothers' legacy, to carry on the mission of President Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, for social justice and human rights. So how appropriate it is today that I have the honor as his son to carry on that legacy of raising this nation's consciousness to an issue of continuing challenge to our country's representation as a nation that upholds the values of human rights, not only here but around the world.



How appropriate that today we all gather in the Kennedy Caucus Room to recommit ourselves to making sure that this great country we call our home lives up to the principles and values which make us so proud to be called American citizens. Today we're going to be talking about an issue that may seem foreign because it involves a situation in another part of the world. But as my uncles believed, the principle that we stand for in our own country is not a principle that we can abandon in U.S. foreign policy in other places of the world. For us to be consistent, we need to be consistent not only here but around the world. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." And for the United States we can't be party to injustice and abusive human rights in one part of the world and then say that we're for human rights in a different part of the world. It's inconsistent. What we're here today to talk about is how U.S. foreign policy needs to be made more consistent. We say we're for liberty, we say we're for human rights. Then where is the evidence of this in places of the world like the Middle East which is unraveling as we speak. Where is the United States going to be on the crucial issues of freedom and democracy in a place in the world that has been long denied freedom and democracy? The moment is now.

The clock is ticking. And people are waiting to find out whether the United States is going to live up to its reputation as being on the side of human rights, human dignity and human liberty. In previous generations we stood on the side of human justice and human liberty. Today that reputation is at stake and is being challenged. The Middle East is the new battleground for whether this United States is going to uphold its commitment to human rights, freedom and democracy. In my uncles' and father's generation the fight was over communism and freedom. Today that fight is over the fascist dictatorship of theocracy and military dictatorships that have oppressed the Middle East for too long. And nowhere is that more apparent over a longer period of time than in Iran where the Arab Spring first began. Today we're seeing it unfold in Syria. We have seen it unfold in Egypt and Libya and other countries. But the test for the whole Middle East is whether it will ultimately come to pass in the country that is responsible for the largest state-sponsored export of terrorism of any country in the world and that is the country of Iran led by the Mullahs in Tehran who continue to try to thwart the freedom and expression of human rights of the people in the Middle East, not only in Iran, but in every other country in the Middle East and around the world where the hand of terrorism can be linked back to the Mullahs in Tehran.

So the remaining friend of Bashar Assad is Khamenei. The remaining country that stands while Assad massacres his people in Syria is the regime of Iran. But Assad's days are numbered. And why? They're numbered because the people of Syria have stood up. They've stood up to impossible expectations it that they can truly take back their country. It's happened in all the other countries as well, barring the one where it needs to happen the most urgently and that's in Iran. Iran must be worried because they know they're increasingly being isolated and when Assad knows there's no more plausible excuse for them not to go yes, and have a new Iran led by a democratic group of people, the most powerful democratic opponents of the current regime in Tehran, the MeK and the PMOI. So today you're going to hear from a number of speakers about this fight. But understand that this fight today for a new Iran is being fought by a group of dissidents on the frontline of this fight to free their homeland. These dissidents are now trapped between a world of Ashraf and a hell hole of Camp Liberty. But understand this, their fight is for a new Iran and that is why their fight for the most basic human rights in Iraq, for freedom and respect in Camp Liberty and Camp Ashraf is really a proxy for their fight to free their homeland in Iran and the Mullahs in Tehran know this. That is why they've gotten the Iraqi officials to do for them what Iran has not been able to do in the last 26 years of trying to kill everybody in Camp Ashraf and Camp Liberty. Now Iran is counting on Iraq, the United States and the United Nations to do what Iran has not been able to do and we, today, are going to make a very clear statement and that is the United States will not stand by and be complicit in war crimes, be complicit in standing on the side of a brutal dictatorship and their agenda and watch as the loyal opposition to Tehran gets massacred and gets denied human rights in the effort of Iran to continue to intimidate and harass the people of Camp Ashraf and Camp Liberty.



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So this is not just a question of geopolitical power, although you'll hear about policy up here; this is a question about whether the United States is going to fulfill its obligation to the people that it made a promise and its obligation to live up to the values that it stands for. And the United States cannot fulfill that obligation while it's denying the opportunity for the people of Camp Liberty and Camp Ashraf to live safe, to have their lives protected and to be afforded some of the most basic human necessities that anybody anywhere in the world would associate with: respect for human life and human rights. When the United States stands on the sidelines and lets the Mullahs in Tehran have their way, the United States is giving the green light for the denial of human rights in Camp Liberty and Camp Ashraf. And we today are going to discuss the lack of water, the lack of electricity, the denial of rights for the disabled, the violation of the Memorandum of Understanding, the lies that have come out from Martin Kobler and Ambassador Fried as they continue to do the bidding of Tehran instead of doing their job, which is to stand on the side of these asylum seekers who have been promised protection by the United States and the international community.

That is our subject that we're going to talk about today. It may also be about the specter of nuclear weapons in Iran. Make no mistake, we're never going to see a resolution about the crisis in Iran with nuclear weapons if we do not decide as a country whose side are we going to stand on? Are we going to be complicit on the side of the Mullahs in Tehran and continue a policy of appeasement, or are we going to stand with the most organized democratic opposition to the Mullahs in Tehran and say that we reject the way they're treating their people and that we are going to stand in this country for a new Iran led by a democratic movement, supported by the MeK and the POMI? What do you think the answer should be? Today we're going to hear that answer from leading U.S. military and political officials as to where our United States policy should be. To start us off today, we are going to see a video clip of the conditions in Camp Liberty. The conditions that show the repeated violations by the United Nations and the United States and Department of State in keeping their promise to allow the habitable, sustainable environment for the asylum seekers to seek refuge in while they're being relocated from Camp Ashraf, where they built a city and they have their independence and their homes, but they willingly gave that up to move to Camp Liberty in order to comply with international requests that they do so.

I have here Secretary of State Clinton's statement where she put the reputation of the U.S. on paper as being committed. Let me read you the words, "we commend --"(this is Secretary of State Clinton), " -- the government of Iraq for its work with the United Nations Special Representative Ambassador Martin Kobler and welcome this important step towards humane resolution of the ongoing situation in Camp Ashraf." Do you call that a humane resolution to the resettlement of the people of Ashraf to Camp Liberty? Does that look humane to you? Of course it doesn't. Secretary of State goes on, "in signing this Memorandum of Understanding, this represents significant progress on the issue and outlines the necessary steps to achieve a peaceful, viable solution for the residents of Ashraf, including their, quote, temporary relocation to Camp Liberty." "We are encouraged." This is the United States' reputation on the line now. This is the country that fought a war to put this current government in Iraq in place, and now says that we are encouraged by the way that the Iraqi government has treated the residents of Camp Liberty. Does this look like it upholds the reputation of this United States of America? Does this look like the kind of agreement that has truly honored the values of our country? I don't think so.





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General James E. Cartwright (ret.), former Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Chairman

Today, many of the countries that aspire to have nuclear weapons aspire to do so in order to protect their sovereignty. But there are two in particular that we worry about with great significance and at least the last three administrations have been unequivocal in our concern about their possession to the point that we say they should not have them, and those are Iran and North Korea. And what is the reason? Both of these nations have dedicated themselves to exporting terror, weapons to support terror, funds and capabilities to support terror.



If they had nuclear capability that they could export, there is no reason to believe that the pattern of the behavior would change. Imagine terrorists with weapons of mass destruction. Imagine a pathway that could occur between a nation that has weapons of mass destruction and their distribution to people who really seek to use these weapons in an offensive way, in a terrorist way, to kill as many people as they possibly can. The attack on 9/11 killed some 3,000 Americans. In some quarters, terrorists quarters, that was considered a failure because it was not 30,000. If they had the weapons of mass destruction, they start to get the potential to think in those terms. We cannot let that happen.

Three administrations, three presidents now, different parties, all agree, you are in a time right now when most of the major nations in the world are actually in a transition of power. UK has a new leader, France has a new leader, China is in the process, the United States is in the process. The list goes on. The time between now and November is a time of vulnerability. The talks that are going on with Iran to eliminate their weapons of mass destruction or their ability to have weapons of mass destruction are basically stagnant. They are not progressing. Why would they at this time? If you were on the Iranian side, this is a perfect time to just stall. If you're on our side, unfortunately, it may also be a time to stall.

That does not mean that the intent has changed, it does not mean that they are not working on gaining the capability. There are regional partners out there, some of them are very close allies, others are friends, others are neighbors in the region that are very worried about this capability falling into the hands of the Iranians. It's very clear that the nexus between terrorism and those weapons is a very real concern as go to the future. We have to be clear and our presidents have been clear about our resolve on this issue. Diplomacy should be the first thing that we work on. And we have worked that for several years now. But if we have to resort to force, there should be no doubt in their mind that we have the resolve to do so.

If we resort to force, the diplomacy must set the conditions. When the force is applied, we have done whatever it needed. As we leave, diplomacy is enabled to succeed in putting people in power in a nation that does not need nuclear weapons, and to set the conditions for a peaceful way forward. There are many people that are talking about maybe one country or another is going take action in these next few months. That decision may be the decision of those countries, but the implications are it's also the decision of Iran if it does not change its path. Because we have been clear as a nation that we will do something about this. We have to stay clear and credible in that activity.

If we move away from red lines, we will move away from what we promised, we will lose face, we will lose credibility and we will really set ourselves up and the rest of the world and our friends and allies and neighbors for a condition that is unacceptable, which is the nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. We cannot move off those promises. We cannot waver from that and we cannot let the world believe we're thinking of wavering from that and I'm not saying that we are, but it must be a very clear message to Iran. One other point that I really want to chime in here, separate from the nuclear issue, is the issue of the MeK and the people at Ashraf and the people that have been relocated to camp Liberty.

One thing that we could do, to make sure they had humane conditions. They had the food, the barracks and the quarters. There should be no doubt those kinds of facilities are provided. The second is, it's just the military in me, but when you decide what it is you want to do, you make sure that somebody is assigned to be responsible and accountable to ensure that it happens. Having people in charge of humanitarian issues, having people in charge of transporting and characterizing are important. Having somebody assigned to ensure relocation occurs is what the mission is. Do not take your eye off the mission. Who is it? Do not hide behind titles. Who is assigned? Who is accountable? And until there is somebody in that position, we are not serious. We need to be serious.



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John Bolton, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations

I wanted to cover basically two aspects: the continuing problem with the status of the MeK here in the United States and the problems with Camp Liberty and Camp Ashraf. They're disparate but I think actually closely related to the president. It all goes to the way in which the United States has not been properly handling the threat posed by the regime in Tehran in the region and around the world or the treatment of the refugees in Ashraf and Liberty. Let me start with the immediate humanitarian concern. Not only has the United States failed here to live up to the representations that were made to the residents of Camp Ashraf after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein, but the United Nations has failed as well. I want to focus on that failure. Others, I think, will talk about the failure of the United States to live up to the commitments that were previously made. This failure by the United Nations is obviously having its most direct, most immediate impact on the residents of Ashraf and Liberty but it's also damaging the United States, the United Nations as a whole.

I think the failure, although we tend to focus on Ambassador Martin Kobler, the real failure is the failure by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in many respects. The first is that, inexplicably to me, UNHCR appears to be taking its orders from Ambassador Kobler. This is fundamentally inconsistent with the whole rationale for creating an independent agency devoted to refugees. The people who created the High Commissioner's Office decades ago understood that refugee problems have inherently political ramifications. But what they wanted to do was to create an international organization whose mission was the protection and assistance of the refugees themselves, divorced from whatever political context the refugee situation arose in. And it was for the High Commissioner to say to governments, whether governments that created the refugee problem or governments in countries of first asylum, like Iraq is for the residents of Ashraf and Liberty, or the rest of the world that had the obligation of becoming countries that find asylum, that the treatment of refugees will be entirely humane and divorced from political considerations. What that meant was that the High Commissioner had to be independent of the political pulls and tugs within the UN system, independent of the Security Council, independent of the U.N. General Assembly, but most importantly independent of the governments that were involved. And it was the obligation particularly of the United States and the other countries that were behind the creation of the High Commissioner's Office to protect that independence because if the High Commissioner for Refugees cannot get protection and assistance to refugees, nobody else can. What we have seen here, in this entire transfer process from Ashraf to Liberty, is the subordination of UNHCR to the UN mission in Iraq. That is a fundamental violation of the principles for which UNHCR was established.

Everybody understood that refugee situations were difficult for all of the participants. But by allowing the High Commissioner to act simply as an agent for Ambassador Kobler, we have eviscerated the whole rationale for the UN's participation in the present mission. I think what we need to see here is not simply getting the United States to do the right thing and delist the MeK and take affirmative steps to begin the relocation process out of Iraq, which is the only solution that's going to be fair and equitable to the residents of Ashraf and Liberty and their families around the world; but we have got to insist that the High Commissioner himself stand up for his own mission to protect and assist refugees. Now, you can argue about whether Ashraf is a refugee camp or Liberty is a temporary relocation facility. You can argue about the jargon and you can argue about a lot of the technicalities. But there isn't any ambiguity here what we're dealing with. This is a refugee situation. And the United States in its first interviews with the residents of Ashraf after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein made that clear, a very thorough job they did before designating Ashraf residents as protected persons under the Geneva Convention. This is the first step and a big one toward legitimate refugee status. The UNHCR has got to do more to fulfill its functions. The argument that somehow or another they have to be subordinate to Ambassador Kobler is just totally wrong. UNHCR was intended to be creative and flexible. I remember after the first Persian Gulf war when the Kurds fled out of the cities in northern Iraq toward the Turkish border, but largely remained inside Iraq, we had a desperate humanitarian situation. We asked UNHCR to step in and provide protection and assistance for the Kurdish refugees. Madam Uganda who was then the High Commissioner called me up and said, look, this is not technically our mission.



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These people are not refugees. That have not crossed the international border. We're prepared to do it. But we want to know where the United States stands on it. I said what was obvious from what President Bush and Secretary Baker said: we will support anything the UNHCR does to provide protection or assistance to those Kurds, whether they're on the Iraqi side of the border or the Turkish side of the border. So UNHCR stepped in and was creative and effective in mitigating that situation. UNHCR could do this easily. And if it's a question of funding, the United States, even in our difficult budget situation today, can help out. And so is true of our European friends. This is a solvable problem and the fact that it's not being solved is attributable to the UN and the U.S. State Department. So that means that as U.S. citizens our job is to do what we can here in Washington to get that fixed and also to lobby the United Nations in New York and the Secretary General and the High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva. This failure to take effective action, unfortunately, is also a counterpart to our collective failure to deal with the ongoing nuclear weapons program the regime in Tehran has been pursuing so successfully. And that, combined with the regime's role as the world central banker of international terrorism, are the principal reasons why the rest of the world needs to be concerned about the policies that the regime is pursuing and why in my view the only real answer to the threat posed by the current government in Tehran is regime change.

This is not a government you can negotiate with. Their objectives are fundamentally contrary to the best interest of the U.S. and the best interest of the people of Iran. Look at what's going on now and what has just happened in the past few days in both Syria and in Bulgaria. In Syria we have a dictatorial regime supported primarily by Iran, Russia and China. Iran, the government in Tehran, has revolutionary guards and officers on the ground assisting the Syrian military. There's little doubt in my mind that among the other interests they're trying to preserve by keeping Assad in power are activities related to their illicit nuclear program. We know that, and ever since the Israelis bombed in September 2007 the North Korean reactor that was built in Syria, Syria has refused to allow the International Atomic Energy Agency to come into the country to look at the site of the reactor or look at the other sites that they have asked to see where they suspect that nuclear activity is going on. This is something that endangers peace and security in the Middle East and the whole world, not just the nuclear, but Syria's chemical weapons program, its biological weapons program and the nuclear war. We're at risk, when the Assad regime falls, of those materials being seized by terrorists or by falling into other wrong hands.

Yet we are blocked everywhere within the UN system by Iran, Russia and China. Just a few hours ago, according to press reports, Russia and China passed again a double veto at the Security Council against the western resolution to extend the UN Observer Mission under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which would be the beginning of giving that mission some teeth. I expect they will extend the observer mission, but there were Russia and China standing with the Mullahs in Tehran against those trying to bring some peaceful resolution to the situation in Syria. So as long as Iran continues to support Assad, as long as it continues to support Hezbollah in Lebanon, we're going to have this problem continuing. That's why the terrorist attack in Bulgaria highlights even more, not just the continuing support for international terrorism by the Mullahs, but the risk of what will happen once they get nuclear weapons. I have no doubt that this attack on school children on a bus trip in Bulgaria, this terrorist attack, will seek retaliation by the government of Israel. Now what happens after that, I don't know. But you could imagine what would happen if the Mullahs already had nuclear weapons. This is a situation that's not going to be answered by negotiations. It's not going to be answered by the pressure of economic sanctions. Ahmadinejad said today that the sanctions will simply cause Iran to be even more defiant. It is not entirely surprising, when people who recommended an attack against the nuclear weapons in Iran, one response always is, but that will simply cause the people of Iran to rally around the Mullahs.

I have never believed that because I think the people of Iran are smarter than that. They understand this is an attack on the Mullahs' threat to the rest of the world, not an attack on the people of Iran. But the sanctions are intended to have and will have, if they're effective, a direct impact on the lives of the people. The regime is not going to suffer. Do you think their standard of living is going to go down because of these sanctions? Do you think they're going to divert resources away from the nuclear weapons program? I do not think so at all. So, we can talk about half measures for a long time. The problem is we're in a race. We're in a race to see whether outside pressure prevails to bring the regime down or whether the regime gets nuclear weapons. The odds are at this point, the most likely outcome is, that the regime is going to get nuclear weapons. So if you don't like the way they treat the people of Iran now, if you don't like the pressure they put on the Maliki government in Iraq, if you don't like their support for the Assad regime in Syria, if you don't like the support for terrorists like Hezbollah and others around the world, how much worse will it be once they get nuclear weapons? That's what the issue is here and why our government needs to be more effective. The most single telling piece of evidence that we have got in that picture is despite the un-contradicted testimony of experts in terrorism across our government on a bipartisan basis that the MeK doesn't belong on the list of foreign terrorist organization, it remains there. If we were to take the MeK off, which I think is justified by all the facts at least that I know, that would be a very powerful signal to the Mullahs in Tehran that their days are numbered.



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Ed Rendell, former Governor of Pennsylvania; DNC Chairman

First of all, let me say that Patrick is a warrior and he's a fighter. If we were back in the days of Persia and Sparta, Patrick would have been the last man standing. And you have to appreciate and love that passion. And everyone up at this table has fought hard for the humanitarian goals that we're trying to achieve. It's easy to fight that short-term battle because you feel good about it. We're standing on our rights. We have been lied to, we have been deceived, we have had broken promises. And that's all true. This is the most unfair thing I have ever seen. The most unfair thing started with my country, our country, when we promised to protect the residents of Ashraf. We gave every single resident a contract signed by a general of the United States Army, General Miller. Then when 2009 rolled around, we gave up security to the Iraqi government. It was as if all of a sudden the paper that we signed meant nothing; meant nothing.

In fact, the great irony of the two attacks, particularly April 2011, was that the United States troops who weren't far from Ashraf, who could have prevented the massacre, were withdrawn and were not allowed to come in to live up, if nothing else, to our moral obligation to protect those people. We were in significant part responsible for that loss of life. If you saw the video, you saw American-made vehicles and American-made weapons being used against innocent people who were defenseless. The idea that we have to search the camp to see if the Ashraf have weapons, Good Lord -- if they had weapons I would have hoped they would have used them in April of 2011. When they didn't resist with that weaponry, you assume that they didn't have weapons. It was absolutely shocking and repugnant to me and any American that believes in what our country stands for. A few of you heard me tell the story before: as governor of Pennsylvania I didn't really know how much of my role as commander in chief of the Pennsylvania National Guard would affect my eight years as governor. I thought the guard would be called out to deal with some floods and snow storms. I never realized that the guard would be deployed in foreign wars. The Pennsylvania National Guard has lost more men in one month in Iraq and Afghanistan, mostly in Iraq, than any National Guard in the country.

As governor, it was my obligation to talk to the families, to talk to the wives, to talk to the mothers and fathers and sometimes even to talk to the children. Those of us in politics think that we can talk about anything and persuade people to say virtually anything. That's the hardest conversation I've ever had. Because you want to give those family members some sense of meaning, of value, of what that ultimate sacrifice of their loved one was worth. The only thing I could say in the early stages, as we started to lose troops in Iraq, was, look, we're fighting to give these people -- to get rid of a horrible situation and to give these people a government that's fair and decent and is democratic and is just. And I told all those parents that. To some extent maybe I made some of them feel better. I couldn't say that with a straight face today. Is the government of Iraq a fair and just democratic government?





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It is a government that has perpetrated these two assaults; a government that has thrown every road block up to the decent transition from Ashraf to Liberty. First of all, I've never gotten a good explanation from the State Department or anybody representing the government of Iraq or from the United Nations why, if their ultimate goal was to get the residents of Ashraf out of the country, why did they have to leave Ashraf to do that in the first place? To this day, if they stayed in Ashraf, we would have been far ahead than where we are now. We wasted all this time transitioning to Liberty. We could have been moving, we could have had people immigrating to different countries of the world already. Nobody has ever given me an explanation. Then, nobody has ever given me an explanation about what the big deal is, why does the Iraqi government not allow us to put up shades? Or to put up paved walkways? We're not asking them to pay the money. Why would you not do that?

Why would you not let the residents bring their own water purification system and pump water out of the nearby river when it's at no cost to them? And the residents of Ashraf and Liberty are willing to do it themselves. They can do it in a few days. What's the problem? What's the problem with letting the disabled that are at Liberty have their own vehicles and their own trailers? Is that a security risk? No one has ever explained to me why the government of Iraq has put up road block after road block after road block in making this a smooth and fair and decent and humanitarian transition. Nobody has ever explained anything to me. And I think it's rotten. I think it's unfair. In many ways it borders on inhumane. And it makes you angry. I know it makes you angry because you have relatives and friends over there. I don't know anybody by name over there, but it makes me angry. It makes me angry as an American and it makes me angry as a citizen of the world...

So our goal is, in fact, three-fold: One, safety of everyone involved. We don't want to lose one more life. Two, the eventual immigration out of Iraq to the United States and to European nations. And three, the de-listing of the MeK. And that de-listing is more important than just, because it would help with the immigration process... As P.J. said, how are you going to get there and accomplish those three goals: Keep everyone alive, goal number one and the reason I got involved. Goal number two, to get people to places like the United States and Europe and countries all over the world where they have roots or in some cases where they're willing to resettle anew. Then three, for the sake of this freedom movement, to get the MeK de-listed. To get all these accomplished...

And it's amazing to me why our own State Department, Colonel Martin and General Phillips who were commanders of Ashraf, who have relationships with the people of Ashraf, why they won't allow the two of them to go over for two purposes: One, so we can have independent evaluation of what conditions are like at Liberty; but two, just as importantly, that they can talk to the residents, because the residents have information, too, and they can tell them what's going on and what the stakes are... Temporary transition is a joke because we know that even if the process goes well, people are going to be there for another six, nine, 12, 15 months. It's not temporary transition. It's really a refugee camp. And the UN should be embarrassed because it refuses to call it a refugee camp when we know that's exactly what it is.





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Phillip J. Crowley, former State Department Spokesman

It is a pleasure to be here again and to see many of you again. And listening to Patrick Kennedy and I'm sure we'll hear from Governor Rendell as well, I feel like I'm a supporter. As a native son of Massachusetts, I'm very proud to be here in the Kennedy Caucus Room. The last time I was asked to speak here on Capitol Hill was on my Senate confirmation hearing to be Secretary of State. I think this is a much more favorable set of circumstances... The question is how do we get from where we are, a totally unsatisfactory set of circumstances at Ashraf and Liberty, to where we want to go where we have a unified, democratic opposition to try to create a better Iran for tomorrow. And that is the challenge for us. We can look backwards at broken promises and failures, or we can look forward and simply say how do we get to where we need to go. And this takes courage, resiliency, and as my colleagues have said, as David Phillips just said, there's plenty of reasons to doubt the United States, to doubt the United Nations and to doubt the international community.

So why should you continue, to put faith in this UN process? Because ultimately while there are steps that need to be taken, to me what's vitally important here is to keep our eye on the ultimate prize, getting the 3,400 people of Camp Ashraf out of harm's way and out of Iraq. How do we do that? Now, as the State Department spokesman, words were my craft, words had to have meaning, words had to be followed by consistent actions. And as John Bolton said, this is still, despite all the failures that we have heard about, a solvable problem. How do we get there? Let me focus on a few words and then highlight a couple of necessary actions. The first word is humanitarian. The main challenge we face is the humane relocation of residents of Camp Liberty meeting minimum international standards.... Now, we're not talking about a third world country here. We're talking about a camp on the outskirts of Baghdad; the capital of a reasonably advanced country and one that we spent close to a trillion dollars liberating, theoretically, in 2003. In a modern world, the world that we all expect, security, safe shelter and water are not unreasonable demands.

Getting the Iraqi government to connect the camp to the Baghdad municipal water system is not an insurmountable task. If authorized, I suspect residents of Camp Ashraf could do it by themselves. The State Department recently in a briefing termed the current period as critical. I would agree with that. The period should be about eliminating obstacles, preventing safe passage of the remaining residents of Camp Ashraf to Camp Liberty. The United States must become more invested in dealing with these issues and insisting on better conditions at Camp Liberty. As David said, with recent temperatures rising to 140 degrees Fahrenheit, the humanitarian conditions at Liberty are urgent. We should continue to insist on minimal humanitarian conditions. But in addressing what is urgent, we cannot lose sight of what is strategic.





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I also agree with David that the one thing we should do is to insist on opening up the camp to outside scrutiny. But it's important to keep in mind our ultimate objective is getting the people out of Iraq as rapidly and as safely as possible. I will be very honest with you, this is at the heart a political challenge and we know who all the actors are, including Iran... We face a deadline that the Iraqis have issued as tomorrow. That's not really a deadline. We face a deadline of October 1st; that is a deadline. A date on which the Secretary of State is required to either reaffirm the existing FTO designation or remove it... We need to keep the focus where it belongs on what the United Nations needs to do, what the United States needs to do and what the international community needs to do to get these people out of Iraq. Just as we can push as forcefully and determinably as possible to improve conditions at Liberty, we have to keep our eye on the ultimate goal, getting the people out of Iraq.

A year ago when I was first invited to attend one of the sessions, I was told that the removal of the FTO designation was vital to getting the international community to agree to resettle the residents of Camp Ashraf. If that remains the central judgment, then over the next two months the remaining residents must be resettled.... The future of the MeK is outside of Iraq. The faster we see movement, not just from Ashraf to Liberty but from Liberty to new destinations outside Iraq, the better. We should continue to demand acceptable conditions at Liberty. We can and should continue to express our disgust at the Iraqi government and its behavior. But what we should focus on more than anything else is genuine freedom outside of Iraq which then provides us the opportunity to focus, as we all have here today, on what unites us all, a different future for the people of Iran, integrated rather than isolated from the rest of the world... The State Department calls Liberty a temporary transit facility. Two key words: Temporary, which I will interpret as a matter of months, not years.

And transient, meaning people arrive and then they depart. That hasn't happened as the folks just mentioned. We have been at this for several months but as yet not a single person has been interviewed, determined to be a refugee and then relocated to a third country. This ultimately, in my view, is the metric that matters more than any; getting these people out of Iraq and out of harm's way.... I said a moment ago that the future for the MeK is not about Iraq, it is about Iran and offering the Iranian people the political alternatives and the ability to choose who will lead them in the future, precisely what is happening in other countries one-by-one. Change is inevitable.

It will be a lengthy process; it will not be easy or quick. Change will not be kind to U.S. policies or even to U.S. interests. But change will come. It has come to Cairo, it will come to Damascus and it will arrive some day in Tehran. So why should we continue to do everything possible to get the people of Ashraf and the people of Liberty out of Iraq? It is ultimately because then we have a stronger voice with which to articulate an alternate vision for the future of Iranian people. The sooner that happens the better. It is what unites us all here today, getting the residents of Ashraf out of Iraq safely and beyond Iran's clutches so we can focus on creating conditions that enable a different kind of Iran to emerge: Be more responsible, with a government that is worthy of the great Iranian people.





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Gen. David Phillips (ret.), former commandant of the Army Military Police School, commander of all police operations in Iraq, including the protection of Camp Ashraf

Thank you. Supporters of a free and democratic Iran, my name is David Phillips and I'm honored to be here today with you. I want to compliment those brave people, many of them who are here today, who are opposed to religious fascism in all its form especially the extremist Islam which has fallen to the country of Iran for the past generation. I want to also mention the 3,400 men and women dispersed between their home of many years of Camp Ashraf and the detention facility located on a small, secluded part of land that used to be called Camp Liberty.

I believe a name like Abu Ghuraib and Dakhau is much more appropriate. I only hope Camp Liberty, that name, does not get added to the list of those other two horrible places. Other than the 3,400 members and residents of the resistance, I am one of the very few people that has lived both at Camp Ashraf and Camp Liberty. Although I must point out when I was at Camp Liberty I did have clean, running water. I had electrical power. I had air conditioning, recreation facilities and freedom of movement. That is not so for the people that are there. I spoke to one of my close friends at Camp Ashraf yesterday. He said the temperature at Ashraf was 61 degrees Celsius. It's 141 degrees Fahrenheit. Do you want to know what that's like? Open your oven after cooking and stick your arms inside, that's what 141 degrees feels like. And they have air conditioning at Ashraf.

What about the individuals down at Liberty in 61 degrees Celsius weather? What part of "protected person" isn't understood? It's quite clear, on the U.S. issued protected person identity card. Forces under my command issued these cards after the verbiage was dictated to us by the U.S. State Department. Let me read: "The individual identified on this card is a protected person under the agreements and terms of the 4th Geneva Convention". Yet it is the same State Department that continues to label them as terrorists. You can't have it both ways. There's a problem, I understand, with the negotiations with the remaining residents of Camp Ashraf and the epicenters for the United Nations, United States, Iraq and from a country many want to pretend isn't involved, but it is, Iran. What strange bed fellows. The disagreement and negotiations boils down to whether the remaining members of the resistance at Camp Ashraf abandon their home of over three decades, along with a great deal of personal and real property, and move into a location which is hidden from public view.

We can argue the nuances of those negotiations. But I'm a soldier, and I've been a soldier for over 30 years. I am not a diplomat. I like to cut to the bottom line. As I see it, if you want to solve this problem, have Mr. Al-Maliki open Camp Liberty to the outside world and allow in media, international press and interested individuals. If Camp Liberty meets even basic human rights requirements, what is there to hide? Here's a simple challenge for Mr. Al-Maliki, from someone who has spent more time battling insurgents in Iraq than he has: I challenge you, Mr. Maliki to allow us to come over and visit Camp Liberty and let us see for ourselves your humane conditions. Over eight years ago I was given a mission for detaining over 3,000 members of the Iranian resistance at a desert post called Camp Ashraf and I was told without evidence that they were terrorists. I accomplished that mission, along with my soldiers.

Yet in 2009, U.S. soldiers were forced to stand idly by while many members of the resistance were gunned down and murdered by the supposed Iraqi democratic regime. That is after we, U.S. forces, convinced the members of the resistance that everything is going to be okay once we turn you over to the Iraqis, don't worry. When, in fact, we knew we were throwing them to the wolves. That's not politically correct, is it? Well, we promised them a rose garden knowing there was no rose garden at Camp Liberty. Any wonder why the people at Camp Ashraf doubt our sincerity? They doubt the fact that we have promised them humane treatment. They doubt the fact that we're going to give them refugee status. How many have been at Liberty over six months and not one has been repatriated to any place? We have promised them we might remove you from the terrorist list if you all move to Camp Liberty.



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Well, after an extensive inquiry and investigation, which the residents of Camp Ashraf complied with in every regard - they were very invasive in 2004 and I was there when we did it - we told them and then Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld signed a document telling them, you're not terrorists any longer, you're now protected persons. Where did the protected persons label go? Confusing to say the least. We promised every member, all 3,400, protection in writing and they believed us. Yet in 2009, we reneged on that promise and they paid with blood. Where was our honor in that? Interestingly, it was the State Department that told then Lieutenant Colonel McCloskey to remove the protected person verbiage from their identity cards.

Any new cards issued -- they were issued periodically -- removed it. Ironically, that was within days before the attack by the Iraqis on these people who were unarmed. So any doubt, any wonder, why the people at Ashraf doubt the promises that moving to Liberty is a good thing? I believe they learn from experience. In the case of the Iranian resistance, what do you expect they learn in their experience in dealing with us? My family and I are speaking out for what we believe in as Americans, and it hasn't been without cost to us personally and professionally. The mere word that we are dealing with terrorists, even though it's a baseless claim, has labeled us as somehow being on the side of wrong. Well, my family and I believe in democracy, freedom, and gender equality.

Unfortunately that doesn't seem to be politically correct when we deal with the Mullah regime. I believe that when we, the United States, make a promise, we need to keep it. I believe in telling the truth and not telling things that we know will get a reaction, even though we know them to be fabricated. I was the voice of our policy at Camp Ashraf in the early years, specifically during the disarmament and then the promise of protection. Well that promise may have been broken by some, but not all. I can assure the residents of Camp Ashraf, who I know will get a chance to watch this, that I haven't broken it, nor have the majority of soldiers who served on Camp Ashraf.

They will support, and we will continue to stand by that promise until all 3,400 members, are out of harm's way. So is it any wonder that there's currently a stalemate in negotiations? That the people at Camp Ashraf are questioning the promises of humane treatment at Liberty? Well I've got a way of solving that and it's fairly easy. First, Martin Kobler, steps aside. Let someone who can accomplish the mission have a chance to do it, I have a recommendation for somebody who can do that job, who will live up to the truths, who will enforce the promise of Memorandum of Understanding and this person has also volunteered to do it and it's not the colonel and I. If you don't think she's up to the task, you haven't met my daughter, and her bags are packed and she's ready to go.





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Gen. Charles "Chuck" F. Wald (ret.), former Deputy Commander of U.S. European Command

I believe in what this country stands for, what America stands for and we still stand for things like freedom of life and speech and human rights. The things that your families are going through in Iraq are the things that we fought for. We do not want people put in concentration camps like they are literally right now in camp Liberty. I grew up that way. I joined the military because I believed we stood for something that is much different than anybody else and we still need to. We should not forget that today. That is why I am proud to be here supporting what you stand for and be against a regime that is suppressive, like Iran.

When I came back from Europe and retired, I joined a group called Bipartisan Policy Center and led a study on why it would be a terrible thing to let Iran have a nuclear weapon. What the significance of Iran having a nuclear weapon was? You heard General Cartwright talk about that. The fact of the matter is that would be one of the worst things that could happen to the world today. There are significant issues that could occur. And United States has issues that are security concerns. The number one security concern for the United States I believe is an extremist terrorist with a nuclear weapon that could do something. That would be unbelievable. And, first of all, I think there are people that would like to do that, believe it or not. It is hard to even imagine what the consequences would be.

A couple of years ago there was a PBS special out on Frontline about having a dirty bomb explode in downtown London, which was I think very appropriate right now to think about as a concern with the Olympics coming up. It was very realistic. They closed off the central part of London for decades with this bomb. There were hundreds of thousands of people trapped because they could not take them out of this area because they were contaminated. At the time I watched this, I said how anybody could imagine somebody doing this kind of thing. As General Cartwright said, there are people out there that want to do this type of thing.

So for us to think that Iran with the nuclear weapon, with the demonstrated leadership they have there and their lack of respect for human rights and the fact that they sponsor terrorism, having a nuclear weapons is one of the scariest things I can think of. For them to say things like Israel should not belong in the world, they do not deserve to exist, take them off the face of the earth, that is a heck of a statement. Those are the type of people we are negotiating with in Iran. So our contention in the paper that we wrote was, again, Governor Rendell spoke about this openly, nobody here wants to have bad things happen. We do not want to have people killed, we do not want to have war.

Nobody more than a military person would like to avoid conflict. On the other hand, the only way to negotiate with people like that is to understand there are consequences. For right now, Iran is not negotiating in good faith. That is the way it is. They need to know there are consequences. For the Iran head to say we will destroy the U.S. fleet in the Persian Gulf is ludicrous. I understand what they have to do. But rhetoric is one thing. On the other hand, we have the evidence because there is complications in the world. It is very difficult. I am not in charge of the United States foreign policy but it is very hard. Syria is an unbelievable challenge. Egypt was a challenge, still is. Other places are challenges.

The United States is saying, I do not want to have another problem right now. Think about it. On the other hand, we cannot short our responsibility. We start out as a great nation because we believe in human rights, we stand for certain things. We cannot decide selectively what we are going to do to enforce or stand for. We have to stand up for it. When General Cartwright said between now and November nothing is going to happen, I understand that. Politics works that way. But Iran during that period is getting a free ride on this. We need to, as a nation, stand for what we believe in.

Idealistically we need to take care of friends and have communes like you and I would. You are just like we are. You have the same rights. We owe it to you to help with Camp Ashraf and Liberty for that matter. So in the times of cynicism, and political difficulties, budget constraints and complexities around the world, it is not going to get any simpler. The world is only getting more complicated. Unless we decide to stand up for who we are as Americans and live for what we believe in, we are just not going to be American anymore. So I believe we will stand with you and I believe you will succeed in your goal.



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Col. Wesley Martin (ret.), former commander of Camp Ashraf

Today I would like to speak this time not to the residents of Ashraf and Liberty but for the residents of Ashraf and Liberty. There is a fight for democracy and a fight for truth and it's been a fight against a sea of lies. When I think about it, a lot of those lies are either generated or moved through, unfortunately, our own State Department. If Moses was able to split the red sea, I would like to see Hillary Clinton induce integrity into the State Department.



We have multiple types of intelligence we have signal intelligence, we have human intelligence. I have continually watched how a government use rumored intelligence. And this is precisely what the entire MeK and the National Liberation Army has endured for decades and it's time for somebody to speak for them and address some of these rumors and make clear they're none more than rumors and actually much worse. Recently one of the comments made by State Department, as we all remember after the Iranian plan to kill the Saudi Ambassador on American soil, is that we need to see how high up the Iranian government this goes.

Everybody in this room knows you don't plan something at that level unless it goes all the way to the top, Ahmadinejad and company. I would appreciate it if our own State Department would give that kind of review and integrity to the MeK and the National Liberation Army and they could get rid of all of the rumors that have been created, but they don't do that so I'll do it for them. We constantly hear about the American blood of the '70s. Last year when I was testifying before Parliament in the summer, another presenter actually tried to bring that up. He couldn't even name the name of the Americans.

Everybody in this room, we know Colonel Shaffer, Hawkins and Turner were not killed by the MeK ; they were killed by the Marxist splinter element of the MeK, as were the people from Rockwell. To blame the MeK for those murders is like blaming the raid from Lawrence, Kansas or Robert E. Lee or Ulysses S. Grant. It is not connected and we all know Rajavi was in prison at the time of these murders. When he came out, he brought with him a core element that was able to cleanse any of the Marxist element from even claiming the name of Mujahideen and able to move forward. The State Department's insistence on claiming the blood of the '70s is just totally wrong.

You heard me speak many times about the claim that it is a Marxist-Leninist organization because they believe in equality among people, and because of the personal right to interpret the Koran. Like the King James version of the Bible was created so people, everybody, could read it. And also no blind allegiance to the clerks. The three founding principles, State Department and the detractors of the MeK say that's Marx and Lenin. I think we all agree that's Jefferson and Madison. And then they say the MeK is a cult. Why? Because they wear uniforms and are not having children. Let's stop for a second. We are talking about the National Liberation Army. All the military people here wore uniforms when we were in an Army. That's what we are required to do. The issue about marriage, not having children, we can be blessed that Rajavi made the decision for no more cohabitation which produces children.

Today, imagine Liberty and Ashraf with 2-year-olds and 4-year-olds. We would be going through much worse. As bad as it is to involve children in something like that would be totally worse. The detractors of MeK do not even understand the difference between the National Liberation Army of the MeK and the MeK itself. This is one point I would like to make about the children. All the way from the far right of this room across, I have watched the young people. I have seen them in Canada, England, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany of the MeK supporters. And I am totally impressed at how well they've grown up in a democracy and I just stare into them thinking how great it would be across the world, and especially inside Iran, if they could have democracy and those children could grow up as fine as the children I see here.

And Ambassador Fried, Governor Ridge and General Phillips can verify, I have made clear to Dan Fried when he says only Ashraf and Liberty residents have all these demands and they want all these things. I said to him, they only want two things as designated by President Franklin Roosevelt, they want freedom from want and they want freedom from fear. Is that too much to ask? Instead of breaking away from the rumors and trying to appease the rulers of Iran, the U.S. executive branch creates more rumors and attack on the defendants. Ambassador Benjamin speculated to Congress that Ashraf still needed to be searched for weapons. Two weeks later that speculation intelligence was presented as a fact at the Court of Appeals.



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Fortunately, all of us together were able to quickly disprove that one. And if we have no access to Ashraf then where did I take all these pictures? Dave Phillips, Colonel McCloskey and I had complete 100 percent access to Ashraf and it was given to us. I had the Marines and the soldiers we could take in whenever we wanted to, but we didn't need to. The doors were always open and we could go where we wanted to and when we wanted to. And yet for defending these people I was recently called an outsider by Ambassador Fried. I'll tell you one thing, don't ever call a U.S. soldier an outsider in the presence of Governor Tom Ridge. Recently, two senior State Department officials, who would not allow their names to be released, speculated to the media that the former NLA, or they just said MeK, they don't know the difference, stopped the movement from Ashraf to Liberty because they were thinking Maliki was losing his grip on the government or the Court of Appeals was affecting this decision.

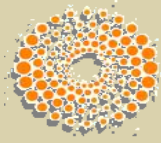
Let's go back to the truth. Ambassador Benjamin when he was speculating, about the weapons being hidden at Ashraf still. Then further, because Iraqi government, Maliki, was not honoring the agreements we have seen presented so well. So we have State Department creating two more forms of intelligence: Speculation intelligence and selective intelligence. They hear what they want to hear and they disregard the rest. And unfortunately the RAND report, which was created based upon State Department lies and sources, is the ultimate testimony to selective intelligence. And also State Department used that selective intelligence when they paid Chalabi \$33 million for his information that we know today was totally wrong and the slightest historian could have recalled that. This one really gets to me as much as it gets to me over what they're doing at Ashraf. We have the attacks from the executive branch on the American defendants of the MeK.

Governor Rendell was the first to be attacked. And I know it was felt we'll just back him away, and he'll back away, but I guarantee you one thing, anyone who thought that does not know Governor Rendell or any of the other names. They were accused of defending a terrorist organization. They're not defending terrorism. These great Americans are defending humanity and defending democracy throughout the world to including inside Iran. Hopefully State Department will change their directions. They will start relying on human intelligence of people who have worked with the MeK. General Phillips and I and Colonel McCloskey stand ready to go over to Foggy Bottom any time as I have done in the past to help them see the light.

We have also spoken out and said, we are ready to go back to Baghdad right now, even though other real terrorist elements over there are waiting for Phillips and I to return and we're on their list, we'll do it, because every American warrior that ever served in Iraq was on that list, and we're going to go again and fight again for democracy and fight for justice. Once it stated, Politics is the art of postponing decisions until they are no longer relevant. That's what we're seeing right now with Hillary Clinton delaying an obvious choice, MeK is not a terrorist organization. But let me say this to Hillary Clinton, concerning that relevancy, democracy in Iran, the role of the MeK and the life of the residents of Ashraf and Liberty will always remain relevant.



From left to right: Gen. Phillips, Hon. Crowley, Amb. Bolton, Cong. Kennedy, Gov. Rendell, Gen. Wald, Gen. Cartwright, Col. Martin



REUTERS

Senate Briefing Warns of Humanitarian Tragedy in Camp Liberty, Iraq, and Urges Immediate Improvement in Conditions Imposed on Iranian Dissidents before Further Relocation to Liberty

WASHINGTON, July 20, 2012 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The following is being released by Iranian-American Cultural Association of Missouri:

In a briefing at the historic Senate Kennedy Caucus room, senior former U.S. military commanders and Administration officials called for immediate improvement in inhumane conditions at Camp Liberty, Iraq, where 2,000 Iranian dissidents reside after relocating from Camp Ashraf, their home for 26 years. The Iranian dissidents are members of the main Iranian opposition movement, the Mujahedin-e Khalq (PMOI/MEK).

Former Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Chairman General James E. Cartwright (ret.); former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton; former Governor of Pennsylvania; DNC Chairman Ed Rendell; former Deputy Commander of United States European Command Gen. Charles "Chuck" F. Wald (ret.); former State Department Spokesman Phillip J. Crowley; former commandant of the Army Military Police School, commander of all police operations in Iraq, including the protection of Camp Ashraf Brig. Gen. David Phillips (ret.); and former commander of Camp Ashraf Col. Wesley Martin (ret.) spoke at the briefing, which was moderated by former Rhode Island Congressman Patrick Kennedy. "For the remaining 1,200 residents of Camp Ashraf, you are not obligated to go to Camp Liberty until the United States and the United Nations keep their word to protect, meet their obligations," Mr. Kennedy said, underscoring that "the residents of Camp Ashraf are not breaking their word, it's the United States and the UN who are breaking their commitment to the people of Camp Ashraf."

Ambassador Bolton, added, "What we have seen here, in this entire transfer process from Ashraf to Liberty, is the subordination of UNHCR to the UN Assistance Mission to Iraq. That is a fundamental violation of the principles for which UNHCR was established." "What we need to see here," Bolton concluded, is "getting the United States to do the right thing and delist the MeK and take affirmative steps to begin the relocation process out of Iraq, which is the only solution that's going to be fair and equitable to the residents of Ashraf and Liberty and their families around the world."

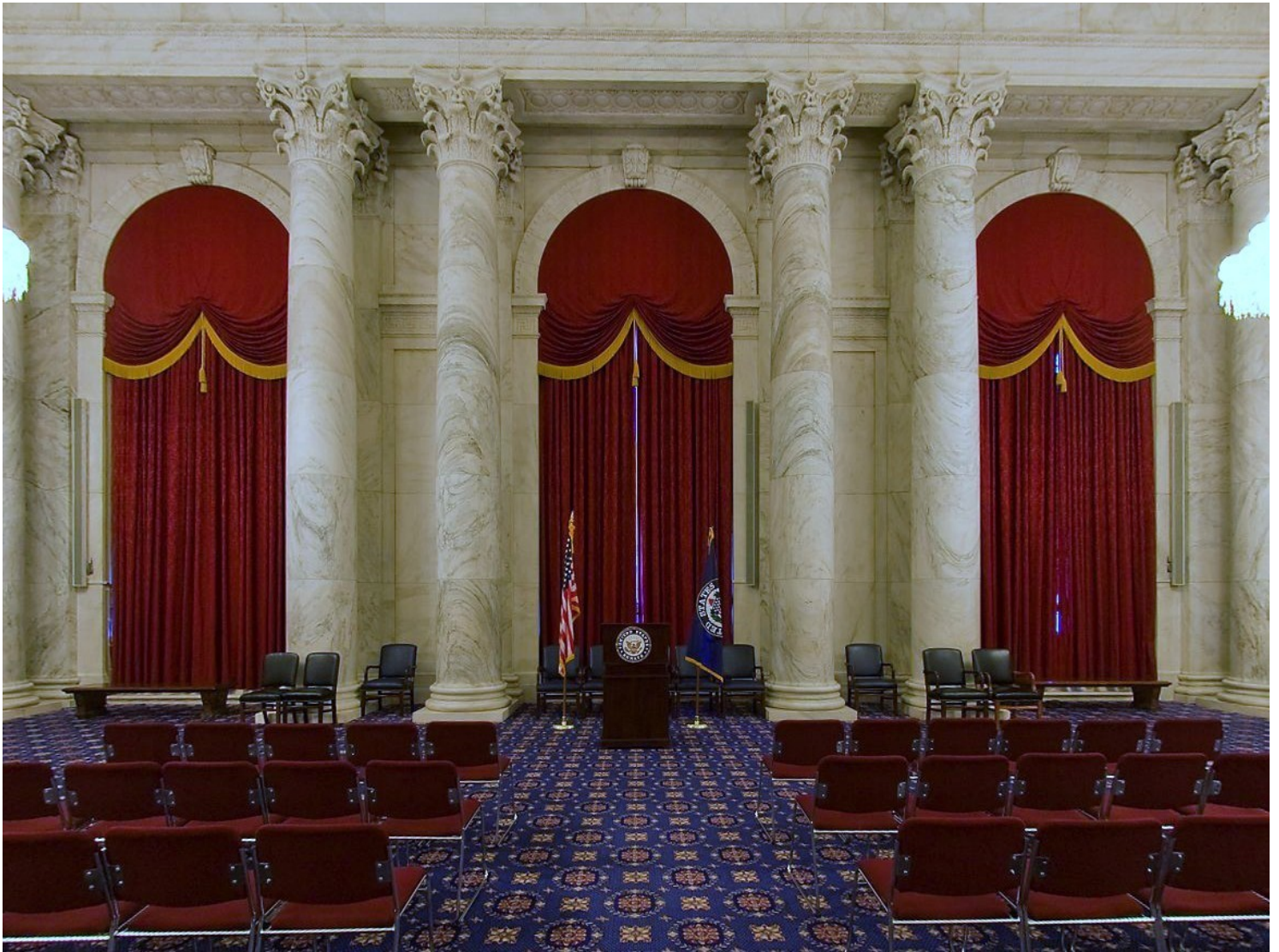
Noting that the Iranian regime was poised to take advantage of the Presidential elections in the United States, General Cartwright said, "The time between now and November is a time of vulnerability. The talks that are going on with Iran to eliminate their ability to have weapons of mass destruction are basically stagnant. They are not progressing." In reference to the situation at Camp Liberty, the retired four-star General added, "When you decide what it is you want to do, you make sure that somebody is assigned to be responsible and accountable to ensure that it happens. Having people in charge of humanitarian issues ... Having somebody assigned to ensure relocation occurs is what the mission is. Who is assigned? Who is accountable? And until there is somebody in that position, we're not serious. We need to be serious."

"I've never gotten a good explanation from the State Department or anybody representing the government of Iraq or from the United Nations why, if their ultimate goal was to get the residents of Ashraf out of the country, why did they have to leave Ashraf to do that in the first place? To this day, if they stayed in Ashraf, we would have been far ahead than where we are now. We wasted all this time transitioning to Liberty. We could have been moving, we could have had people immigrating to different countries of the world already. Nobody has ever given me an explanation. Then, nobody has ever given me an explanation, about why does the Iraqi government not allow [the residents of Camp Liberty] to put up shades, or to put up paved walkways? We're not asking them to pay the money... Why would you not let the residents bring their own water purification system and pump water out of the nearby river when it's at no cost to them? And the residents of Ashraf and Liberty are willing to do it themselves. And I think it's rotten. And I think it's unfair. And I think in many ways it borders on inhumane. It makes me angry as an American and it makes me angry as a citizen of the world," Governor Rendell said.

Highlighting the U.S. responsibility in a satisfactory resolution of this crisis, Mr. Crowley said, "The United States must become more invested in dealing with these issues and insisting on better conditions at Camp Liberty... We should continue to insist on minimal humanitarian conditions... Security, safe shelter and water are not unreasonable demands. Getting the Iraqi government to connect the camp to the Baghdad municipal water system is not an insurmountable task. If authorized, I suspect the residents of Camp Ashraf could do it by themselves." Crowley emphasized that the future for the MeK is "about Iran and offering the Iranian people the political alternatives and the ability to choose who will lead them in the future... what unites us all here today, is getting the residents of Ashraf out of Iraq safely and beyond Iran's clutches so we can focus on creating conditions that enable a different kind of Iran to emerge."

"I am one of the very few people who has lived both at Camp Ashraf and Camp Liberty... If you want to solve this problem, have Mr. Al-Maliki open Camp Liberty to the outside world and allow in media, international press and interested individuals. If Camp Liberty meets even basic human rights requirements, what is there to hide? Here's a simple challenge for Mr. Al-Maliki, from someone who has spent more time battling insurgents in Iraq than he has: I challenge you, Mr. Maliki to, allow us to come over and visit Camp Liberty and, let us see for ourselves your humane conditions, General Phillips said. Gen. Charles "Chuck" F. Wald added, "As a nation, we need to stand for what we believe in, we need to take care of friends and have communes like you ... We owe it to you to help with Camp Ashraf and Liberty for that matter."

In part of his remarks, Col. Martin said that the residents of Camps Ashraf and Liberty "Only want two things as designated by President Franklin Roosevelt, they want freedom from want and they want freedom from fear. Is that too much to ask?" He added, "We are ready to go back to Baghdad right now... we'll do it, because we're going to go again and fight again for democracy and fight for justice." As regards the status of Camp Liberty, Rendell said, "It's not temporary transit location (TTL). It's really a refugee camp. And, the UN should be embarrassed because it refuses to call it a refugee camp when we know that's exactly what it is." Crowley agreed, "The State Department calls Liberty a temporary transient facility. Two key words: Temporary, which I will interpret as a matter of months, not years. And transient, meaning people arrive and then they depart. That hasn't happened."



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