

conversations tonight and tomorrow.

Q It seems to fly in the face of what Hadley has written here.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: It's a range -- it's like what we said to Mark -- it's a range of possibilities. It is not a, as you said, summary judgment.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: And, Sheryl, if you take a look through the rest -- what you've done is you've read off the beginning, and then you go back through the steps both sides can take, and those are all about capability building.

Q It's all in the conditional. If Maliki is willing to move decisively, this is how we can help him.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: Well, but as we --

Q It suggests a disbelief or a feeling that you're really not sure who Maliki is and how committed he is.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: No, I think -- again, if you take a look at what we've discussed in terms of measures that have been taken in recent weeks, and furthermore, what you're seeing with Prime Minister Maliki is somebody who has made it clear that he is eager to assume greater responsibility in these things. The President has made that clear in recent conversations, and Steve talked about it as recently as yesterday.

SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL: But as I previously said, you would expect us to probe these very issues during an assessment period that's going on right now. These are important questions that have to be raised, possibilities have to be entertained. But the judgments that are being rendered and are being demonstrated and what we're actually doing we believe concludes that we think this is an issue of capability, not intent or vision.

Thanks everyone.

END 12:20 P.M. (Local)

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