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## General Keane and LTG Hussein, National Police

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NP Headquarters, International Zone, Baghdad

By b 3, b 6

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### Abstract

I'd nearly lost hope in 2007, but you turned things around. In the future, the NP will be provide security in all the provinces, but will take orders from Baghdad, not from the governors. We need the coalition to stay. Iraqi political rhetoric is hurting the political situation in the US. As Iraq is changing, its example will change the entire region. We must educate the people.

*We drove in the motorcade to the National Police compound, where we were met by a colonel and troops of the 1ID, who escorted us into the NP HQ. At the entrance, a couple of NP conducted a salute with their rifles. Going through the foyer, there were two more officers saluting on each side and two female officers saluting as well, one on each side. It was an old, one-story building, but decently kept. We were escorted to LTG Hussein's office. It was rather small. There were a couple of fine leather couches and chairs around three walls, plus a couple of extra chairs. LTG Hussein's desk took up the fourth side. High on the wall above his desk were pictures of Prime Minister Maliki and President Talibani. On the wall opposed Hussein's desk, a flat screen TV showed imaged from Mecca, scriptures going across the screen, pilgrims, and clouds. I thought it might be a 24-hour Mecca channel, but later noticed images of coalition troops conducting operations in Iraq. At that point, I thought it might be anti-coalition stuff, but it did not seem necessarily to be trying to depict atrocities. Then there was an anchorman doing news. I've no idea what channel it was. I did notice (b)(6) Fred Kagan watching the screen from their seat on a sofa. The screen was up over my right shoulder. I could not see it directly without rudely turning my head up to it and away from LTG Hussein. However, I could see the screen reflected in the glass of the trophy case behind LTG Hussein's desk.*

*Besides LTG Hussein's desk, there was a large kitch fountain. It stood about 4 feet high with elaborate sculpting, was lit up, and the flowing water provided a gentle background noise for the office.*

### Discussion

Hussein: I am very happy to have you here. I'm happy to have MG Jones. I am happy he is returning to his family, and extremely happy to have you here.

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Keane: We've watched with interest the remarkable success you've had over two years. In 2007, I was giving up hope. You've turned that around. It is all about leadership and courage, and yours was decisive.

Hussein: Thank you so much. I could not do it all on my own. The success is thanks to all your help.

Keane: Mostly you, but we always helped.

Hussein: Clapping takes two hands.

Keane: What is your future direction?

Hussein: I think we're on the right direction. Briefly, the future. Our idea is that the National Police will be responsible for security all over Iraq, in every province.

Keane: How do you have National Police in every province after the elections when the governor does not control the National Police?

Hussein: I think this force will work in a province under the authority of Baghdad. The province has no authority over it. This way they can do what they must and operate freely. The plan is to mix and match forces across the country. We have a plan for NP in Baghdad, which depends on the security situation. After the Army secures Baghdad, then the NP will take over security of Baghdad. We'll divide coverage of the country into the three regions: south, central, and north. This is our future.

Keane: Will NP brigades take orders from commanders of operational centers, like in Basra or Mosul?

Hussein: They'll be a center . . . our future vision is population security and freedom of movement for everyone. It is very unpleasant to see a tank on the road. Iraqis should not have to have checkpoints.

Keane: When do you think coalition forces will be able to pull out of the cities and leave it to the IPs and the NPs?

Hussein: We'll take it a step at a time, but under a year.

Keane: I'd be cautious. We made the mistake in 2006 of moving too fast.

Hussein: I will never underestimate the enemy or lose the victory.

Keane: We need to be cautious. I know there is pressure to pull back and reduce the pressure of the image of "occupation."

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*Hussein stood up and walk around his desk, pulling up a chair to sit partly in front of it, facing Keane. He asked something about being able to speak freely, and Keane replied they could clear the room of all the extras. That did not seem to be necessary.*

Hussein: I'll talk like a normal, educated Iraqi. We are having an experience our neighbors aren't having. Without coalition forces, we'd never have this opportunity, and educated Iraqis know this. For all those saying this is about oil, the US has spent 20 years worth of oil here. That doesn't make sense. Those who think Iraqis don't like coalition forces in the streets, this is only about politics. Have you occupied Germany, Japan, and Korea all these years? You've spent your money and sacrificed lives. We know this. Those who say we don't need coalition forces, that's rumor. We don't like the occupation [but we need the help]. We need clean water, schools, education, and hospitals. Sometimes people say we need to attack coalition forces . . . but in Saddam's day, he would grab anybody by his ear . . . Now we can speak. We have freedom to speak. Many provinces don't even have drinking water. The Americans help. The terrorists don't understand; they just destroy things.

Keane: It is unfortunate we've let a simple security agreement become so politicized. We have to have an agreement to remain, and we have to remain, but the agreement has gotten moved into this big discussion about sovereignty and 'occupation,' which has hurt the talks. Talk of 'timetables,' timelines, and disengagement all hurt the situation and our talks. The issue is what do we need to do right now. When those terms are heard in the US coming from Iraq leaders, by those who opposed all of this, it gives ammunition to use against our mission. All politicians want to be re-elected. They know 'occupation' is a big issue. Hence, they use these terms, which help them in Iraq, but those terms hurt the cause in the U.S. Still, I think we'll get through this. I think we'll have an agreement, a memorandum of understanding, and a SOFA later. We have to recognize this is a democracy, and democracy is hard and frustrating, but the rewards are great and worthwhile.

Hussein: Democracy is expensive. Look at the French Revolution, at Germany. You gave it to us all at once, and it was too much, too soon . . . we will be the center of the Middle East, with or without the agreement of the rest of the region.

Keane: Every country in the region will change because of Iraq. Nothing will be the same. Sunni Arabs and Persians will force change on their governments, and we want that, change without force. Iraq is a dagger to the heart of the Iranian regime. US does not want war with Iran. The best way to handle Iran is a democratic Iraq.

Hussein: I agree. This is what all our neighbors' fear. They know the danger. Iraq will be an example to their people. Look at KSA and the rest, with kings and presidents for life.

Kagan: [redacted] 1.4b, 1.4d

[redacted] 1.4b, 1.4d

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Hussein: The situation is very sensitive. For example, in Basra, after the Charge of the Knights operation, a bad guy fled. He tried to return. The neighbors spotted him, beat him, and turned him in. Why? The operation gave the people of Basra their freedom. They knew they did not want to go back to militias. If we start rebuilding, all the people will join the effort. . . . The Iraqi population suffers from a lack of education. We must build them up. The more we educate the more they'll support the GoI and turn against bad people. If we could send the uneducated to the west, let them learn and become educated, they would come back and understand. AQ moved in because the people allowed them to. After seeing what AQ did, the people rejected AQI and kicked them out. We should do everywhere what we did in Ramadi.

Keane: What are the remaining problems?

Hussein: We face big challenges. For example, the National Police don't have a budget, and we need help working it out [with the MoI]. We're dealing with them. Basra, Sadr City, and Mosul are on track.

Keane: Thanks for your hospitality.

Hussein: The problem that the NP has is this. This month feels like saying goodbye to all who have helped us through the hardest time. Our NP is much better.

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