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MNF-I Staff Notes Excerpts, May-Sep 2006

21 May 2006

1. General Casey met with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki on 21 May and advised him that he was bringing forward two brigades from Kuwait to help in Ramadi. He tied the need for the Ramadi operation to security in Baghdad, over which Maliki is extremely concerned. Maliki provided his approval to the CG and agreed that this is a necessary security measure that his new government must support. On Thursday the CG will bring back the revised security plan for Baghdad for the PM to review. The Iraqis are worried that there is not enough presence in certain areas of the city, that the army and police are not coordinating and cooperating, and that the sectarian killings can and should be better controlled. The new Baghdad security plan will attempt to address these issues.

2. CG said that he saw Tawfiq al-Yasiri in the waiting room as he was departing the prime minister's office, and believes that Yasiri's candidacy for the MOI position is solidifying. In addition, he said that Muhammad Bara al-Rubai, the UK choice for MOD, is flying in from London tomorrow for interviews. The other two names still in play are Hajim al-Hasani and Muwafuq al-Rubai. CG still thinks the decisions on both jobs are imminent.

3. CG confirmed that the Ambassador had agreement from the PM and Foreign Minister to defer the [1.4b] delegation plan to visit Baghdad until the end of the month so that they were not the first group to call on the new Iraqi government. Instead, there will be a high level visit by the UK Prime Minister followed, hopefully, by a visit by a high level [1.4b] delegation.

4. General Casey...convened a group of his senior commanders evening of 21 May to go over the DDR ideas and frame a plan of action. The CG said he is going to focus more heavily on the reintegration piece. He has asked LTG Dempsey (who is nearing completion of the core work of his training mission) to take on the task of establishing vocational centers to retrain militia for non-ISF jobs. He does not want the militia simply integrated into the ISF, as a default position, for some of the following reasons:

- it would dilute of the quality of the force
- it would contribute to the perception of sectarianism in the ISF
- it would reduce the availability of slots promised in the al Anbar consolidation plan, and possibly other troubled Sunni provinces

As a result, MNF-I needs to build capacity now for employment alternatives. LTG Dempsey has the command authority and capability to produce fast results, which is what the CG has asked him to do. The CG said there are basically four groups that have to be considered in this process: those covered in the CPA order 91, Sadrists, security detainees, and the Sunni resistance. These four groups will need to be brought into the reintegration process differently, and will be required to make different individual concessions...

5. There was some concern that the Ambassador may be working a parallel effort to convince the new Iraqi government of the threat of [1.4b, 1.4d] in their country, and the need to undertake measures to reduce it. The CG said that he and the Ambassador are in synch. They are both very well aware of the work being done in Washington policy circles on Iran and are coordinating their Baghdad-based plans.

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6. In a separate meeting, the CG commented that he continues to be concerned over the embassy's timelines in moving forward on the political and economic lines of operation...The CG has always pushed for these two lines to fully integrated with the security effort, but they continue to lag. The implications are huge, and can untimely delink MNF-I's own timelines. As an example, one of his planners cited the Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) issue. PIC is a security condition in which the governor has sufficient security capability in the province to manage the threat at a specific point in time. The security conditions, however, will regress without political and economic improvement. The CG has stressed the need to have a joint campaign plan and a joint mission statement to ensure overall success, but this is still problematic and not in MNF-I's control.

22 May 2006

1. GEN Casey met with PM Blair in the morning together with the Ambassador. GEN Casey had said earlier that there [were] conscious Washington decisions to let the British leader travel first to Iraq, and to also begin the public discussion about force draw down. The CG had coordinated on the proposed statements that the UK PM would make, and so was cautiously optimistic that this would resonate well with both the British and the Iraqi public. Both countries could use a little boost and benefit from the momentum this positive and public move could generate. The CG did not say much about his meeting with Blair although they did discuss the predictable issues of security, sectarianism, ministerial capacity, resourcing, and government communication.

2. The CG also met with the current MOI candidate Tawfiq al-Yasiri for the first time. He was extremely impressed. He said they had a full discussed of his career, and although he has not held Ministerial level jobs in the past, he seemed to be a capable, competent candidate. He said he had been wounded twice. His last job in the Saddam army was as a Brigadier General in command of the Military Administrative and Technical school. He also served as the Commander of the Arab Gulf Military Academy, and was the Iraqi MOD rep in Kuwait at one time. Post liberation Yasiri was given the rank of Lieutenant General by the MOD. He asked him what the greatest challenge would be, and Yasiri said sectarian violence, and the need to restore confidence in the integrity of the Ministry. GEN Casey asked him if he thought he could run a Ministry with a quarter million people, and Yasiri replied he thought he could, but did not really know. The CG thought this was a pretty honest answer and gave him credit for his candid response.

3. At the conclusion of the meeting General Casey phoned former prime minister Ayad al-Alawi and asked him for his views on Yasiri, since Alawi knows what it takes to run the MOI and knows Yasiri. Alawi provided some very positive comments. He described him as a man of strong character, brave, and open to ideas. He said he had good credentials for the job, and a good family. He is cool and calculating but not over confident. With that strong endorsement from Alawi, the CG told the Ambassador that he was very favorably disposed toward Yasir, and, of all the candidates, he was the most impressive and most likely to succeed.

4. On other security posts, Hajim al-Hasani and Nasir al-Rubai are still in contention for the MOD, but CG said Tawfuq is still threatening to walk out of they do not get the MOD. The Iraqis are looking for a candidate to fill the Minister of State for National Security position with Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih is currently presiding over. The thought is that a Kurd should fill this as the Sunnis have the MOD

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and the Shia have the MOI. The CG thought that Sadun al-Dulaymi was still a candidate for DG/INIS.

5. CG asked if there was enough locational data for the coalition to pick up the 1.4a Commander Soleimani. He would like to do so, and is thinking about this in connection with the possibility of working with the Iraqis to declare the QF a 'hostile force'. This would permit the arrest and detention of any/all QF personnel operating inside the country.

23 May 2006

General Casey said that in his meeting with Blair and with the Ambassador, that the Ambassador had very quickly identified security as the issue to be immediately resolved. General Casey interjected that it was unity that had to be first established, before the security environment could be improved. The Ambassador indicated that PM Maliki clearly understood all this, but the CG thinks the issue needs to be reinforced at senior levels as Maliki's impulse is to move against the Bathists.

10. The CG asked both the group to focus on collecting against JAM leadership. CG said he is thinking about the possibility of publicly warning Sadr that if his forces come 'out of the box' that the coalition will respond immediately and with force.

24 May 2006

The CG said that he would start working on projecting what the coalition presence might look like by the end of 2007. With the standup of the new Iraqi government, and the various statements by PM Nuri al-Maliki and senior UK and the US officials, the CG believes he will need to have a straw man together in time for his mid-June trip to the US. He has said that it is unlikely he can move the force below 100,000 by the end of the year, but notes that by that time MNF-I expects to move the Iraqi Army over the hump, so that the majority of their units should be in the lead with coalition support. This is the point where the CG expects that force drawdowns can begin in earnest. In addition, he expects the Joint HQs to be fully functioning in the next month or two, allowing the Iraqis to command and control the movement of their soldiers across the country down to the smallest unit. Again, this is the type of progress that will permit the coalition to further adjust their status.

Before the CG can project force status through 2007, however, he wants a review of what has been lost in terms of security over the past five months, during which a caretaker government struggled with post Samara sectarianism and growth in lawlessness. In preparation for that, the CG has asked MG Zahner to pull together another Red Cell to assess the impact that the last five months has had on the security environment overall. The Red Cell begins its work in the next few days.

1.4b, 1.4d

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1.4b, 1.4d

The CG spoke more about his intent to convene a meeting to focus on the situation in Basrah. He would now like all the players to come to Baghdad...and have a session on the assessment of the situation and the plan to deal with it through the end of the year...He should also have by then the Iraqi Basrah proposals as well so that their plans can be accommodated and integrated into the coalition plan. The reason for the change of venue is that he would like to show the UK the Baghdad Fusion Center and ask them to establish one of their own in Basrah. The CG would like to see a robust targeting effort directed against the Sheibani/Garawi EFP network operating in the south as their first priority. There are, of course, many other targets of interest that will justify this effort.

1.4b, 1.4d

On 23 May GEN Casey...received a fascinating briefing from the Task Force on Extrajudicial Killings (EJK-TF). The briefing opened with a Hunter UAV video clip that showed the execution of two males on 21 May by JAM militia. The UAV had been routinely deployed over suspect JAM facilities in order to 'catch them in the act' and it finally paid off. The video shows a black-flagged JAM compound in the Nur section of NW Baghdad. The video shows a dozen or so black clad men in the JAM courtyard milling about. Two vehicles, a blue and white sedan, approach the compound and enter the courtyard. The blue and white sedans leave the target area and drive onto a quiet road, apparently looking for a body dumping location. The vehicles stop and the passengers dismount the white and blue sedans, pull one male passenger out of each trunk, execute each with a bullet to the head (caught on screen for only one of the executions. Both sedans depart the execution site leaving the bodies in the middle of the road. The UAV followed the vehicles back to the suspect JAM compound, and subsequently it followed the white vehicle to his possible residence/bed down location.

GEN Casey told the Task Force to clean up the video, translate the briefing into Arabic, and prepare it for him to present to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki and the MOI/MOD if on board by then. The CG plans to show this to Maliki in the next day or two, and ask him to personally order the takedown of the compound. He also will ask Maliki to identify an Iraqi force to execute the raid. The CG plans to link this to the Baghdad Security Plan and will also emphasize the use of the Baghdad tip line. The CG will ask MG Thuman at 4ID to hit the house where the white vehicle resides soonest...

Overall this is the culmination of three months of painstaking work by this EJK TF. In addition to this video, following are also some of their findings briefed to the CG.

Most victims are unidentified military aged males. Most are executed singly. The process of identification is so intimidating most families don't even try to claim the bodies. The CG made a note to

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surface this with the PM and is considering some sort of internet based photo system that is safer and more accessible. The EJK-TF is hoping to collect more information on the victims and the circumstances of their death through family interviews which are now just about impossible. The perpetrators are likely Shi'a militia enabled by law enforcement...There is no data on when the murders occur, only when the bodies are found. Most bodies are found on Saturday and Sunday. Most victims shot in the head. In April the number was 396. 24 suffocated. Nine hanged. Five beheaded. (NJOC statistics)....More than half show some combination of binding, torture before murder.

26 May 2006

On 26 May, the MNF-I DCG LTG Fry hosted Talat al-Wazzan, Secretary General of the Iraqi National Unionist Party at the embassy for further discussions on reducing levels of violence and bringing Sunni resistance groups into the political process. The last meeting with Wazzan was on 16 May. At that meeting Wazzan provided an 18-page document of his group's demands. This latest meeting was intended to address the demands and establish a mechanism to transition into the military-technical discussions of the proposed ceasefire...

Regarding the 18-page document, the DCG told Wazzan that there was nothing in it that would preclude further discussions. He confirmed that he had briefed President Talabani on the status of their discussions, and Talabani had agreed to lend his authority to these negotiations. He said the goal of this meeting would be to set an agreement on the time, place, and date where the insurgent commanders can sit down with local leaders and discuss conditions for the suspension of operations. They also need to determine the geographic area, the period of time that these operations would be suspended, and a review process for violations and for expansion of the ceasefire in other areas.

The DCG proposed Bayji as the first location to start, and possibly expand to Hawijah and Tal Afar if this first effort succeeds. Wazzan immediately agreed. There was extensive discussion on the venue for the military-technical meeting. Wazzan's group wanted the first meeting in the UAE. The DCG rejected this, and counter-proposed a third country embassy in Baghdad (probably Arab and not European) or the UN offices to which Wazzan eventually concurred. The DCG proposed the next meeting in mid-June, but interestingly Wazzan said he could not hold his group together that long, and needed another meeting much sooner...The UN option appears to be the best one. Regarding the composition of the delegation, Wazzan expected to have four or five local commanders in attendance, and they will be split into two committees. The first committee will work with MNF-I on the mil-tech discussions, and the latter will focus on the political demands of the resistance as stated in the 18 page document. The DCG told Wazzan that he would provide 100 percent guarantee of their personal security with respect to these meetings, which Wazzan acknowledged would be a requirement.

While it is still not clear exactly which groups Wazzan represents, he did specifically cite the [1920] Revolutionary Brigade and Jaysh al-Islami as two groups that have given him guidance on the course and content of these discussions...

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GEN Casey chaired the Friday staff meeting and was provided a more up to date briefing from the Extrajudicial Killings Task Force. The Task force focused more specifically on the connections they are seeing between law enforcement (MOI) and militia activities. This prompted the CG to ask for a list of MOI/MOD officials that have been connected to EJKs...MOI officials have been noted providing vehicles, uniforms, and target lists to militia to action.

Of note, MG Thurman...said he believes that the Sunni EJKs are approaching the level of Shia EJKs, and would estimate they are responsible for nearly half of the killings. The EJK Task Force still believes that JAM accounts for the majority of the executions, but agrees that the Sunni are actively targeting Shia, especially the Umar Brigade, which has so far claimed responsibility for some 150 executions. Most of the Sunni killings relate to neighborhood watch efforts to protect their enclaves and, of course, the Sunni extremists [AQI] continue their campaign against the Shia, mostly with VBIEDS/SVBIEDs but also with executions.

CG asked his commanders for their thoughts on declaring JAM a 'hostile force' (along with 1.4a) and asked if any other group should be added to the list. CG thought this may be one way to get at this militia problem. The government will need a solid position from which to operate against these groups, and the CG is simply looking at options that might help them. It was noted that the Baghdad Security Plan is supposed to address this issue directly. This security plan will focus on illegal checkpoints (where most victims are snatched) and militia associated compounds/illegal detentions centers. The CG acknowledged all this, and asked whether this militia-EJK issue is now serious enough to jeopardize the accomplishments of the coalition's strategic objectives (the joint campaign plan) to justify bringing additional force into the city. He tends to think it does. The CG will revisit this issue with his commanders in the morning.

MG Zahner briefed the Ambassador on the 21 May JAM executions caught on video, and showed him the clip today. GEN Casey has asked his staff for their thoughts on the best way to handle it. He still believes he should first bring it to the PM so as not to undercut his leadership, but is worried about the possibility the site location could be compromised before it is hit. The CG is just not sure how the PM will react. As a result he may brief it to him, show him the video, without any information on the location of the compound...just an hour or two before it is raided. Beyond that, the CG is also concerned about a possible Sadr backlash. He toyed with the idea of first trying to get a nod from Sistani, so that Sistani could prepare to put the brakes on Sadr if required. CG said he will be looking at making this decision quickly and in the next day or two...

[T]he CG confirmed that he and the Ambassador had briefed the Prime Minister on the whole range of 1.4b, 1.4d and lethal operations in Iraq. The CG said that the PM was very attentive. He did not push back at any time, and at the end of the hour long session stated 'these are terrorists operating in Iraq.' The CG was very relieved that this important briefing seemed to have convinced the PM of the need to address these issues directly with the 1.4b hose foreign minister arrives in the next day or two...

27 May 2006

GEN Casey has decided to brief PM Maliki on the suspect JAM compound and videotaped executions on the evening of 28 May. He will also show the video clip to the Presidency council. The CG is likely to

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encourage Maliki to touch base with Ayatollah Sistani to prepare for a possible backlash from Sadr's militia. He also fully expects this to provoke a strong Sunni reaction, who will point to this as proof that they are under assault and flog the government for their inability to provide security. The CG will encourage the PM to make a televised address to the nation, and to show the video clip, to provide the people some transparency into government operations and also to try to control the story.

The CG commented that he thinks that the Baghdad Security Plan still needs some work. He noted that they have not clearly articulated their strategic objectives (beyond reducing assassinations/executions and sectarianism in the capitol city) and so the current plan is not structured as tightly as it needs to be. Very generally, the planners have identified the five areas in Baghdad where most of the executions have taken place (Adamiyah, Mansour, Doura, Bayaa, Karadah) and they intend to isolate and secure those areas by focusing on establishing 'tiered response checkpoints' and combined patrols in key areas versus patrolling everywhere. They want to mass combat power in key areas by reducing presence in areas with less threat activity.

CG described the next few months as 'high adventure.' He is waiting now for the semi-annual June assessment that will gauge...progress against the joint campaign plan. He has also tasked out the Red Cell to evaluate how the security environment was impacted by the five-month delay in government formation. He has suggested to GEN Abizaid the need for an outside group to come in to assess the ISF. He would like a fresh review of their overall status to guard against the possibility that his officers are just too close to objectively assess it. All of this will feed into the work he must do to provide a roadmap for the reduction of forces through 2007.

The CG said he thought it might be time to get the concept of the Fusion Centers written up and documented. This has become such a powerful tool in this theater, and it has revolutionized the way the counterinsurgency campaign is being waged. To date the military has established centers in Mosul, Tikrit, Fallujah, Balad, Baghdad and soon in Basrah. Most significantly is that all the centers are fully linked together, and are able to pass off time sensitive targets across the country for immediate prosecution.

The CG commented on the 25 May trip out to the Iranian border crossings at Mandali and Khanaqin. It seemed clear that the Iraqis have little ability to control the flow of people and goods through Mandali. The border fort is manned at half strength, its view toward Iran is obstructed by a bombed out structure that sits directly in its line of sight. They have few vehicles and lack a regular supply of gasoline to conduct patrols. Moreover, the Border Transition Teams (BTTs) are really just getting started, so their impact is not yet measurable. Khanaqin was a different story. The border checkpoint had more infrastructure and organization than any of the others visited. The big business at this location is the transloading of vehicles across the Iran/Iraq border. The transloading is done in full view of the Iraqi customs/border agents (unlike at Mehran where the Iraqis had no visibility on the content of goods being moved). The passport controls for individuals entering Iraq also seemed to be fairly robust. The CG is still interested in helping the Iraqis get better control over their borders and is thinking about prompting the MOI to increase hiring into the Department of Border Enforcement. There are likely sufficient numbers of unemployed tribal youth who could be tapped to fill these jobs. He is also considering the possibility of putting a US squad at the transloading points to help the Iraqis focus on the need to thoroughly inspect shipments entering their country.

29 May 2006

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General Casey said he and the Ambassador briefed PM Nuri al-Maliki and Muwafuq al-Rubai on militia extrajudicial killings in Baghdad and also showed him the video clip of the two executions. The PM appeared nervous but did not doubt the credibility of the briefing/video and understood the gravity of the issue. He is not ready to respond, however, and wants another day to think about it. He commented that showing the video on national TV might actually provoke more sectarian violence, and felt it would not be productive for the Iraqis. He asked what evidence there was that the compound was associated with JAM, but the CG responded that it really did not matter. At this point, we know that the executions were directed from that compound, and whoever did it, is guilty of a crime. The CG will brief the Presidency Council tonight and show them the video. If there are no surprises, then the Iraqi Special Operations Force (ISOF) is scheduled to raid the compound this evening.

The CG and the Ambassador attended the MCNS today to further discuss the Baghdad Security Plan, but it was not set up for success still lacking an MOI or MOD, and having a few newcomers (the foreign minister Hosnei Zebari and DPM Barham Salih, along with the acting MOD minister al-Zawbai) that needed to be brought up to speed. The CG commented that Rubai was able to brief the parts of the plan that were focused on the politics, communications, and policy issue. Maliki's understanding of how this translated on the ground, however, was still lacking. In retrospect, the CG thought that the briefing itself just was not designed for a civilian audience and that the message was a bit lost. They will regroup and try to step Maliki through this again at the next opportunity.

The CG said Maliki now plans to travel to Basrah on 31 May. This trip is in response to recent central government concern over security in this port city. The CG does not know, however, what the agenda will be and who else would accompany him. The CG pushed his own meeting on the Basrah way forward until 1 June with the intention of incorporating Maliki's input as a result of his trip. As with the Baghdad Security Plan, there is a need now, with this four-year government, to ensure that Iraqi input is incorporated into overall strategy and plans. It is expected that the UK Commander will have London approval of his Basrah strategy by 1 June.

30 May 2006

The CG said he will need to make some decisions in the next month or so about whether to continue coalition force drawdowns, or hold until the new government settles in and the sectarian violence is reduced. He will consider the results of the joint...June assessment, and the Red Cell on...the impact of the five-month delay in government formation...on the security situation. MG Zahner provided a final draft of the Red Cell paper to the group. One of the key judgments is that the MNF-I strategy has not been significantly disrupted—development of the ISF and putting the Iraqi army in the lead and securing Iraq's border remain on track. However, the paper notes that the achievement of some objectives may be delayed, such as securing Baghdad and reducing violence to a level that the ISF can handle.

MOI/MOD. The CG stated that there is still no clarity on the choice for either MOI or MOD. He said that Maliki met with a UIA group two days ago on the topic, and showed some resistance to their selections, stating that he needed to make the final choice on both positions. CG noted that he and the ambassador will interview the latest candidate, Faruk al-Araji, this afternoon. He said that Abd al Qadr al-Mufriji seems to be acceptable to all parties as the MOD. The UIA has rejected Tawfiq al-Yasiri. Both Muwafuq

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ai-Rubai and Qasem Daud remain possibilities for the MOI.

Baghdad Security Plan. The CG told the group that he is still working with Maliki on this plan. He noted that MNF-I had not articulated the military aspects or the plan for non-civilian audience very well, and would be recalibrating the presentation. The CG said, however, that Maliki understands the politics and the communications strategy that this overall plan entails, and even said that he thought he could bring the Baghdad communities together on this. Maliki agrees with the need to articulate a weapons policy and to empower the ISF to enforce it. He also agrees with the need to announce a plan to deal with the militia, with the understanding that this will be a long-term process for the government. The CG said it remains to be seen whether Maliki can deliver this or not, but he seems to be leaning forward for now...

Ramadi. The CG said that operations for Ramadi continue apace, which he likened to Mosul in November 2004. He said no one is really in control of the city right now, not the government, not the terrorists, not the coalition. In an effort to restore Iraqi control, the marines have basically cordoned off the city and access is by checkpoint only. The intention is to prevent insurgents from entering the city, conduct targeted operations against the terrorists inside the cordon, build Iraqi police stations, and move Iraqi police officers into them. He has moved a couple extra battalions into Ramadi (two from Kuwait) to help accomplish this over the next three to four months.

31 May 2006

On 30 May Shaykh abd al Nasir ai-Janabi, senior INCD member, asked for an urgent meeting with GEN Casey, who acceded to his request. Janabi had two agenda items. The first was the Ministry of Defense position. Janabi stated that it was essential that it be filled with a strong Sunni leader of great credibility. He understood that Khalaf Ulayan was not acceptable to the Shia/UIA, and as a compromise he proposed that the Sunni Deputy Prime Minister Salam Zawbai be moved over to the MOD position, and Ulayan be allowed to fill the vacated DPM position. Janabi had apparently drafted letters to the US Congress on this very issue, and those letters were passed to the Ambassador's office. The CG listened, but did not give Janabi any assurance that this would be an acceptable move. In his own opinion, the CG believes Zawbai was a terrible DPM choice, is close to incompetent, and rather untrustworthy to manage MOD issues even in a caretaker status as he is now doing. Some of CG's commanders believe they have some evidence of corruption against Zawbai (bribed a judge to get his brother out of jail) and the CG is encouraging them to work up a package that he can take to Maliki, who also has little use for Zawbai, and would like to replace him under any circumstance.

The second issue was the detention and status of [b 6] Janabi very cautiously approached this topic. He stated up front that [b 6] was a key Sunni player, had been detained, and said he was concerned about his welfare. Janabi clearly was uncertain whether [b 6] was in coalition or Iraqi custody. Janabi said he feared for [b 6] life if the Iraqis were holding him. The CG did not give Janabi any indication that he had knowledge of [b 6] status. He did assure Janabi that detainees would be treated fairly whether they were in coalition or Iraqi custody...[T]he next day, Speaker of the COR Mahmud Mashadani told the Ambassador that [b 6] was the key Sunni resistance leader that the coalition needed to contact in order to turn off the Sunni insurgency. Mashadani stated that this was the most important individual that the coalition could engage on this issue, and indicated that he and his colleagues (to include Shaykh Khalaf Ulayan) had been working up a plan to organize a meeting between [b 6] and the Americans in Amman. It appeared, however, to the ambassador that Mashadani was

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relieved to be out of the middle of this effort. From his perspective, the US now had (b)(6) and his full attention, and could pursue the issue or engagement at a time of its choosing and without their assistance.

MOI/MOD. As of the morning of 31 May, it appeared to GEN Casey that the Minister of Defense would be Abd al Qader al Mufriji as he appeared to be acceptable to all parties with the exception of KDP leader Masud Barzani. Efforts were underway to secure Barzani's support and barring any surprises, Maliki would likely announce his selection at the Sunday COR session. Of the names still in play, the CG thought Qader was the best choice. The CG also thought that Shia General Faruq al Araj would be selected as the MOI, and also likely to be announced on Sunday. The CG and the ambassador interviewed Araj yesterday and the CG assessed him as possessing good intellect and character, and was strong enough to do the job. Regarding the selection of ministers, the CG continues to say that there is no 'dream team' here, but he is anxious to get the key security players in place so he can advance his agenda, much of which has been stalled for the past five months.

Extrajudicial Killings. The CG received an update...on the status of the suspect JAM compound associated with the executions of two men captured on video. The most recent video showed several flatbed trucks had been moved into the compound and that cargo had been loaded on to the trucks, and the trucks had been driven off the compound. One segment showed what appeared to be a body-sized bag being loaded into the trunk of a vehicle that was also driven away. As of 31 May, the only Iraqis the CG had briefed were Maliki (b)(6) and one of the PM's assistants...He had not yet had a chance to brief the Presidency Council as he had planned, so there were a total of three people in the Iraqi government who had knowledge of this briefing. It is unclear who leaked the information...[A]dditional targeting had indicated that this was an OMS/JAM headquarters located in the Ash Shulah neighborhood of Baghdad's Kadhimiyah district. JAM strategic leadership is associated with this location to include Hazim al-Araji, who is a close advisor to Muqtada ai Sadr and Shaykh Mazin, the director of JAM committees in western Baghdad. It is also the likely headquarters for Saad Aswar, the JAM Brigade commander for Western Baghdad.

Maliki had asked that the CG continue collection against the compound, and that is what the coalition had been doing. The CG encouraged his commanders to move against targets as soon as they had the intelligence needed to justify it. Muwafuq al Rubai will work with MNF-I to develop mitigation measures to deal with the likely blowback from a raid on the compound. The PM specifically stated that he wants to avoid another scenario like the one that occurred in the aftermath of the ISOF raid on the Husaniyah prayer room near Sadr City.

The CG pointed out...that the kidnapping, extrajudicial killings and sectarian violence is as big a threat to the accomplishments of coalition strategic objectives as the terrorists/insurgents. The CG further noted that this conflict is not now about us, but about the competition for influence and power, and we need to provide the Iraqis a secure environment to allow them to work this out. As a result, he has now elevated the targeting of these criminal elements (kidnappers, murderers)...

Basrah. The CG confirmed with Maliki that his agenda for his 31 May visit to Basrah was limited to meeting with the Governor of Basrah and a number of religious and tribal leaders. He had no plans to meet with any of the coalition partners. General Casey has requested [MNF-I staff] to look into developing a criminal case against the governor of Basrah, Muhammad Musib Muhammad Al-Wa'ili, that would allow the central government to officially remove/suspend him from office. The central government is very focused on bringing security back to this city and understands that the removal of

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Wa'ili is central to the city's recovery. It is unlikely that provincial elections will be held before the end of the year, and the Basrah governing council does not have the numbers/will to remove him through their official channels. As a result, the CG would like the [MNF-I staff] to produce a case against Wa'ili that can be presented to Maliki. Maliki could then justify the removal/suspension of the governor for cause, and hopefully begin to work on cleansing the institutions in Basrah that are now filled with militia, criminals, and corrupt officials...

1 June 2006

Gen Casey chaired a 90-minute meeting on 1 June to discuss the security situation in Basrah on the heels of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's 31 May declaration of a one month state of emergency...There was broad agreement on the nature of the problem, and a strategy for moving forward. All agreed that action must be taken quickly in order to bolster the Prime Minister's first national security declaration, and also to pave the way for successful provincial elections.

The group agreed that the primary issues in Basrah is the intra-Shia struggle, and elected officials (Governor Wa'ili) using local police and other government organs to maintain power and control. In addition, 1.4b, 1.4d is fueling instability, and prolonging the conflict. The third factor is rogue Jaysh al-Mahdi elements that are targeting the coalition with EFPs. The forth significant issue is the small Sunni presence that has largely been victimized by the Shia majority. There was general agreement that if the primary cause of the security problems (intra Shia struggle) could be addressed, it would remove obstacles for dealing more effectively with the other causes of instability.

The group agreed that the first step should be the suspension/removal of Governor Wa'ili. The Governor has used his position of power to allow gangs under his patronage to conduct illegal activities with immunity and impunity. Once the governor is removed the national government should take over control of the police, and other government security functions and groups that Wa'ili has co-opted and corrupted, to include the facilities protection services and major crimes units. In order to do this, the group agreed that a case should be developed against the Governor that is sufficient to allow the national government to justify his removal from office, while they investigate the charges. There was some consensus that focusing on his financial probity would be the most productive avenue. There would be no need for the coalition to prepare a case for a court of law. Coalition objectives could be achieved simply with a suspension of Wa'ili. The group agreed there is no danger that Wa'ili would be reelected in the upcoming provincial elections, so this would effectively permanently remove him from the scene. It was also agreed that there would likely be little blowback if he were successfully suspended, as even Fadilah regards Wa'ili as a vote loser.

Once the group has assembled the case against Waili, the CG will bring it to Maliki. The CG may pitch this as part of the PM's overall anti-corruption campaign, which he has indicated will be a high priority for his new government. In addition, by taking this aggressive move he will demonstrate that a Shia government can govern, even on tough Shia issues. While there was some question as to whether Maliki had the backbone to take on a Shia problem, the fact that he declared a state of emergency in Basrah yesterday means he is under pressure to back it up with concrete actions soonest. The CG's impression is that Maliki will be looking to the coalition, as early as today, to help him define what the 'state of emergency' consists of. MNF-I is meeting with the national security advisor, Muwafuq al-Rubai, today and will begin to lay out for him this strategy and the steps needed to implement it to include

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issues associated with implementation of vehicle bans, curfews, weapons bans etc.

With respect to [1.4b] the group thought it might be best to work on securing the ports of entry on the southern border, where most of the weapons and lethal aid is being transported, largely unchallenged. In addition, it was noted that [1.4b] are providing water, power and other services to Iraqi border towns, thus solidifying their control of those areas. LTG Chiarelli said that the Corps had been looking hard at the issue and would be providing proposals in the next day or two to address both issues. The CG noted that at a minimum, the MOI should ensure that the Iraqis have full visibility at all truck transloading border sites. He also added that the border transition teams (bttts) would be directed to focus the Iraqi border enforcement officials on the need to thoroughly inspect the cargo. There was also consensus that the Iraqi government needs to publicly request [1.4b] assistance in stopping the flow of lethal assistance across the border, at a minimum to demonstrate their position as a sovereign nation concerned about the security of its borders. As there is no expectation that [1.4b] it would be key to target the Iraqis that are [1.4b] [1.4b] with their smuggling activities.

Of note is MG Cooper's admission that he has not had any contact with the IP for nine months. He said that engagement restarted just 10 days ago and was associated with the downing of the Lynx. Cooper is obviously optimistic that his strategy for Basrah has a much better chance for success now that his forces will be able to resume its IP training/mentoring mission.

04 June 2006

GEN Casey chaired a [meeting] evening of 4 June to discuss operational planning and implications for the capture/kill operation against [1.4b] (b)(6) ..It was thought that he may be near the border in the daylight hours of 5 June...The discussion turned toward the wider implications of this takedown to include possible desirability of policy approvals [1.4b] [1.4b] Iraqi impact...Finally it was agreed that this was not the first, and would not be the last time, we receive advance notice of [1.4b] (b)(6) travel to Iraq. His presence was noted previously in the International Zone in connection with government formation. Prior to that trip, he was in the south, near Basrah. We expect that he will continue to travel periodically to Iraq and that there will be other, possibly less complicated, opportunities to move against him.

5 June 2006

General Casey traveled to Camp Echo in Diwaniyah on 5 June to visit with the [1.4b] MND-CS Commander MG Grushka and coalition members, as well as with the 8th Iraqi Army Division. This is the fifth rotation for the [1.4b] contingent. They are now down to about a 1900 man division. The CG noted that this is too small a force to adequately control two provinces. Similarly, the 8th IA Division has responsibility for five provinces, and is also stretched too thin to be effective, despite the great leadership from its commander MG Othman Ali Farhoud. CG noted that he will have a conversation about Othman replacing 'Abd al-Qadir Muhammad Jasim al-Mufraji as Commander of the Iraqi Ground Forces. Qadir moved up to become the Defense Minister on 8 June.

The [1.4b] briefed the CG on their new effort to improve border security at the Mehran port of entry. This has been of great interest to the CG for some time, but this is the first time that the [1.4b] have

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taken measures to respond. They noted that they are working with the MOI's Department of border enforcement (DBE). They now have four border transition teams (US and UK) and were running combined operations to go after weapons smugglers. They briefed a large operation called Iron Gate that is intended to start in mid June with the objective of reinforcing the border with four layers. They will have the Port of Entry officials on the border, backed up by the Iraqi army, backed up by the IP, and finally backed up by coalition forces. The CG told them that the real issue from his perspective is that the Iraqis do not have visibility over the truck transloading activities on the border. Their view is completely obscured. He told them that they needed to make changes to that immediately, and the CG indicated he would raise this in Baghdad with the Minister of Interior. He would like the border to look as good as the POE at Kaniqin.

The [1.4b] thought they could achieve Provincial Iraqi control of Wasit and Qadisyah province possibly by October 2006, and perhaps as late as January 2007. At that time the [1.4b] will move into operational overwatch.

The CG then moved to the new 8th IA Division HQs and was hosted by MG Othman. The CG continues to believe he is perhaps the best Iraqi Army Division commander. In addition, Othman has a strong staff that provided comprehensive ops and intel briefings. Of note is GEN Othman's views of the JAM and Badr security threat. He stated that while both were dangerous, JAM at least operated in the open and their activities were easy to track. Conversely, Badr operated in secret and he thought they were the most dangerous of the two groups. He said that Badr, backed by the [1.4b] had drawn up an assassination list with 116 names of former Bathists and regime officials that was being executed by Shia death squads.

06 June

...GEN Casey said that he and MG Zahner had just briefed the Presidency Council on the scope of [1.4b] interference in Iraq to include the importation of EFPS, training/equipping of militia, and the extrajudicial killings. While President Jalal Talabani was not present, the two Vice Presidents, Abd al-Mahdi and Tariq al-Hashimi, both took the brief. This is the same briefing that the CG presented to the Prime Minister last week. The PM agreed that it should also be shared with the Presidency Council. The CG said that they discussed [1.4b] in Iraq and the fact that it causes problems for both the Government of Iraq and the coalition, as it prevents either one of them from achieving their objectives of a stable environment. This was followed by a very good discussion of the definition of a terrorist, an insurgent, and a militia. The CG was upbeat about the session, thought that they clearly received the message, and were unified in their commitment to address it...

Hashimi asked about evidence of Badr Corps involvement. The CG told him that there is no evidence that Badr is significantly contributing to the increase in executions/assassinations in Baghdad since the Samarra bombing. If there is evidence to the contrary, the CG would welcome it, but simply is not aware of it at this stage. JAM appears to be largely responsible, with some Sunni and AQIZ retaliatory strikes in the mix. He did note that from his meeting in Diwaniyah yesterday with 8th Iraqi Army Division Commander Othman, that Badr may be more actively conducting such operations in the south. Othman told the CG that he was aware of a Badr assassination list with 116 names on it, that was systematically being addressed in his AOR b [1.4b] acked Badr death squads.

[Status of the Jadriyah Bunker investigation.] The CG said it had stalled. Two products were produced for former Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jafari...The MNF-I product implicated Bayan Baqir Jabr as culpable

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by failing in his supervisory responsibilities as the serving Minister of Interior. The CG recalled that the PM kept only one copy of the briefing and returned the others to the CG and the Ambassador. The CG will speak with the Ambassador about the need to resurface this investigation. He is aware that SCIRI is very concerned about ensuring that the new MOI is someone they feel they can control, because they fear that issues like Jadriyah will be exposed, and discredit both Jabr and SCIRI. The CG believes that this is absolutely the scenario that will play out when a new MOI steps in, as this will be part of its effort to regain the MOI's legitimacy and credibility with the Iraqi people, and the Sunni in particular. In fact, the CG thinks it is almost necessary for this chapter to be played out. Now they just need to help the PM prepare for it...

The CG said that the PM had asked MNF-I for assistance in developing the emergency plan. The MNF-I staff should complete it by the end of the week and will then present it to the PM for his approval and implementation. The plan will give the PM a scenario that allows the Central Government to direct and control the police and security organs in the city.

The group briefly discussed planning for Operation Griffen which seeks to hit 4-5 simultaneous targets in and on the fringe of Sadr City. The CG said that he briefs the PM on any/all Sadr City operations but that this should not be viewed as a limitation. The CG will always support well developed target packages in this sensitive part of the city, but in recognition of its potential for blowback, will ensure the PM has visibility in advance. In this case, the CG said the PM approved the operation, but requested that the ISOF not participate. (The reason for this is the PM felt that the ISOF was responsible for the flap following the raid at the Husaniyah and does not fully trust them.) The CG said that Corps really needs the ISOF and does not want to proceed without that important force multiplier. As a result, the CG needs to re-engage the PM to secure his approval for Iraqi participation, which he thinks he will obtain. OP GRIFFEN is now on hold, but not cancelled.

There was a short discussion about the possibility of using detainee [b 6] in a Sunni engagement role. As previously reported, the senior Sunni community approached both the Ambassador and GEN Casey about [b)(6)] and advised that he is the key to turning off the Sunni insurgency. They also credited him with their decision to participate in government...Interestingly, there has not been one request from the Sunni community to release [b)(6)]. In any case, there are still a lot of questions on the actual role [b)(6)] played in the insurgency...The CG thought it was interesting how little we really knew about him. In any case the military debriefings continue, and [b)(6)] appears to be very talkative and willing to discuss his Sunni government connections. Both the Ambassador and GEN Casey have not completely discounted using him in some future unspecified role to reduce levels of violence.

07 June 2006

GEN Casey flew to Balad early morning of 8 June to receive a full briefing... on the successful capture/kill operation against Abu Musab al- Zaraqawi (AMZ). The CG spoke individually with the operators and the analysts, to directly convey his respect and admiration for their hard work. The atmosphere was subdued and serious, despite the obvious victory that marks this key mission milestone.

[b)(3), (b)(6)] briefed the CG on the genesis of the intelligence that lead to this successful operation, and culmination of three years of relentless work. He stated that they developed this lead to AMZ's final location in the May-July 2005 timeframe, with the capture of Abu Zar. Subsequently, in April 2006, at

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Objective MAYERS, key insider "ALAWI" was detained and brought to the TSF for interrogations. It was only at the 51st session that Alawi began to give up information on intelligence associated with AMZ meetings. He provided the start point, the life style and travel patterns, along with meeting security profiles of AMZ key lieutenant and spiritual advisor Shaykh Abd al-((Rahman)) al-Atiyah. [The Coalition] placed ISR over Rahman's Baghdad residence nearly continuously for 17 days, until they began to see the signature patterns of an upcoming meeting with AMZ. Rahman sent his family south, and then headed west, conducted a vehicle swap, and by 1400 hours on 7 June was headed out of Baghdad. They follow the vehicle to an unidentified house, a white truck arrived, and ISR tracked it to the ultimate meeting location in an isolated house just 8krm outside of Baqubah. They watched the white truck drop off passengers, depart the area, and one spotter checked the perimeter before closing the gates and moving inside. At that point, they felt that all the markers were in place indicating an AMZ meeting was in progress, and made a decision to recommend an air strike. Given the remote location of this house, there was no possibility of conducting an assault.

LTG McChrystal contacted GEN Casey while the CG was briefing the Fort Leavenworth CGSC student population. The CG broke from the VTC and provided approval for the strike. At the time he noted something in McChrystal's voice suggested everything had just come together and success was within reach. The air strike was conducted at 6:15 with two five hundred pound bombs placed on the target.

It took some ten minutes before the SITEX team arrived at the location. By that time, the Iraqi police had found and loaded the injured AMZ into a waiting ambulance.

[The Coalition] visually identified AMZ, and removed him from the ambulance. He was alive at that time, and TF 1.4 is certain that he knew that the Americans had captured him. AMZ made an effort to roll away and off the litter, and moments later he died, likely from the concussion. In addition, they recovered the body of his spiritual advisor Rahman and one other unidentified male. There were also two female KIA, and an unknown number of others. In connection with OP ARCADIA, 13 other targets were prosecuted that night with 7 KIA and 16 detained.

In addition to a visual identification, [the Coalition] verified his fingerprints, as well as scars. They sent DNA samples to Andrews AFB same day for FBI processing.

b 6 said there were two factors that made this success possible. The first is their ability to keep detainees for long term exploitation. The second element was the use of dedicated ISR sufficient to pick up the signature indicators provided by the detainees.

Following the briefing, the CG overflowed the site of the air strike, which consisted of a huge crater and piles of rubble. There were earthmovers and military personnel on site working exploitation.

The CG notified SecDef evening of 7 June who was relieved to finally be getting good news from Iraq. The Ambassador called the President to convey the same.

The CG and the Ambassador briefed PM Maliki morning of 8 June. The three principals then held a press conference. PM Maliki opened the session and made the general announcement, which produced prolonged applause from the media. The Ambasaador spoke about its implications for Iraq's efforts against terrorism, the momentum it creates, and the need to unite behind the PM to bring this to a successful conclusion. GEN Casey spoke about the military details of the operation and noted that the decisive intelligence originated from sources from AMZ's network. MG Caldwell will hold a follow up

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press conference, with more specific information about the operation, at 1500 hours in order to capitalize on the Washington morning news hour.

The...mission should not be greatly affected by the Zarqawi operation. The mission charges them with attacking the AMZ network. The network will continue to function in his absence. It is expected, nonetheless, that LTG McChrystal's recent requests for more forces will likely meet with some resistance now that Zarqawi is off the target deck. CG commented that what they don't understand is that when you have the advantage, this is precisely the moment that more force is needed to successfully close.

7 June 2006

On 7 June, MNF-I held its second meeting with Muqtada al-Sadr political advisor (b)(6) at the home of LTG Nasir al-Abadi. This was a very different meeting in tone and tenor than the Sunni engagement meetings that generally are characterized by monologues, from self-proclaimed spokesmen, who bring long lists of demands, and only vague assurances of future cooperation. The fact that (b)(6) represents an organization, rather than a loose structureless group, may help explain the difference.

(b)(6) spoke easily and at some length about the timeline for coalition withdrawal and the role/mission of the ISF and the new government. He was surprisingly supportive on all fronts, despite some noted shortcomings. He said that PM Maliki was a great patriot with good intentions, but he was inexperienced, and needed MNF-I coaching and mentoring to be successful. (b)(6) was very careful to clarify that he did not want the coalition to leave too soon, because the ISF still needed supervision and was not prepared to assume full responsibility. He thought that the MOI and MOD were not properly staffed, but would eventually be able to accomplish their mission with coalition support. Interestingly, he said that if, in consultation with the MOI/MOD, there is consensus that the coalition should depart in a set number of years, then he would recommend one additional year be added to that, just to be sure.

With the new four year government, (b)(6) encouraged MNF-I to also try to change how it interacts with the people, and to focus on winning their hearts by providing services. He said that Sadr and JAM will help bring the people along. He said the Iraqi people are simple. They see things in black and white, and they would respond to such a positive change. He said that now is the time to show the people that MNF-I also is changing, and is here for the good of the people. The removal of the MNF-I presence from the cities would send such a signal, and would start the process of winning hearts and minds. He said the issue was one of trust. He emphasized, with some urgency that now is the time to make these changes. He said he may not be able to control these 'gangs' if we wait too long. Further, he said if JAM is offered alternative employment opportunities in the civilian or military sectors, that JAM would effectively cease to exist in two months. (b)(6) said security is the priority. With security, economic investment will soon follow, and the whole country will start to move again.

In addition to encouraging a change in the coalition posture, (b)(6) made several specific requests. He wanted the coalition to make a public statement about a timeline for withdrawal. He wanted the Prime Minister to speak to Sadr directly about the contents and objectives of the Baghdad Security Plan. He requested two mobile hospitals for Sadr City, and 10,000 jobs for Sadr City residents (not just JAM members). In exchange he could 'guarantee' that the violence in Sadr City would end...Having our own channel to Sadr is useful now, and could be critical later if tensions increase. (b)(6) requested some fairly easy deliverables. MG Caldwell stated he can divert a couple mobile hospitals by the end of the week.

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He said putting 10,000 young men to work would be something MNSTC-I can facilitate. The PM already speaks directly to Sadr, and could be encouraged to discuss with him the Baghdad Security Plan. The Prime Minister will announce the transition of Muthana Province to Iraqi security control in the next week or two, and there will be an announcement of another brigade off-ramp soon. MNF-I will set another meeting with (b)(6) to go over these in the next few days, and encourage the dialogue to continue.

09 June 2006

General Casey convened his Friday Board of Directors meeting at Balad on 9 June... in a discussion of AQIZ associated issues in the aftermath of Zarqawi's death... The CG noted that there would be a lot of media focus on the raid that netted Zarqawi, but he would also like statistics that show the number of raids and the number of terrorists killed/captured since January.

GEN Casey identified some actions and IO themes that he would like to see implemented to exploit this advantage against the enemy. He told the group that this is the time to help the Iraqi government continue the momentum this operation has generated:

Use overt/covert means to demonstrate to the people that the network is penetrated, ineffective and under pressure

Use all measures to increase the turmoil in the organization.

Introduce the IO message that Zarqawi was a failure. He failed to divide Iraq, he failed to prevent elections, he failed to establish a caliphate

Hit all valid targets to maintain momentum

Prevent the AQSL leadership in Iran from entering Iraq and attempting to provide a replacement for Zarqawi

Use all efforts prevent the AQSL from bringing together the disparate insurgent groups

Try to make the death of Zarqawi a unifying experience, and launch a counter intimidation campaign

Need to build up the image of the coalition to further drive the wedge

In the next 30 days continue to encourage the senior Iraqis in government and religion to make public statements about unity, security and prosperity.

The new govt will focus security efforts on Baghdad, Ram.adi, Diyala and Basrah

FOREIGN FIGHTERS

...Most of the fighters were motivated by the Abu Ghurayb prison flap, and there is some concern that the Haditha event could produce similar incentives to this susceptible group...nearly 80 percent of the foreign fighters enter Iraq through (b)(6) [Coalition analysts] continue to believe that the majority of

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suicide operators are foreign, and do not really distinguish between the two terms. They estimated that only a small percentage (20 percent) enter Iraq through established border crossings/ports of entry. Those are normally associated with bribes to border guards. They believe that 1.4b continue to comprise the largest group of fighters.

The CG asked how many are now entering the country monthly. They thought the number was about 40-50 per month. He asked how many total FF were in the country, and noted that he has been using the 1000 figure for the past two years but that it probably needed updating. He would also like an update on the number killed/captured monthly.

The FF are using the Rabiah, Biaj, Tikrit corridor to bring in the FF. After they lost Al Qaim as a base of operations, they are now running administrative ops out of Ramadi and training activities in the Thar Thar and Samara areas. The FFET continue to focus on Yusufiyah which remains a center for foreign fighter activity...

10 June 2006

...GEN Casey traveled to Fallujah morning of 10 June to meet with MG Zilmer for an update. Enroute the aircraft overflew the city of Fallujah which, 18 months after major military operations, now looks like a normal functioning city with positive signs of growth and economic development. Of note was the large number of children outside playing, and their friendly waves to the Blackhawks. Overall, the marines are about where the CG expected they would be in planning their Ramadi operations. He reminded them that the death of Zarqawi presented a huge opportunity for them to further drive the wedge, and he urged them to consider some action that would visibly show they were seizing the initiative and turning the tide...Zilmer said that two nights ago they conducted 21 raids in Fallujah, half of which were executed by the marines, and half by the ISOF. They netted 40 detainees. Of significance was the fact that all the leads were provided by the Fallujah leadership. These leads originated from a city council discussion of cell towers and the absence of phone service. The marines told them they were all set with communications, but it was the Iraqis that needed the towers, and it was they that needed to solve the problems with them. This prompted some discussion about identified individuals preventing them from reactivating the network, and before long they had compiled a fairly lengthy list of targets. The marines emphasized the need to keep these 40 detainees incarcerated for the next 6-12 months so that the Fallujah leadership will feel not only safe from retribution, but maintain confidence in the marines ability to protect them, and continue to provide these operational leads.

The discussion turned to Ramadi operations. Zilmer noted that the high level insurgents are beginning to depart the city in anticipation of operations. He said they are going to Haditha and Ana. He noted the incidents of insurgent-on-insurgent violence are the highest since they arrived. He further noted that the cordon around the city is nearly complete, and will be by the end of June. The area in the south of the city near the railroad station is the last piece that needs to be finished. They have boats working the river and the canal. They do believe that their control over traffic in and out of the city is already having an effect...

Zilmer stated that one critical piece of their plan is still not in place. They need one more Iraqi brigade to accomplish their objectives of securing the city, clearing it, building/manning police stations, and turning the city over to Iraqi control. The deployment of the brigade they were promised was suspended due to wholesale desertions. Zilmer noted that they would begin to lose coalition units in September and so

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would need to turn that space over to any Iraqi force {army, police, national police}. To keep this schedule on track it would be important to get that Iraqi brigade in sooner rather than later to get them accustomed to the battlespace and the operating environment.

Zilmer noted that they had originally projected that by August they would have recruited some 2700 police officers in Ramadi. On paper they have 600 today, and about 100 actually show for work. They stated that the increase in Iraqi presence was just not materializing. CG reminded them that the city is not yet secure, but the police recruiting effort would take off when they set the conditions inside the city. He indicated that MNSTC-I and Corps would work the issue of another Iraqi brigade, but commented that they were not as mobile as he had hoped they would be. It may be necessary to include some sort of special pay to incentivize more mobility in the army.

GEN Casey told them that it would be important to capitalize on zarqawi's death, especially in this city that is under intense pressure from AQIZ elements. He urged them to think about how to use this to reinforce what they are already doing. He emphasized the offensive mindset is the key to winning. He suggested the need to demonstrably seize the advantage from the enemy, perhaps by reclaiming a symbolic piece of real estate, like the area around the Government Center. The marines said they had plans to refurbish the Government Center in a way that improved its security and provided a needed facelift. The project was estimated to take 2-3 months, and the Governor and council members would need to relocate, possibly to Camp Blue Diamond, while the renovation was underway. The Governor has expressed great reluctance to move, so they were still working that piece.

The CG said he had received a letter from the Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi on Rarnadi. Hashimi stated that AQ was leaving, and that the resistance and the civilians can be brought into the process now. Hashimi is offering to use his Baghdad IIP connections to facilitate this. (Governor MA'MUN SAMI RASHID AL-'ALWANI AL-DULAYMI is an IIP member} The marines also thought that (b)(6) (b)(6) currently residing in Amman, could also serve as an effective conduit.

The CG asked what he could do for the marines. They told him that they needed business laws passed by the Council of Representatives to bring development back to the province. They noted that many companies operate in more dangerous environments than al Anbar, but until there are business laws to support and protect them, they will not be interested in bringing their business dollars to Iraq...

11 June 2006

...GEN Casey said he is only now beginning to see just how much former PM Ibrahim al-Jafari had set back Iraq. He is now aware of some of the enormous problems in the Ministries of Transportation and Health that resulted from Jafari appointments. Moreover, Jafari is ultimately responsible for exponential growth of Sadr's Mahdi militia, that is at the root of so much violence in Baghdad and key cities.

The CG thought that his last meeting with Maliki on the Baghdad Security Plan was extremely positive. Maliki was enthusiastic, upbeat and ready to move forward with his agenda. The group noted that Maliki still has no personal office staff. Ambassador Khalilzad acknowledged that and said his initial focus had been on cabinet formation, but that now it was time to staff his office. He said that POTUS had given Maliki very similar guidance on the imperative of a competent and trustworthy staff during the course of their last phone call.

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The group anticipated questions from Camp David on how this new government differs from the last. All agreed that the difference is that this is a nationally elected unity government. Maliki fought for his ministerial candidates, and even cut a deal with SCIRI Chairman Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim to get his candidates in place. His willingness to take on the largest UIA party, on such a critical issue, early in his tenure, could presage future willingness to stand up to the UIA and demonstrate his intent to unify the country on other polarizing issues. The CG said that the new Minister of Interior Juwad al-Bulani actually drove around the streets of Baghdad, in the most dangerous neighborhoods, until 0300 hours, to look at the checkpoints and get a feel for the city under pressure. This was his first day on the job. Further, Bulani has moved into and is working out of his Red Zone office, something that former MOI Jabr ever did. Indications are positive that this new minister will have an impact.

There was some discussion on the status of National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai. Rubai was convinced that the only reason he did not get the MOI position was Ambassador Khalilzad's opposition. GEN Casey explained to Rubai that it was not the case and, in fact, they were never asked to choose between candidates. In any case, the group believes that Rubai is a perfect fit for the NSA position, is pleased that he continues to function in that role, and would very much like to see him continue.

There remains a lack of clarity on how the Minister of State for National Security Affairs Shirwan al-Waili slipped in. It appears that Maliki capitalized on the AMZ death to roll out his favorite candidate at the last minute, and ensure that Dawa could retain control over the Shia led MOI. The group also expected that Maliki is likely to place key advisors in the MOI. The group agreed that every effort would be made to ensure Waili does not try to create a parallel intelligence service, as did his predecessor 'abd al-Karim al-Anzi.

GEN Casey commented on his pre-briefs for the Camp David session. He noted, with some resignation, that he was given the lead for most of the agenda items for the five- hour event. He commented that this continued the trend he has observed since his June 2004 arrival in country, of Washington providing no strategic guidance on Iraq.

GEN Casey surfaced the issue of resourcing the Iraq effort. In the Commanders Conference, MG McCoy had stated that there would be a 10 billion dollar gap over the next four years between what the Iraqis need, what they are able to contribute, and when the international donors come in. McCoy had stated that Baghdad would need four billion of the ten, and the rest would be dispersed across the country. No one had seen the assumptions on which this estimate was based, but did not doubt that there was some hard data there to support. There was some discussion of the possibility of surfacing this number for the Camp David participants to react.

The group recalled the discussion in the Commanders Conference on the disconnect between the civil sector capacity that is now being built, and the absence of connectivity to it by the community it is supposed to serve. This is true with electric grids, sewage treatment plants, and water purification centers around the country. As these projects come on line, there is an urgent need to connect the citizens to them, improving delivery of essential services, and employing a large number of military aged males in the process.

1.4b US policy, and ho 1.4b should be treated in the Iraq context. There was an exchange on whether 1.4d All agreed that it had to be worked through the Iraqis, but the US would participate in direct discussions with both parties. CG reminded the group that Maliki fully understood 1.4b following his last

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briefing on the topic. It is not clear, however, what measures Maliki is willing to take. All agreed that the Iraqi government has to speak about it publicly and acknowledge [1.4b] No one yet had feedback from Vice President Adil Abd al-Mahdi's recent visit to [1.4b] and whether he might have started the dialogue with his [1.4b] counterparts.

Militias. The CG said he is considering resurfacing the video showing the JAM executions to the PM. In the aftermath of the Zarqawi death and the naming of the two new security ministers, the PM may now feel he is less constrained and more willing to take action. The CG considered asking the PM to show the video to Muqtada al- Sadr, and deliver the message that these executions must stop. The CG further suggested the possibility of Maliki addressing the nation in a televised statement in which he shows the video (does not identify any sectarian association) and announces that he will be further looking into detainee abuse that surfaced from the recent Site 4 investigation. His message would be that this is the time to put an end to Iraqi-on-Iraqi violence.

GEN Casey stated a conflict with Sadr is looming in the next six months, and it needed to happen in advance of any significant coalition troop drawdown. The group surfaced the need to isolate Sadr from JAM. All agreed that it likely would require the assistance of Ayatollah ali al-Sistani. It was also agreed that JAM could be built down. One way to accomplish this would be continued engagement with Sadr political advisor Baha al-Araji. Araji guaranteed he could bring quiet to Sadr City in exchange for jobs for 5,000 residents and some other fairly easy deliverables. The group thought that Sadr could contain some percentage of his followers, but there would be an element, probably even in Sadr City, that he won't be able to control, and will be killed by the coalition. GEN Casey is still considering proposing that JAM be designated a hostile force. MNF-I retains a list of 14 no-touch Sadristes that they are continuing to review and update.

Gen Casey said he had indications that he will be questioned about who is killing US forces. The obvious next question is whether and how he can reduce casualties. CG is still considering how best to determine what level of pain the USG is willing to accept regarding levels of violence. Clearly MNF-I can do more with more forces, but this causes the Iraqis to do less. The main issue right now is the sectarian violence, and that is something the Iraqis have to fix. This cannot be done with force alone. It also cannot be done without force, and the Iraqis will have to use what they have. One associated issue is how to get the different factions to stop viewing this conflict as a zero sum game.

In a further discussion of how to get the Iraqis moving forward, the question of a deadline was placed on the table. If this government looks like it is failing, then what is the appropriate next step for the US? Should the US say we are out by end of 2007? There was general consensus that by December 2006, it will be clear if this government will succeed. Ambassador Satterfield is convinced that the Iraqis believe the US is here to stay. Breaking that illusion is perhaps the most powerful tool available. The idea of a passing the Iraqi leadership a 'focused deterrence' message was surfaced. In summary, if there is agreement that this struggle and this solution is Iraqi, then a deadline might be the right answer.

As a more palatable alternative to a deadline, GEN Casey p-r-o-p-o-s-e-d a national compact that basically identifies key benchmarks or milestones that need to be met over a set period of time. All noted that the coming period did not have the same deliverables (consitutional referendum, national elections etc) of the past 18 months that served to keep the momentum going. There was some agreement that this would be helpful, could focus the government, and could serve as a transparent litmus test to the Iraqis and the American public. At the end of the time period, GEN Casey suggested the coalition convene a joint December assessment. The outcome would serve to calibrate future USG commitment. As an

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example, the CG suggested the Iraqis should have national reconciliation by November and provincial elections by December. To underscore this way-ahead, POTUS could speak directly to Maliki. It was also noted that this was risky as it acknowledged the possibility of failure in Iraq.

13 June 2006

...GEN Abizaid...told the CG that he had just come from a meeting with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. He said that Maliki had told him that he wants to add 50 more battalions to the Iraqi army. The CG said that Maliki had told him the same thing a few days ago. He added it was reminiscent of former Prime Minister Ayad Alawi's request for two armored divisions.

Baghdad Security Plan. The CG had just returned from a meeting with the MOI and MOD to confer on the launching of the Baghdad Security Plan. He said that National Security Advisor Muwafiq al-Rubai conducted the meeting and reported that he had briefed the Presidency Council, the mayor and governor of Baghdad on the operation. The CG also stated that the PM had sent a representative to Najaf to brief Muqtada al-Sadr and Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. The Iraqis and the coalition are hopeful that these Najaf briefings will assist with mitigation if there is any blowback, especially out of Sadr City...The only restriction that exists is that any move against mosques must be approved by Corps, and any move in Sadr City needs to be briefed to the PM in advance. Other than that, he wants all operations that are ready to be executed.

The CG stated that the plan is designed to establish a series of access control checkpoints in and out of Baghdad. Once this is step up, it will be followed by focused operations inside the city. At the same time the information operations message will concentrate on national unity themes, the need to unite against the terrorists, and support for the government and its security forces...

[Benchmarks.] The effort is intended to recreate the political timelines that kept the previous government moving forward. Some of the benchmarks will include: establishing an ISF lead by the end of 2006, passing of legislative packages on the economy and legal framework by November, national reconciliation by November, provincial elections by December. At the end of these six months, there would be a joint assessment to review progress in achieving these benchmarks. The results of the assessment would help calibrate future coalition commitment to the Iraqis. There was some discussion about whether or not to make this public, but that issue is still under discussion.

Ramadi. CG said that the Relief in Place in Ramadi is complete and the new brigade, 1/IAD from Tal Afar, has taken over. CG said that [Coalition forces] captured one of the very senior AQIZ amirs of Ramadi, Methat Ibrahim Husayn. GEN Casey also highlighted the fact that two very bad areas of Ramadi had yet to be cleared -- the hospital which is being used as a command and control center, and a place in SE Ramadi called 'the second officers district'. The CG said that clearing the area would involve a couple of Iraqi battalions, backed up by a couple of US battalions. Given that this is a fairly large operation, the CG will meet with the PM, Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi, and Senior Sunni INCD leader Khalaf Ulayan al-Khalifawi al-Dulaymi tomorrow morning, along with the Ambassador, to brief it and secure their support before the operation begins. This is an accelerated start to operations, which had been scheduled to begin on 1 July...

[Basrah.] The group also reiterated that there is no need to get a legal case against Wa'ili, just enough suspicion that the PM could legitimately launch an investigation. GEN Casey said that the MOI had just

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dispatched the Assistant Deputy Minister for Police Affairs Major General Aidan Khalid Qadir to Basrah. His instructions were to remove the corrupt officials in the force. GEN Casey said he would first confer with MND-SE Cdr UK MG John Cooper.

14 June 2006

POTUS visit. GEN Casey provided several comments on the 13 June POTUS visit to Baghdad. He said they had a moment to smoke cigars together privately in the Embassy courtyard. The CG told POTUS that we should not allow the levels of violence in Iraq to define our success. POTUS reacted quickly and positively, but caveated that by saying 'Yes. But we have to win'. The CG agreed, and said we will win with less, not more troops. More is not better in this case. More US troop can do more at a tactical level, but will not get us closer faster to our strategic goals of transitioning this to an Iraqi lead. Moreover, if we bring forward more US troops, more US troops will be killed.

The CG continued by saying that when 60 percent of Iraqi Army shows up for work, we lose. They need to show up. The 265,000 trained and equipped members of the ISF need to be assume more of the responsibility for securing the country and help accelerate the transition. This, the CG said, is why Maliki's request for 50 more battalions is not the right response to the current situation. The CG plans to write a paper that lays out his thinking on why a US troop drawdown is not only a good thing for the coalition and for the Iraqis, but is necessary to win.

The CG thought that one of the best moments between POTUS and the Iraqi government leaders was when POTUS looked them in the eye and told them 'we are committed to you until you succeed'. He said the Iraqis were mesmerized, just as completely as the US troops were during the POTUS address that followed in the ballroom.

Camp David Brief. GEN Casey also provided a few comment about the Camp David SVTC on the 12th. He said his opening remarks to the cabinet was to remind them that MNF- I is proceeding for planning that will cover the tenure of the four year government. He went on to establish that everyone was still supportive of the end state the campaign plan is attempting to achieve. Once that was set, the CG tried to get consensus that they were all tracking the right issues, even with Zarqawi out of picture. Dr. Rice indicated, as she has in the past, that there is not enough security for them to accomplish their objectives. The CG said Dr. Rice and he had their usual exchange on the subject, in which the CG pointed out that in order to win this, there has to be a full court press on all lines of operations. No one can stand back and wait until conditions are more agreeable before implementing their parts of the campaign plan. It is the combined effect of all aspects of the plan that will be decisive.

Ramadi. On 14 June GEN Casey briefed senior Tawfuq member Khalaf Ulayan al-Khalifawi and Sunni Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi on the situation in Ramadi. The CG's goal was to ensure Sunni leadership support for this ongoing operation and he enlisted these two as among the most influential and credible in the community. The CG outlined the problem and the coalition plan to address it. He noted that AQIZ essentially had taken over parts of the city, and that the coalition goal was to restore Iraqi control. This would require some military operations in order to successfully insert Iraqi security forces back into the city, to include recently trained IP officers recruited from Ramadi and al Anbar.

The CG then asked both Ulayan and Hashimi for their views of the Ramadi situation. Both provided somewhat lengthy responses, but the CG characterized them as exceedingly weak. When they had

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finished, they solicited the CG's comments. He told them he was very disappointed. The CG's words appeared to have impact, and they both did some backpedaling. In the end, Ulayan laid out a reasonable description of the problems in Ramadi and agreed with the plans for restoring order. There was also wide agreement that Ramadi would be tough. The CG told them that he would expect to see some tough clashes between terrorist groups of 15-25 men in the most contested areas of the city. He told them to expect collateral damage. There will be bombs placed on residences and there would be civilian casualties. Overall, the CG was satisfied that both leaders understood and accepted the need for military operations, and supported the strategy the coalition had adopted to restore order...

14 June 2006

[Khalis, etc.] The CG mentioned that the situation in Khalis, where [Coalition forces] killed two children in the course of operations, is brewing. He thought there might need to be a joint US-Iraqi investigation. In the meantime, he would count on LTG Chiarelli to keep the situation calm.

- In addition, the CG noted that there had been a report that a senior Sunni leader...had disappeared after visiting the MOI. The Sunni are worried that they remain under attack and as a result of this latest incident were on the verge of threatening to walk out of the government. For the CG, both incidents underscore the continuing fragility of the current situation, and the need to be alert to events that could quickly escalate and break the process.

-GEN Casey stated that Syria and Badr are two issues a little out of the limelight right now, which causes some worry. What are these intelligence gaps? what are we missing?

-Iraqi General, and MNF-I advisor, Kudair told the CG that the Sunnis are very worried about Maliki. They think that Maliki, together with [1.4b] are trying to get the Sunnis out of government over the next four months.

14 June 2006

On 14 June GEN Casey chaired a meeting to discuss developing a strategy for dealing with malign [1.4b, 1.4d] [1.4b, 1.4d] in Iraq...The CG opened the 90-minute session by referring to his circle chart which identified four groups attempting to disrupt the Iraqi political process [1.4b] Sunni and Shia extremists, and the resistance). Those four groups have to be neutralized to allow the Iraqis to work out the division of power and resources in a secure environment. In order to accomplish this MNF-I needs to develop a strategy for dealing with each of the four groups. This session focused on developing a strategy to deal with th [1.4b, 1.4d]

MG Zahner provided an overview of the [1.4b, 1.4d] in Iraq, and noted that it was pervasive and growing. The most direct challenge to the coalition is its support to JAYSH Al Mahdi (JAM), and the provision of EFPs to their proxies for use against the coalition.

Jaysh al Mahdi. [1.4b] interest in supporting JAM appears to be opportunistic. They are working multiple lines to achieve their objective of forcing the coalition to depart Iraq [1.4b, 1.4d] [1.4b, 1.4d] and ensuring a friendly Shia government is firmly in control. There was a brief discussion of how to define a JAM member. Most agreed that this requires being associated with a JAM local organization, membership card, and rank, working for Sadr. But all agreed that JAM membership is fluid and its requirements are not clear...LTG Chiarelli said his staff now associates the Mustafa al-Sheibani EFP network with JAM, based on detainee reporting.

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1.4b, 1.4d

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1.4b, 1.4d

1 July 2006

GEN Casey chaired the monthly Threat Laydown on Saturday 1 July... This 90-minute meeting focused on ethno-sectarian strife and insurgency effects. Overall, this was among the more sobering assessments of the conflict, and the forces in play as this government attempts to stand itself up.

Regarding ethno-sectarian levels of violence, MG Zahner started off by stating that Sunni extremists and Shia militia are contesting control of key areas of influence in Baghdad, Diyala, and Kirkuk. The extremists goal is to leverage sectarian strife to radicalize the population and generate support. Shia militia seek to expand influence and control, defend Shia interests. GEN Casey suggested that we may be giving the two groups more credit than deserved. This may be something more akin to criminal gang violence than a sophisticated political and economic strategy. The group suggested that while there is a power vacuum, Iraqis are filling the void, getting what they can, while the situation is still unsettled. GEN Casey pressed MG Zahner to focus more on developing the motivation behind the violence. He said we accept that this is struggle for economic and political power; we accept that this conflict is shifting to a battle between Sunni and Shia extremists. What we need to do is to get to the next level, to better understand it, and help the Iraqis end it.

The group then characterized the situation as one of sustained violence that just continues to drag on and serves to disrupt everything else. There is no outcome. It just keeps going. This is not a phenomenon directed by a leader or group of leaders. It is self-generated. Individuals from the competing factions are working aggressively to grab a slice of wealth and power in this current vacuum of governance before that window closes. The creates a new problem for the government as it begins to assert itself, it will then have to fight in order to regain control of government functions and resources. This is clearly the situation now playing out in Basrah. Until the government acts, the power grab will continue. In some respects, it may be worse than civil war because it occurs below the radar and can go on forever. At this low level of conflict, people are not yet exhausted. The group again lamented just how much was lost between the elections and government formation. Since February the Iraqis have soured on each other, and on the government.

This climate of fear is exacerbated by the problems in the Ministry of Interior. Reform of the MOI must occur if the Iraqis are going to learn to rely on the government for their security vice the militia. They need to clean house at the MOI, bring legal charges, and successful prosecutions in order to improve the

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perception of the police and security services. GEN. CASEY said that he had asked LTG Dempsey to take responsibility for drafting an MOI reform plan.

As a consequence of this general lack of security, the situation with the Sunni is becoming increasingly precarious. They are leaving some areas of the country, and some are leaving the country entirely. They believe the 1.4b backed, and now support this new government and that they will not be protected or fairly represented. The CG noted this is a critical time. If the Sunni withdraw from the government, the government will fail, and we will be back to square one. The CG noted we have had some success in driving a wedge between the terrorists and the Iraqis, and some success with Sunni and Shia engagement. We now need to set the conditions for getting after those individuals perpetuating the sectarian violence.

GEN Casey thought it may take another crisis before the Iraqis get serious, come together as a country, and stop fighting each other. He noted, however, that in discussions in Washington that there was general agreement that we should give the Iraqis another six months and then evaluate our commitment and presence. By that time, there should be enough of a balance sheet to evaluate their commitment to the process.

Finally, the CG asked the group, in light of the current problem set, if the coalition should be do something different. He highlighted the 100-day plan that the coalition is now attempting to help the Iraqis implement, and asked if this is still the recommended course of action. The group tended to think that it was.

2 July 2006

GEN Casey traveled to Basrah 1-2 July to meet with the UK MND-SE Commander MG Cooper, the 20th Armored Brigade Commander Brigadier James Everard...and the Battalion commander Headquartered at the Shatt al Arab hotel in Basrah city. The CG received an update on the status of the Basrah emergency month declared by the PM, the state of the Sunni minority, and on progress toward Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) of the southern provinces.

Brig Everard provided an overview on the security situation in Basrah. He noted the struggle in this city is a 'dispute among friends' and that it is characterized by the Iraqi quest for honor, power, and wealth. He highlighted issues associated with the emergency month. He noted it was flawed from the outset, as there was no warning order, no objectives other than to 'secure Basrah' and no plan to accomplish it. He did say, however, that some positive elements did emerge. He said there was a marked (100-200 percent) increase in Iraqi ISF presence across Basrah. There is growing IA confidence with solid sub-unit performance. This exercise has accelerated joint planning and fed ISF ambition. There have been some 56 arrests and minimal backlash. There has also been a reduction in EFPS, but that is more likely due to the success in locating a cache containing over 40 of these devices. There were also some negatives to include a total of 136 murders in the month of June, up from 101 in May. He identified his key security tasks as they have been, but added death squads (consisting of JAF militants and rogue JAM elements) and the squeezing of the Sunni community as very recent additions to his task list.

It was noted that the end of the emergency month (2 June - 2 July) had essentially been reached and there was no indication whether it would be extended or replaced by another mechanism. GEN Casey stated that Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Maliki indicated that he would like to appoint a military officer to

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head a Security Committee for Basrah that would have the authority to operate independently of the Governor and of his administration. The CG thought the new committee would need to be headed by a political heavy-hitter to balance Governor Wa'ili, and would also need to have a credible and senior police official to assume control of IP functions in the city.

Brigadier Everard and MG Cooper continue to target individuals in the Basrah community for detention. They have identified four top individuals they would like to detain. From JAM they are (b)(6) (b)(6) Also on their list is General al Quatrani, who is a key instigator they would very much like to take out of play...

Border at Shalamchah. The CG asked about the status of (b)(6) in Basrah. MG Cooper said he has continued to ask...whether or not it has intensified, but there is no indication that it has. It was also noted that the border at Shalamchah does not require transloading like other border crossing points the CG has visited. The UK estimates that about 1500 vehicles pass through the border a week, but could not provide information on the current inspection procedures. CG asked them to work with the Iraqis to improve the process, and he will push the issue with the MOI in Baghdad as well. He wants every vehicle coming from (b)(6) to be searched, and if transloaded, watched. The CG also suggested the UK consider establishing some temporary checkpoints on the main road leading from the border to Basrah, to ratchet up the pressure.

Sunni displacement. ...[A]ll agreed that Sunni tensions in Basrah have been on the rise since May. Most of the 136 murders in June were likely against Sunni and conducted by members of JAM, Fadilah, and elements from the Serious Crimes Unit. There is a general belief that as Shia in the north are being displaced from their neighborhoods, that JAM leadership has supported and possibly directed, retaliation against the Sunni in the south. There is no evidence that this is being centrally driven, although the UK tends to think that Sadr and the (b)(6) could be drivers. They stated the situation deteriorated following the 16 June assassination of the Sunni imam Shaykh Yusuf al-Hasani at the Grand Mosque...they might actually be reaching a crisis point that could result in the further displacement of the Sunni population in Basrah...[W]hen the Governor regarded the assassins of Shaykh Yusuf as martyrs, it sends a particularly bad message to the Sunnis. GEN Casey said he would tell the PM that he needs to apply additional pressure on the Shia community to back off. He will point out the catastrophic consequences which could occur if this played out and Basrah became an 'ethnically cleansed' city in the first months of this new Shia government.

In a subsequent meeting with the battalion commander and the Division Commander, these UK military officers thought that the Sunni leaders were claiming displacement, but that they are really not seeing the evidence on the street. They allowed that it may be happening in the Sunni enclave of Al Zubayr, but they do not have a presence there that could confirm. In Basrah, the Sunni and Shia are fairly well integrated and separate neighborhoods really do not exist.

Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC). MG Cooper said that they are looking at mid July for the formal turnover of al Muthana province to PIC. He thought this needed to be a largely Iraqi event and will plan accordingly. He would, however, like to have some media coverage to reinforce this success to neighboring provinces. Cooper said that the Australians would provide overwatch of Muthana. He is hoping that they will also be able to provide overwatch of Dhi Qar when the Italians depart. He said the Italians had helpfully doubled their MiTTs to ensure that they achieved their goals for the Iraqi army prior to their departure.

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MG Cooper said he is toying with the idea of moving Maysan province into overwatch a bit a head of PIC. This would be a test case to see if such a move accelerated progress toward PIC or not. If JAM showed up in response, it would be easy enough to move forces back, or even the Maliki government in Baghdad move some IA to push back.

2 July - Ramadi

The CG traveled to Ramadi on the afternoon of 2 July to meet with MG Zilmer and (b)(3), (b)(6) to get an update on Ramadi operations. The desired end state for this operation is to neutralize the enemy, ensure that the police are established and operating throughout the city, and that the Iraqi army backs them up, with the coalition in support. Overall, the CG was very satisfied with the status of the operation and encouraged the commanders to not feel too limited by the politics in Baghdad.

(b)(3), (b)(6) 1/1 AD provided the update. He reviewed his task organization and confirmed that he has six Iraqi battalions in play. Two battalions now own battlespace in the city center. He said the Second Officers District is where most of the insurgents are located. He said they have killed 60 enemy in the past 72 hours. He said in the past three weeks they have killed 170, and lost 10 of US soldiers in the process. He is averaging 5-10 EKIA each day.

(b)(3), (b)(6) told the CG that the Rarnadi hospital, tallest building in the city is being used by insurgents as a C2 node and needs to be reclaimed for the city residents. He plans to move on the hospital and occupy it at midnight on 4 July. He said they have prepared well for the likely insurgent response to characterize this as an unprovoked attack against the citizens of Rarnadi. The Governor supports the operation and may be brought to the hospital in the early hours of 5 July to make a press statement about the operation. The military will ensure their embedded US journalists have coverage of the operation. The military also will have ready medical supplies, trauma kits, generators, and doctors to insert into the hospital as needed. The CG is bracing for the fallout, but believes that his commanders have prepared about as well as possible under the circumstances.

CG asked if there is any evidence that the cordon/berm is having an effect. (b)(3), (b)(6) confirmed that it was. He said it had clearly hindered their resupply of ordnance and the flow of fighters into the city. He said the number of IEDs has decreased substantially. (b)(3), (b)(6) noted that the leadership is now directing operations from outside the city. He is now seeing the enemy attempt to enter the city through Tamim and cross the river to conduct operations. (b)(3), (b)(6) [said] that the Ramadi amir is trying to encourage his fighters to stay on the offensive, but they seem to be collapsing.

(b)(3), (b)(6) estimated that the foreign fighters comprise five percent or less of the total insurgent strength. AQIZ and others are all fighting for resources, although increasingly they are seeing that some groups have opted out and are waiting on the sidelines to see who wins. For example, (b)(3), (b)(6) said that elements of the 1920s Revolutionary Brigade have fallen back to Fallujah to wait it out. The CG asked if there is any evidence of insurgent checkpoints being established, but they have not seen in any in the city of Ramadi.

(b)(3), (b)(6) commented that the ISF is dangerously close to combat ineffectiveness. Both the 7th and the 1st IA are manned at about 62 percent. He is concerned that if the premium pay is lifted, that even fewer soldiers will show up for work. The CG said that the IA country wide has the same problems with

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manning levels that they have experienced in Ramadi. He is considering raising the manning levels to 110 percent to accommodate leave and absences.

b 3, b 6 told the CG that they had tripled their IP recruiting. They signed up 130 Iraqis during their last recruiting drive, up from 30 the previous week. He has moved the recruiting center to a more accessible location in Jazeera, and that also seems to be having an effect. More importantly, however, they seem to believe that the security situation is being brought under control and that policing will be less dangerous than prior to operations. (b)(3), (b)(6) also said that he is planning to set up patrol bases in the neighborhoods where most of the Iraqis have been recruited so that they do not have to worry about the safety of their families while they are at work. MG Zilmer said that he has asked the Governor to persuade the 2,000 trained Iraqi policemen to start showing up for duty. Finally, the marines are encouraging the Shaykhs to send them more recruits to train.

CG asked if it would be useful to bring the Ministers of Interior and Defense to Ramadi to continue the dialogue on the Al Anbar consolidation plan. MG Zilmer agreed that it would and will work to organize it.

There was a lengthy discussion...about troop rotations, drawdowns and backfills. Bottom line is that the CG will need to make a decision on all of this by 15 August in order to be ready for the changes that will be manifest by end of September.

In closing the CG told the group that he believes they are handling this operation exactly right. He said that Sunni leaders are sensitive, but the past two weeks have dampened their concern about the intensity of fighting in the city. That said, the CG urged them not to put so many limits on their soldiers that they are worried about pulling the trigger. They need to run their operations to achieve their objectives, and the CG will provide them top cover if they need it. The CG reminded them reclaiming Ramadi is of strategic importance to his mission. This is the key to defeat AQ, who want to establish a safehaven in Al Anbar.

The CG also mentioned the possibility of off ramping two more brigades - one from MND-N and one from the Abu Ghurayb area.

3 July 2006

GEN Casey provided a few comments on his late June Washington trip. He said he discussed with senior administration officials the possible option of shifting MNF-I focus away from developing the Iraqi police, in order to concentrate on building a stronger army faster. The CG said it is true that the Iraqis do not have a history of relying on a police force for neighborhood/civic policing functions. Perhaps this effort to create acceptance of an internal security force that more closely resembles others in the western world is not, in the end, going to find the overall acceptance needed for it to be credible and useful in the time frame required. LTG Dempsey is working through some of these issues for the CG, and the two will further develop their thoughts on the advantages and disadvantages of shifting their effort, and concentrating more on the building, resourcing, training and mentoring of the army.

GEN Casey is considering a reorganization of his 1000 member MNF-I staff to better support his current priorities. The CG's circle chart, that identifies the current pressures on the Iraqi government are Sunni and Shia extremists, 1.4b and the resistance. The CG is developing individual strategies to deal with all four issues. As a result, he is considering organizing offices to work militia, DDR, engagement and 1.4b

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At the last Commanders Conference, the CG and the Ambassador discussed the ed .for a full court press, over all lines of operation, through the end of the year, to push the Iraqis forward on a decisive course. They both agreed that this would require an intense and integrated effort that may also include merging State and MNF-I staffs to ensure unity and focus at this critical stage. This will also be considered in the reorganization.

There was some discussion about the CG's future plans. While there has been some agreement that the CG would stay through December, he does not want to just pick an arbitrary date to leave. He now believes that a more natural departure time for him will be after the Iraqis hold provincial elections. There is still no indication when that will happen, but he suspects they will be scheduled at the latest in the April/May timeframe...

4 July 2006

CG...has been concerned with the spike in suicide bombings and their destabilizing effects on the new government. Attacking this network could help reduce the foreign fighters/suicide bombers. The CG also asked MG Zahner to continue to probe that issue, and see if there is any indication that Iraqis are beginning to serve as suicide bombers. If there has been no let up on the border, and the...foreign fighters are still being turned away, then where are the suicide bombers coming from?

GEN Casey said that while in Washington at the end of June he identified

1.4b, 1.4d

1.4b, 1.4d

He is not at all sure what they are doing. ...He noted that President Jalal Talabani has told him that the

1.4b, 1.4d

He has not seen this theme developed elsewhere, but would like to know if there is any thing to this claim.

MG Zahner mentioned a few updates from his Extra Judicial Killings Task Force. They recently visited the Baghdad morgue and met again with the coroner. He described a situation in which there were stacks of dead bodies, many still had flex cuffs and hands tied behind their backs. He said the trend continues to show that these victims are first kidnapped, tortured, and then executed. He expected that there would be a spike as JAM continues their retaliation for the 1 July Sadr city SVBIED. He said that the data shows that of those killed in the last month, throughout the country, 80 percent were labeled as executions. There were 1600 murders/executions in June in Baghdad. The CG said he discussed the problem with MG Thurman yesterday. He has asked him to consider using the ISOF and to design a counter death squad force. The CG also reiterated his request for a HQS product that reviews lessons learned from other countrys' efforts to deal with death squads...

The CG said that the MNF-I staff has been working [engagement] for the last year, largely through the efforts of his engagement cell in STRATEFF. STRATEFF accelerated efforts following the elections, casting a wide net, and seeing if they could get any of their Iraqi interlocutors to move to the next level of cooperation. The CG said that they have finally made some progress with head of the Iraqi Union led by

(b)(6)

Now it will be necessary to coordinate the effort more broadly...

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4 July 2006

[Update on the extra judicial killings.] [The MNF-I staff] noted that executions account for 80 percent of all reported deaths last week. They further noted that the Baghdad coroner reports over 1600 bodies for the month of June. This is the highest number ever recorded. Of that number, 90 percent reportedly show execution style murder. They suggested that this is indicative of AQI/JAM cycle of violence, which appears now to be nearly self-sustaining in Baghdad.

The briefer noted that the actual number of dead bodies is higher as there are a total of six morgues in Baghdad. Generally, families claim the bodies at the smaller, local morgues, and only the unclaimed bodies are forwarded to the Baghdad coroner's office. GEN Casey noted that the general assumption had been that the Iraqi NJOC reporting was inflated, but it now appears they under report actual numbers.

The coroner's office was designed to handle 36 bodies, but there were 400 bodies stacked in the space during their visit. The briefer also reported that JAM members work as facility protection service guards at the morgue, so most Sunni are afraid to show up and claim bodies of their relatives.

As a final note, MG Zahner assessed that the murders and executions will continue and that they expect a new record for the month of July.

The CG transitioned to how the CF and Iraqi government should address this growing problem. CG would like to start by identifying the top ten individuals most responsible for the death squad activity. He also said he would like to see sustained offensive operations combined with an effort to isolate the critical areas where most of the JAM activities seems to originate. The CG asked the [staff] to help the 4ID Commander, who is now directing the CF portion of the Baghdad Security Plan, to think through this operational concept. He noted that there is a clear strategy for targeting AQIZ, but now we need a comprehensive targeting strategy to deal with the death squads.

The CG stated he also plans to revisit the late May video clip of the JAM executions with the Prime Minister. He will seek approval to raid the compound, and if successful, will encourage him to put the video on national TV. He would like the PM to get off the mark on the issue of facing down the militia. The timing is critical, as the Sunni need to see soon that this government is going to take convincing measures to protect them. The CG's Iraqi Liaison officer, GEN Kudair, told the CG that life in Baghdad is getting very hard for the Sunni in reference to the death squads. The CG commented that neither the army nor the police are at all comfortable that they have the support of the government to go after the militia, and are consequently hanging back.

...LTG Abadi had reported that Muqtada al-Sadr has released a letter and he was awaiting a copy. Allegedly, the letter directed no attacks against the Iraqi Army and Police, no sectarian attacks, and no criminal activity. The CG said that letter has not yet appeared, but he did not regard it as a welcome development as he seems to be trying to protect himself and his militia against any kinetic action by the coalition.

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5 July 2006

On 5 July, the CG visited the 101st Task Force 1.4a in Tikrit for an update with MG Turner. The 1015 briefed the CG on the status of their transition plans for the IA and the Ips, and their planning for their relief in place (RIP) with the 25th Infantry Division, just about 60 days from now.

The 101st reported that the two Kurdish provinces of Dahuk and Sulaymaniyah are ready to be turned over to Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) and that they are planning transfer ceremonies for mid August. The Koreans have responsibility in Irbil, so will make their own decision on PIC. The 101st asked if there might be political resistance to having all three provinces in Kurdistan go to PIC simultaneously.

The CG noted that it would be important to have the GOI policy on the KRG/Peshmerga in advance. He stated that he had told his staff to draft a statement that designates the Peshmerga as a provincial security force. The impetus behind this is to find some mechanism to move the Peshmerga out of the CPA 91 order, that identifies them as a militia. The CG [said] that while his staff had drafted the statement, they had also scrubbed with the embassy who non-concurred. Now, MNF-I and State are coordinating on proposed language to be provided to the GOI to re-designate the Peshmerga and allow PIC to continue. The CG plans to get this proposal to Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih and to the National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai for action.

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One of the most interesting metrics the 101st provided was the changes in their force posture they have made since they arrived in November 2005. At that time they had:

- 2 MNDs
- 6 BCTs
- 30 BNs
- 31,000 troops
- 35 Bases

In September 2006, they are projecting:

- 3 BCTs
- 13 BNs
- 15,000 troops
- 10 Bases

All of their Iraqi battalions will be in the lead at TRA Level 2 at the time of their RIP. GEN Casey asked MG Turner to try to come up with a metric that shows the change in the population's perception of security over the same time period. This will provide the next level of understanding of the effectiveness of the work that has been done over the past year.

Some other items of interest:

FOB Courage will be transferred to the Iraqis on 20 July

The 5th Iraqi army in Mosul is doing well. The commander reports the IA and the IP are joined at the hip. As an example, the Chief of Police conducts foot patrols, meeting citizens on the street, in the company of the IA commanders.

They need another battalion of national police for duty in Samarra
Bayji refinery was described as a lifeline to the insurgency, through black market fuel sales and smuggling. It is a zone of support for the insurgents and especially for AQIZ

In Samarra, the CF commander found the locals handing out flyers to their neighbors asking them not to support the insurgency.

70 percent of the attacks on the coalition in the 3/101 AO occur on Route Tampa.

3/101 has concentrated their TRA 2 level IA units in the city centers of the Zab Triangle and Muj Bucket where most of the fighting remains, and the 3/101 have assumed responsibility for the outlying areas in the AO. This is a very effective deployment scheme.

Monthly attack totals have either held or declined in the 101st AO, with the exception of Diyala which have doubled since January

GEN Casey told them one of his greatest strategic challenges right now is sectarian violence. The sectarian violence in Diyala falls in after Baghdad and before Basrah. CG noted that the 101st only has two battalions in Diyala and that they are weighting their tactical imperatives ahead of the CG's strategic

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objectives. The CG commented this is not uncommon, which is why there needs to be close connectivity with the Division commanders.

6 July 2006

National Police. During the weekly update on the Baghdad Security Plan, the CG stated that MG Thurman identified serious problems with the national police units in Baghdad. Originally, these units were trained and equipped entirely by the Iraqis as a light infantry unit and not a police force. They filled an important function as they only credible policing/paramilitary unit available in the early years and were regarded as heroes. Subsequently, however, these units have atrophied, and never really were trained for the jobs they have been assigned to do. MG Thurman said they report for duty without uniforms, and generally present themselves as militia in appearance. His soldiers have found them sleeping at their checkpoints, and only about 50 percent of the force is ever present for duty. As a result, MNF-I plans to conduct a short-term reconstitution of this force. They plan to take a small group off line for a two weeks period, get them back in uniform, issue the oath of loyalty, and re-equip them for duty. CG stated that there will also be a longer term reform of the national police that will involve an 18-24 month training program similar to that of the Italian Carabinieri.

MG Thurman reported that in Baghdad there are now more attacks against Iraqis than against the CF. This is the first time this has occurred in two years. This tends to validate the CG's judgment that this conflict is shifting away from fighting the coalition, to fighting each other for power and influence.

MOI reform. As noted in previous traffic GEN Casey has asked LTG Dempsey to provide the Iraqis with an MOI reform plan to help establish some legitimacy and transparency in this institution. As part of this effort Dempsey with the assistance of State department, has drawn up a list of the top MOI employees that should be removed from their positions. The Iraqis will be provided the list, and the recommendation, but they will make the final decisions.

Implications of Joint HQS on Coalition Operations. The CG noted that the Iraqi Army Joint Headquarters and the Ground Force Headquarters come on line on 1 September. For the first time, this creates a direct chain of command from the Prime Minister all the way down to the soldier on the ground. He and LTG Chiarelli will be discussing what this actually means for current operations. It may mean that the Iraqis will exert full control over any/all Iraqi army battalions in the lead, or at Transitional Readiness Assessment (TRA) level 2. The CG wants a clear description of how the support to the Mitts and Bitts will be provided in this transition. CG noted that this will create a fundamentally different situation for the coalition when it occurs. He said he needs to understand this better before mid August when PIC in Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk is now planned.

8 July 2006

GEN Casey visited both Camp Cropper and Abu Ghurayb prisons on 8 July. MG Gardner, the TF 1.4a commander hosted...The first stop was Camp Cropper where [TF-1.4a] provided an overview of the current status, security plan, and detention operations. Camp Cropper will have a total of five compounds when construction is complete, and the base is designated fully operational. They made a

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point to emphasize that Cropper has been constructed from lessons learned at the other detention centers country wide, and they have already noted that the soldiers and detainees have responded well to the huge improvements in quality of life that this new center provides.

Presently, there are a total of 1000 US personnel, and this number will climb to about 1700 when fully occupied. The facility will be able to hold ca 3300 detainees at full capacity. Camp Cropper already has received some new detainees in the past few days, and has also received detainees transferred from Abu Ghurayb. These initial detainee transfers have gone well, and they feel they have a good routine to fall into in order to accept the remaining population from Abu Ghurayb. They reported that they plan to move all detainees via Chinook aircraft, and only the support elements will move via overland routes. They expect to transfer the remaining prisoners from Abu Ghurayb to Cropper between 12-18 July... The group then flew to Abu Ghurayb where the staff provided an overview of operations. The coalition is planning to hand over the facility to the Iraqi Ministry of Justice in mid-August. There are currently 1811 detainees, down from a high of 5000. They have closed the areas known as Redemption, Redemption South, Liberty, Bravo and Alpha. The remaining detainees are currently housed in camps 2,3,4, C and D. The next large-scale detainee release is scheduled for 19 July.

Regarding transfer operations, they described the plan to vacate the facility in stages and remove the structures that are no longer viable, in particular some of the tent facilities. During a walking tour of the compound, CG discovered that there were a total of four Life Support Areas (LSA). Each of these hard buildings had originally been designed as detention cells, identical to those in the main prison, but four companies of US soldiers had utilized each as living quarters. CG noted the sensitivity of such an arrangement, but focused on the fact that these LSAs might best be returned to use as detention facilities for the Iraqis. He asked MG Gardner to look into what it would take to restore them for use as fully functional detention centers, and also to provide a count of the additional detention capacity this could provide if completed.

CG's final guidance to MG Gardner was to leave the Abu Ghurayb 'like we were never there' and not to scrimp on engineer support if he needs it to achieve that objective. MG Gardner commented that he thought that the Iraqis could succeed in taking over Abu Ghurayb if they staff it correctly and if they provide sufficient security to defend it. He noted that they had suggested the Iraqis consider dedicating a full battalion of soldiers to the facility, but the CG cautioned that this is not now the best use of the Iraqi army.

10 July 2006

GEN Casey said he met with Prime Minister Nuri al- Maliki...he said the PM was feeling very isolated. Maliki complained that he does not feel he has the support of his government for the hard issues, and that they are standing back and essentially leaving the problems to him alone to resolve. Maliki was especially critical of the security forces (both police and army). He complained that he did not have enough of them, and that they were not well equipped, and did not perform at a high level. The CG has invited Maliki in the past to accompany him to meet ISF units around the country to get a better feel for who they are and how they operate. CG believes this is especially important for a politician without any military experience, and would likely make him more comfortable with the force he commands. LTG Dempsey is trying to organize this for the PM as soon as he can set aside time.

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CG confirmed that the Iraqi leadership generally believes that the Baghdad Security Plan has not succeeded. From the standpoint of reducing the level of sectarian killings, the CG agrees with their conclusions. He also noted that the Iraqis tend to think the problem with the plan was that it was defensive in nature. The CG noted that since 14 June there have been 375 combined offensive operations in Baghdad, that levels of violence in certain neighborhoods have decreased, and that the checkpoints have caught a large number of IEDs. Thus, the plan has had some positive impact. Nonetheless, the CG conceded, that until the Iraqis' perception of their security improves, then the Plan has not met its primary objective.

CG drafted a four-slide PowerPoint briefing for Maliki to highlight some of the important accomplishments of the Baghdad Security Plan, and also to provide suggestions on additional measures that need to be taken. On the former point, he noted:

Killed AQIZ leader, Abu al Afghani
MND-B units executed offensive operations in South Baghdad, Abu Ghraib and Taji
45 percent of VBIEDs/SVIEDS interdicted (15 of 35) which means that the checkpoints are having effect
Attacks in the focused areas are down 30 percent
Increased public perception of security in nine out of 10 beladiyehs
Transitioned security responsibility of the Karadah Peninsula to the Baghdad City Iraqi Police (no attacks since the transition)
Adjusted focus areas to increase presence in Rusafa and Bayaa
Adjusted operations to the enemy

The CG also reviewed for the PM the results of an MND-B poll on the citizens' perceptions of the effects of the Baghdad Security Plan which are generally trending upward, but just slightly.

Finally, the CG offered some proposals on needed changes:

Empower the ISF to enforce the law against illegal armed groups
Increase availability and professionalism of National Police
Develop dedicated forces to target leadership of illegal armed groups
Increase operations against illegal armed groups and terrorists particularly in Doura
Complete bonus payments to ISF
Develop and announce program to counter illegal armed groups
Engage national political leaders and the Council of Representatives in support of the Baghdad Security Plan

In addition, the CG has given LTG Chiarelli guidance to work the Baghdad Security Plan with increased focus, and to make recommendations on additional force/resources he might need as soon as possible. Also, [MNF-I staff] plans to brief the CG on the findings of their latest Red Cell on reducing levels of violence in Baghdad tomorrow, and the CG hopes to get some 'out of the box' thinking to apply to this problem. As mentioned in previous traffic, the CG is redirecting the Iraqi Special Ops Force (ISOF) to focus exclusively on the counter-death squad mission, and he has reprioritized targets in the Baghdad Fusion Center to include death squad leaders. He may ask CJSTOF to support the death squad mission as well...

11 July 2006,

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...GEN Casey opened with an interesting vignette from a just concluded meeting with the MOI and MOD. At the end of the meeting, he said that Badr Chief Hadi al-Amiri walked in to their meeting and sat down at the table. The CG thought his presence was inappropriate and surfaced this with National Security Advisor Muwafiq al-Rubai. Rubai said only that someone must have invited him and added as a possible explanation, that Amiri is the head of the security committee for the Council of Representatives (COR). The CG acknowledged that, but told him it was unwise to mix proceedings of the executive and legislative branches of government. Rubai acknowledged, but made no move to either adjourn the meeting or ask Amiri to leave. The CG then sidelined the MOD and told him the same thing. At that point, the meeting ceased its discourse, the Ministers began to simply make statements, and it concluded shortly thereafter. The CG concluded that there were a lot of problems with Amiri's presence, not least among them being the fact that Badr is very much part of the sectarian killings that are destabilizing Baghdad.

(b)(6) has emphasized that JI is split into two wings. The majority wing still wants to fight. The minority, which he represents and serves as its spokesman, is in favor of a dialogue with the coalition. Moreover, JI still meets as one group, so if Tamimi's engagement with the coalition became public, he would be ostracized by the majority wing and rendered ineffective. CG agreed that this was exactly the right course for this particular engagement effort... (b)(6) had a very specific message for the coalition. He thought they needed to speak publicly about their plans and intentions to eliminate death squads/militia. In addition, they needed to move quickly to address the de-Ba'athification issue. Finally, Tamimi believed it would be essential to reinstate pensions to former officers as this would tie them to the government and they would have clear incentive to help this government succeed...CG confirmed that Maliki wants to gradually increase the pressure on the militia. He thinks that Maliki eventually will approve large neighborhood sweeps. At this point, however, Maliki thinks he can keep a good number of the Sadrist off to the side, and out of the fight, using this incremental approach.

CG confirmed that at the last Ministers Council for National Security (MCNS) the reporting of the assassinations of sunni in the Jihad district of Baghdad was breaking. However, he noted it was barely discussed by the (mainly Shia) Ministers. Sunni Deputy Prime Minister Salam al-Zawbai flagged this to the group, and said this was not the same reaction when the last Shia mosque was attacked. He asked why no one wanted to focus on this latest massacre. The response, as has become standard, was to blame MNF-I for tying their hands.

CG described his last meeting with Sunni vice President Tariq al-Hashimi on the subject of the latest attacks on the Sunni in the Jihad district. He said it was a very candid discussion, with none of the hyperbole normally present in these sensitive discussions. CG told Hashimi that now is the time to break the cycle of violence and Hashimi agreed that the Sunni are ready. Hashimi did say that Muqtada al-Sadr had phoned him just after the event, and denied JAM responsibility for the violence. Hashimi told him he should make a public statement on the TV to that effect, but Sadr declined saying he was not ready for that type of public move yet. In addition Sadr told Hashimi that there would soon be a 'million man march to Samarra' but did not indicate when this would happen...

Baghdad Security Plan. The CG has a number of lines of operation now in motion to address the insecurity in Baghdad. GEN Casey said he has given 4th ID the lead in working the Extra Judicial Killings (EJK). In addition he told MG Zahner that [MNF-I's] EJK Task Force will be fully in support of 4th ID, and may need to collocate with them. He said MNF-I would be scrubbing the national police by battalion. They will separate out those that cannot be vetted/trusted. They will retrain them, put them

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back in uniform, and reequip them. In addition the CG said he will move five companies of MPs, now in Kuwait, forward to Baghdad. The MPs will work side by side with the police to ensure their performance. In addition the CG is considering the pros and cons of using elements of the 2nd and 3rd IA Divisions in the north, that are majority Peshmerga, to assist in securing Baghdad. The CG will take a briefing from LTG Chiarelli this evening on his recommendations for how to improve the Baghdad Security Plan.

The CG noted that he is in discussions with Maliki about his intention to off-ramp two more brigades, as battlespace is being turned over to the Iraqi Army. He noted that the amount of battlespace owned by the ISF has tripled over the last six months. He said 4 IA Divisions are in the lead. 20 of 36 IA Brigades are in the lead. 78 of 110 Battalions are now in the lead. This is the picture the CG is trying to portray to the PM to demonstrate why the off-ramp of coalition forces makes sense right now. The PM is still concerned that he needs more not less. In addition, the CG said that he would move one brigade forward to Kuwait and fly an additional battalion into Kuwait to test the contingency system...CG said he needs to spend a little more time with Maliki to help him understand why these shifts will be beneficial overall.

11 July

...The CG received a number of briefings on Jaysh al Mahdi, highlights of which are provided below.

The first briefing was on the OMS/JAM internal dynamics from 2004 to present. The [MNF-I staff] believes that the organization has fractured and is composed of four different groups: the Sadr loyalists, ideologues, pragmatists and radicals. They have identified the leaders of these factions both at the national and provincial levels. They conclude that Sadr's leadership of the movement is creating fractures between the groups and reporting indicates some influential members are openly disagreeing with Sadr and leaving the movement. They conclude that opportunities exist to expand the rift in OMS/JAM where the senior leadership loses effectiveness. Further, because the underlying issues concerning Sadr's personality and leadership are not solved, they will continue to affect the movement dynamics.

The second briefing for the CG was very narrowly focused on the JAM leadership in Baghdad. They describe the structure, and note they have identified 30 of 50 JAM top brigade, battalion, special forces, and intelligence commanders, and are tracking their locations, at least on those whose phone numbers are tasked. They note that the Special Forces leadership controls the best-trained JAM units. They use them to conduct attacks against Sunni targets, Iraqis supporting MNF-I, and are involved in kidnappings. They are assigned areas to defend Sadr City and they are the priority for [MNF-I] collection. They also highlighted fact that they have identified seven of the eight intelligence commanders, essentially responsible for targeting operations. One of the big questions for the CG is how much control is exercised over the death squads, and the targeters/intelligence leaders may be the key to that.

The [staff] presented a list of 14 JAM members, which they recommended as HVIs. They noted that JAM is highly dependent on the core leadership and removing them will significantly impact the group's ability to manage both legitimate and illicit operations. They assess that Sadr is likely aware, and provides direction through the strategic leaders. These leaders implement guidance and directives through their operational level leaders, giving Sadr deniability to illicit activities conducted by JAM.

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The CG told the [staff] to prepare the current Restricted Individuals List (AKA 'No Touch List') of JAM/OMS members for the BUA in the morning. CG said he will discuss this with his staff, and decide which of the individuals, involved in the death squad activities, ought not to be protected any longer from arrest and detention. Once he pares down that list, he will take it first to the National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai to get his reaction and guidance. From there, he will bring the list to the Prime Minister to gain his approval to actively target them.

CG confirmed that 4ID has the lead in working the Baghdad death squads. He reaffirmed that the...Extra Judicial Killings Task Force needs to directly support this effort, and if necessary, to move into 4ID spaces.

CG...discussed...the importance of targeting the death squads, noting that they had the potential to unhinge everything if not checked...he wants ensure that the level of effort against AQIZ and the death squads is about the same. The [task force] commander indicated that they did not yet have the same level granularity on the organization as they had after three years of working AQ in Iraq, but confirmed they had some 20-target packages ready to action. The CG confirmed that CJSOTF's primary mission would now be to target the death squads...

11 July 2006

GEN Casey said that the National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai had relayed an interesting conversation he had with Muhammad Rida al-Sistani on 11 July. Rida telephoned Rubai to discuss the Baghdad violence. For only the second time in Rubai's recollection, Grand Ayatollah Muhammad 'ali al-Husayni al-Sistani also spoke to him on the telephone, lending even more weight to the importance of the phone call.

According to Rubai the Sistani's believe that the violence is essentially payback for three years of Sunni terrorist violence directed against the Shia. They believe that the USG policy, to engage the Sunni and to use insufficient force against them, is a policy of appeasement, and that it is a root cause of the violence against the Shia. In Rubai's opinion both Sistanis appear to support the Jaysh al-Mahdi and Badr death squads. They view them as a protective response, and they do not want them to stop. Rubai tried to give Rida more facts surrounding the JAM activity to explain that it is much more than a defensive action on their part, and the consequences of their unchecked activity.

The CG and Rubai discussed some ideas on how to further engage the Sistanis on the subject of these Shia death squads, and strategies for getting their support to end them. It was not at all clear to Rubai that Rida fully understood the phenomenon or its impact. The both considered options to provide more information to them, to attempt to get their support for speaking out against them. If they can do this, the Rubai would like to leverage their support by possibly convening some kind of religious conference in Najaf that would bring together leaders from all sects to call for an end to violence, and support for unity and the new Iraqi government.

In the end, the CG stated that tensions among the top leadership of the Iraqi government are such that they seem to think it is acceptable to target each other's groups. The challenge is to get the religious and political leaders to stand up and call for an end to it. One problem, the CG thought, was they were not yet tired of fighting. He is also worried that deep-seated hatreds between Sunni and Shia are so visceral

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that they may not be able to rise above it. He still tends to think that another crisis may be the catalyst needed to get them to work together to end it.

13 July 2006

During Secretary Rumsfeld's 12 July meeting with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, the CG learned that Maliki had been a bit unnerved by his recent discussions with Senator Biden. Maliki told SecDef that Biden conveyed to him, in very strong terms, the fact that the American public was losing patience, and that US troops would not stay in Iraq much longer. GEN Casey reflected on the timing and realized that after the PM's meeting with the Biden, that he had briefed Maliki on his plan to offramp two brigades, unwittingly reinforcing the PM's fears that the coalition was leaving too soon. He also recalled Maliki's recent lament that he felt alone in the fight as his ministers were standing back and not supporting his efforts. Upon piecing together this unfortunate sequence of events, the CG asked for a meeting with the PM on the evening of 12 July to specifically discuss the coalition force presence, which he was granted.

GEN Casey and Ambassador Satterfield spent one full hour with the Prime Minister that evening. In order to ensure a positive exchange on this important topic, the CG said he rearranged some furniture to ensure he was face to face with Maliki, with only a small table in between them where the CG sketched out the strategy that he was pursuing in Iraq on a yellow pad. The first thing he told Maliki was that the strategic guidance he has been given by the President is to win in Iraq. The CG told him that winning means Iraq at peace with its neighbors, an ally on the war on terror, with a representative government that respects the human rights of all Iraqis, and security forces sufficient to provide domestic security and prevent Iraq from becoming a safehaven for terror. The CG asked Maliki if he agreed with that end state, and he said he did.

The CG then proceeded to describe for Maliki how he was working to achieve the security objectives. One of the assumptions is that only the Iraqis can achieve an enduring strategic success. The coalition can, and will continue to help them, but they cannot win this for them. The PM agreed. The second assumption is that the Iraqi people won't tolerate the presence of foreign forces in their country for long, and the period of consent is rapidly diminishing, and probably will be exhausted within the next two years. The Prime Minister also agreed.

The CG then laid out for the PM his overall strategy for transitioning this to an Iraqi lead and reducing coalition force presence. He stated that the longer US forces are present, and in large numbers, the longer the Iraqis will defer to them, and rely on them to do their job. This will prolong their dependency and work against the coalition effort to make them self-sufficient. The number of ISF units that have moved in to battlespace has tripled in the past six months. Assumption of battlespace by Iraqi units is intended to generate effects on the population by reducing coalition presence when the security responsibilities are transferred to an increasingly capable ISF. In practice then, when an Iraqi army unit reaches TRA level 2 they need to take and hold that battlespace, and the coalition needs to back away while they do that. This is the process that will help the Iraqis gain control of their country faster. This is the process that will allow the coalition to stand down as the Iraqis stand up.

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The CG then discussed the two-brigade offramp and how that fits into the overall strategy. In that discussion, he also told Maliki that he is moving the entire reserve from Kuwait forward into theater. He is moving a new brigade from Germany into Kuwait as a backfill this contingency force, and he is flying one of the battalions from Germany in to test the system. Thus, there is, on balance, a small reduction of the overall force, and a ready contingency nearby if needed.

The CG told the Prime Minister that he should take some time to think about it. Maliki need not provide his approval for the off ramp of the two brigades right away. (The CG does not technically need Iraqi approval for any of this, but he regards the effort as a partnership and wants to keep the Iraqis involved and supportive as he moves on with transition.) Maliki indicated he may want to scrub it with the Committee that has been stood up to monitor the coalition drawdown. The PM may want them to bring this to them for their review and discussion.

The CG thought that the meeting was an important one, and that Maliki now had a much better understanding of the strategy. He seemed less anxious about the us short and long term presence...

13 July - Diyala

GEN Casey traveled to Baqubah on 13 July to get an update from (b)(3), (b)(6) who commands the Third Heavy Brigade Combat Team. MG Turner...also attended. The CG has been concerned about the sectarian fighting in Baqubah since he returned from the States. The province has been especially impacted because of its demographics (50 percent Sunni, 33 percent Shia, 10 percent Kurd) and a recent heavy influx of Jaysh al Mahdi members has further inflamed the area. The Brigade refers to the fight as 'factional gerrymandering' and do not expect it to improve before the provincial elections. That said, they do not think it is passed the point that they cannot stop the slide. Following are some highlights of the very wide-ranging discussion.

3. Levels and Nature of Violence:

- (b)(3), (b)(6) stated that [Coalition forces] had moved to aggressively target the AQIZ presence in Diyala three months ago, and have subsequently successfully policed up an impressive number of targets especially in the Muqdadiyah area.

- He noted that the distinction between the former regime elements and AQIZ had noticeably blurred, where they are working together in central and western Diyala.

- The sectarian fighting, kidnapping and executions have ramped up tremendously. (b)(3), (b)(6) stated that his troops have no hesitation to arrest and detain JAM members. But clearly the level of effort against AQIZ and JAM is not the same. They tend to catch JAM in the act, unlike the careful targeting effort put into the AQIZ fight.

- Attacks have steadily increased since the Samarra mosque attack, but the target is changing. In June 64 percent of the 307 effective attacks were against civilians. (National average for June is 64-69 percent).

- The Brigade clearly stated that the population is being targeted. They are attacked by MM/JAM to reinforce Islamic beliefs. Attacked by PUK to shape demographics. Attacked by BADR to maintain instability. Attacked by 1920/TWJ to incite fear. The CF is crushing the Sunni and their infrastructure.

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New Bath Party is reeling. But no one is targeting JAM. Certainly not the Iraqis as, from their perspective, JAM's status was legitimized after the January elections.

- This is much more than tit-for-tat violence. This is a power play that will continue until the provincial elections are held. The current leadership will do what they can to delay elections and maintain their control of provincial governance. Similarly, Shia are trying to control space in places like Baghdad, Kirkuk and Baqubah.

4. Jaysh al Mahdi

- Governor Ra'ad and the police chief Ghassan, both Shia, tends to view JAM as a 'political party' that should not be targeted.

- Sunni feel that they are being exposed. The coalition continues attacks on their infrastructure...and the Shia are attacking them with increasing frequency. They are getting weaker every day and less able to protect themselves from either the Shia death squads and the coalition.

- Local Mahdi militia commander spoke directly with (b)(3), (b)(6) and offered to secure the release of kidnap victims (COR member (b)(6) and the DG for the Health Ministry Dr. Ali) in exchange for the release of recently detained JAM members. Operating in the open in this brazen manner shows that JAM feels invulnerable and is operating with impunity.

5. Iraqi Security Forces.

- The 2nd brigade of the 5th IA just assumed battlespace. (b)(3), (b)(6) indicated that no one is comfortable with the army and police integration. IA 'lead' means nothing to the police. IA and IP are responding to whatever incidents occur and the coalition is intervening only to ensure that they do not fail. Problem is that there is no clarity in the roles and missions of the IA and the IP and both think that the other is encroaching. At this point they both seem to be focused on fighting the criminals and not moving against the insurgency or the sectarian violence.

- The Police force is developing slowly. They have their authorized strength of 9200 men. The Chief of Police Gen Ghassan (Shia) made a series of changes in the police force designed to bring in more Sunni, and to appoint more Sunni into the major crimes unit. It is now about 50-50.

- Fifth IA Division, led by GEN Ahmad has exceeded expectations according to MG Turner. Unfortunately, he has submitted his resignation due to a dispute with the new MOD. (b)(3), (b)(6) regrets his departure as he is a very fine leader, but he said all of the brigade commanders are strong so the impact of his departure should be mitigated. MG Turner and the Iraqi local leadership want the Division HQS in Baqubah as it is the seat of government, proximity to the media, FOB Warhorse etc. But facilities need to be upgraded.

- Rule of Law will take another 3-5 years to become embedded in the province.

6. Next steps. The Brigade will invite the Mayor of Baqubah, who is influential with the Sunni leadership and can be an effective problem solver, to sit down with the Governor of the Province. The mayor thinks he is seeing civil war already. The Governor is doing nothing to calm the Shia down. These two leaders have the ability to calm the situation in the province. The Brigade will encourage them to act.

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(b)(3), (b)(6) said he said he needs better access to the media. Security is all about perception, and the people need to at least know the facts on the ground. Right now they are reacting to rumors which is fueling conflict.

He would like the IA and IP roles and missions better defined so that their work is more effective.

- This may be time for another army/police recruiting drive
- CG is considering a Diyala Consolidation Plan to help, and tie it to cooperation and political participation. Neither (b)(3), (b)(6) or MG Turner showed much interest noting that a lot of money already had been put into the province.
- CG reminded the commanders that his strategic priorities in Diyala are stopping sectarian violence and securing the Iranian border.

7. CG's comments on the situation. The sectarian situation in Diyala is worse than he expected. The fact that 64 percent of effective attacks are against civilians means that their battlespace paradigm is clearly changing. The question now is how to deal with this new conflict. CG used the term civil war, but stated that he did not think we are there yet. He said he must maintain focus on the Sunni extremists, but need to refocus on the Shia and keep strong military pressure on them. They need a bridge from the current situation, short of civil war, until the provincial elections. Bottom line is the Coalition must protect the population, and empower the IS. The coalition can and will help, but the Iraqis must be seen as successful, and they must be seen as the dominant force. There is still a problem addressing the rogue JAM elements, even at the Ministerial level. Problem is that if the Iraqis, with coalition support, don't deal with these death squads, then the ISF won't be seen as capable of protecting the people. It may be that there needs to be a conflict with this largely Shia group, and the ISF must emerge as the protectors of the people. The focus now must be against those who are kidnapping and killing.

14 July 2006

GEN Casey has tasked another Red Cell to look at the last 60 days of violence and lay out what we think happened and what the implications are for the campaign strategy in Iraq. It will start on Monday. Due out is Friday.

MNF-I's MG Caldwell has given the PM's office a draft of an OPED piece for Maliki to review and hopefully approve for publication in major US newspapers.

Secretary of Commerce and Secretary of Energy are arriving Baghdad Monday and Tues. Connected to this visit, on Thursday the National Compact is supposed to be rolled out. UN needs to be seen as taking the lead. MNF-I may need to provide all the transportation for the National Compact attendees. This first international event has to be seen as a success and it has to be secure. CG has tasked STRATOPS to think their way through it.

CG met with the MOI and MOD on the Baghdad Security Plan. They are moving it to another level. Need an operational concept that shows how the plan expands to ultimately bring security to Baghdad. Chiarelli has the lead. Iraqis pushed back on idea of bringing mainly Pesh units from Irbil/Suly into Baghdad, but CG thinks their reasons are weak.

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They discussed introduction of an anti-terrorism law. They agreed that many of the death squad operations start and finish at mosques, so they are thinking about shutting down mosques that are associated with criminals and found to be storing weapons caches etc. Iraqis agreed.

They discussed ways to regain the initiative, to include instituting a 3-5 day driving ban in Baghdad. They will identify focus areas in the city that will either be cleared or protected. Amariyah, for example is a focus area in need of protection. CG asked for more ISR assets to provide persistent stares at the focus areas...

CG said the Iraqis agreed on the need for a dedicated counter death squad force that will consist of the ISOF/ERU working with CJSOTF...More discussions on ways to improve consistency of the national police performance. GEN Adnan and the MOI agreed to the plan to take some off line, vet, retrain, equip, and redeploy. CG will meet the group again on Sunday to make some decisions. In the meantime MNF-I will continue to flow coalition forces.

CG asked MG Fastabend (replaced Bargewell) to look at how we can treat the MOI as Tier 1 so that he has adequate force protection to do his job. CG asked Bulani if he would be willing to accept a US PSD, at least temporarily, until they could train an Iraqi force that he trusted. He said he would think about it...Problem is he has no political constituency to take care of him with robust PSDs, FAVs etc. and he is obviously very vulnerable.

Discussion about breaking the cycle of violence in Baghdad. CG noted that they need a lot of work on deligitimizing death squads...They will try to get the PM to convince Sadr to issue a statement against death squads. They think it possible as the latest Sadr speech acknowledged that there were rogue elements in JAM.

Issue is that the coalition needs to engage and work kinetically against both Sunni and Shia extremists and the effort needs to be balanced between the two. Right now it is heavily weighted against the Sunni extremists.

15 July 2006

On 15 July, GEN Casey traveled to Rutbah, Korean Village, and the ports of entry (POE) at Trebil and Walid... along with 1 MEF BG Neller. The commanders reported mostly favorable conditions and made very few requests to the CG for support. Overall, the situation in all locations seemed to exceed expectations.

The marine post at al-Rutbah is a rustic outpost with basic life support still catching up to the needs of its 200 marines that occupy it. After much prodding from GEN Casey the marines last year placed a berm around Rutbah (population 35,000) that was essentially in place mid January 2006. The berm has been extremely effective and allows a small force (just over 200 men) to man the three checkpoints leading into and out of the city, as well as do some patrolling in the city center. They described the enemy essentially as smugglers and crooks, with only a very small number of insurgents. If they had more Iraqi police, they believe that Rutbah could become a major success story. They reported the Iraqi army is doing well and jointly mans the checkpoint and conducts patrols. The marines would like a female

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interpreter to better exploit their work at the checkpoints as they seem ready and willing to provide information on location and identities of the AIF.

The CG had a short briefing at Korean Village by the 2nd marine division light armored reconnaissance battalion. Their security situation was not much different than that in Rutbah. They support the border and ports of entry transition teams in Trebil. They support the FOBs on the border and provide QRF to border elements. They stated that the gas stations along the main road tend to support small population centers and also tend to work as the command and control nodes for the smugglers/criminals. They stated that the enemy's most dangerous course of action is their murder and intimidation campaign against local and key leadership. They want to eliminate government control in the area to allow their criminality to proceed unchecked. The marines said their first priority to address these issues would be to get a highway patrol that would cover the main supply route (Rt Michigan). They also would like to have the National Police deploy to their location, where it has been difficult to grow a local police force.

POE Trebil. The CG was given a very brief overview of the support to the POE that is being provided by the newly established Border Transition Teams (BTTs) and Ports of Entry Transition Teams (POETTs). There are some 18 marine officers and NCOs that comprise the POE transition teams that are deployed to Trebil to support between 60-100 Iraqis from the Department of Border Enforcement. This is a pretty high ratio, and the results have been dramatic. Last month the POE collected over 1.8 million dollars in tariffs. Until now no money was being charged/collected. BG Neller stated emphatically that the DBE troops were exceeding expectations and performing reliable and competent work on the border.

The CG had very little time at the Walid POE. Of note, marines manned the main checkpoint on the Iraqi side of the Syrian border, which needs to change. The CG will recommend that the Iraqi's replace the marines at that location. The marines noted two life support issues at Walid. There supply of potable water and fuel is problematic, and the Iraqis need to conclude a reliable contract to supply these basics services.

16 July 2006

GEN Casey continues to weigh the pros and cons of putting more coalition force on the street to support the Baghdad Security Plan. He can easily do this, and he continues to flow forces forward. However, the problem is that it will encourage the Iraqis to stand back and continue to criticize the coalition effort. Rather, what he wants the Iraqis to do is to accept ownership, to demonstrate leadership, and to make this a unified GOI effort to reclaim the city. The Shia especially, led by the Prime Minister, have not displayed a willingness to step up, and the CG is mulling over options to encourage them to do so. They claim they are against death squads in discussions with MNF-I and State, but privately show little concern with their Sunni targeting. The CG met with the PM last evening and continues to make his case.

The CG met Shirwan Kamil Subti al-Wa'ili, Minister of State for National Security, at the 4th of July reception at the embassy, and the two had a private meeting earlier this week. GEN Casey was overall favorably impressed, and the CG described the exchange as very positive. Of note, Wa'ili said his number one priority was legitimizing his ministry. He solicited US support for training and partnership. The CG offered MNF-I assistance and views this as an opportunity to get a much better understanding of the structure, manning, and mission of this organization that remained much of a mystery under the previous leadership of 'abd al-Karim al-Anzi. The CG is optimistic that Wa'ili's outreach will allow the

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type of 'shadow leadership' that both MNF-I and State Dept have worked to provide the other key security ministries. If successful, the CG can see a scenario where Wa'ili's Ministry plays an increasingly important role in the management of Iraqi security, and one that the coalition can mentor and monitor.

The CG mentioned that National Security Affairs Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai claimed he had received phone calls from representatives of twelve different political parties concerned about continued MNF-I immunity. This is in response to the five investigations of US soldiers and marines violating the laws of war and committing human rights abuses...The CG had earlier considered the utility of a...group to conduct periodic consultation with the GOI on key security issues. He initially thought it would be useful to have the group arrive within the first 90 days of government formation, with quarterly follow up sessions. These would provide a forum to work key issues and show the Iraqis that MNF-I is really leaving, and at the same time will continue to be involved in their long-term security.

The plan continues to move forward but with some changes. At this point, it appears that the first step is to get the authorities that MNF-I still requires from the next UNSCR. In addition, the outline of the new relationship will be worked through the Deputies and Principals Committee. Once there is agreement on the framework for the new relationship, and the timelines associated with it, then NSC will lead a group, that will travel at the invitation of the GOI, to discuss the short and long term presence. The overall US policy objective for Iraq will be regional stability, and all that this entails to achieve it. There will be work on transitioning MNSTC-I to an Office of Defense Cooperation, gradually changing the relationship to a conventional military-to- military one that will be managed more routinely.

17 July 2006

GEN Casey continues to consider the changes in the nature of the conflict in order to ensure that the force is fighting the right fight, and will achieve the objectives of the campaign plan. He knows there has been a shift in the last 30-45 days, and he is coming closer to some conclusions about what happened and its implications. GEN Casey's current view is that the changes we have seen in the nature of the conflict revolve around two separate developments. The first is the growing link between Al Qa'ida and the Sunni. The Sunni fear of growing 1.4b, 1.4d coupled with the growth in Shia death squads, is forcing these two groups closer together and in some areas, like Diyala, the commander reports there really is no distinction between the two any longer. Further, the AQSL strategy to appeal to the Muslim nation to support the Sunnis of Iraqi in light of their treatment by the Shiites, is only going to intensify this cooperation and escalate the sectarian violence.

GEN Casey further remarked that the Sunni are generally referring to Maliki's government as 'the Shia government' vice the Iraqi government. This is further indication that the sectarian divides have deepened and will not be easily or quickly bridged. While the coalition strove to achieve a unity government, what it actually got was a government of compromise candidates, and now broad acceptance of this government by the Iraqi people is going to take time.

The CG continues to believe that it is necessary to both engage the resistance and continue to pursue the Sunni extremists militarily. So, this two-track approach still seems valid for now.

The second critical development that has negatively affected the current environment in the past 30-45 days is the lack of Shia will to stop the sectarian violence. GEN Casey has noted before that Prime Minister Maliki says the right things in discussions he and the Ambassador routinely have with him.

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Maliki has acknowledged that the militias are undermining his government and that he needs to secure the population by disarming the militia and empowering the ISF. His national reconciliation plan is evidence that he understands the issues. However, Maliki tends to backtrack publicly, and privately in discussions with his Shia government colleagues. The problem seems to be that he and the Shia leaders view the activities of JAM death squads as a long overdue effort to protect and defend the Shia population. They tend to believe that the Shia were attacked relentlessly for three years by the Sunni, and that while the coalition had the power to stop it, they consciously did not. They cite coalition engagement with the Sunni nationalist as evidence that this conspiracy against the Shia continues. The Shia now have an opportunity to fight back, and they are doing so with government acquiescence if not support.

Evidence of Maliki's conflicting views of the violence and his role in dealing with it are readily apparent. For example, Maliki has told GEN Casey that he is working closely with Muqtada al-Sadr and routinely engages him in dialogue on the issue of militia and his role in the political development of Iraq. Maliki told the CG he is close to getting Sadr's agreement to make a public statement that renounces violence. Maliki is now concerned that the detention of Sajaad Badr Abdul Saeed in Basrah in mid-July may complicate his dialogue with Sadr, and will further inflame the situation.

17 July

On the afternoon of 17 July GEN Casey visited 4BCT at FOB Prosperity, commanded by (b)(3), (b)(6) to get an update on his AO which remains one of the most affected by the sectarian violence in Baghdad. (b)(3), (b)(6) commands the mixed Sunni-Shia neighborhoods of Dora, al-Jihad and Hay al-Furat. (b)(3), (b)(6) organized a two-hour patrol of these three neighborhoods for GEN Casey...

Of note was the absence of activity in the neighborhoods. While initially attributing it to the heat of the day, the 4BCT officers thought that fear was keeping people off the street and closed up in their homes. The convoy traveled for over an hour seeing less than a handful of residents outside their homes. There were checkpoints throughout the patrol. Those manned by the IA were the best, with soldiers in full gear, standing guard, weapons in hand. In fact the first IA checkpoint passed had just engaged a vehicle, whose windows were shot out, and the body of the dead driver evident. The IP checkpoints were evident, although less professional than the IA. The National Police checkpoints seemed to be the least effective with members out of uniform, sitting in the shade, and generally not providing much of a presence.

Commanders assessment of the situation was briefed to the CG as follows:

Attacks against local nationals and ISF now equal attacks against coalition indicating focus of sectarian targeting by both Shia and Sunni insurgent groups and militias

Significant decrease in number of effectiveness of IED attacks on the US

Corresponding increase in VBIED, SVBIED and murders

Dora will continue as the focus of sectarian violence. Arrival of 6/2 NP in Dora combined with increase of US forces in the area as well as significant local political and religious dialogue is designed to reduce violence against local civilians.

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Sectarian violence in Jihad Furat significantly reduced this week. Expect shift in violence to Shurta

Lack of public trust of confidence in ISF (particularly NP and IP) contributes to sectarian violence

Increase in small arms fire against ISF checkpoints and patrols signals lack of trust by general population, which see the ISF as sectarian. (b)(3), (b)(6) believes that both murders and attacks on ISF have expanded beyond insurgent groups and militias to include a broader segment of the population.

Karrada still seeing low attack levels. The IPs are doing a great job. Expect continued attempts by JAM to exert influence in this area.

18 July 2006

On 18 July GEN Casey attended his weekly meeting [with MNF-I analysts] and received several briefings...In response to a CG question, the [analysts] attempted to identify the presence or absence of a Shia grand strategy that might shed light on their current patterns of activity and future objectives. They concluded that currently there is no Shia master strategy. There appear to be separate plans with some shared goals. The nature of the Shia activity is largely characterized by the pursuit of parallel organizational goals, advanced through limited cooperation between groups to achieve common aims.

Regional activity is disorganized, diverse and motivated by a mix of local provincial and national interests. Shia political unity, they said, is fragile and the UIA is already a splintered organization. Further, provincial elections are likely to adversely affect the ability of UIA members to coordinate a national strategy. Finally, the analysts have not seen any official discussions or agreements regarding a common plan for dealing with the Sunni.

The analysts stated that while there was no master strategy, each Shia organization has its own individual national strategy, some goals shared and advanced through limited cooperation. The three shared goals they identified are as follows:

- Shia dominated government and security of Shia population
- Suppression of Sunni Arab population
- MNF-I withdrawal

GEN Casey said he thought that the Shia cohesion revolves around subjugation of the Sunni, and despite UIA fractures, they tend to rally around this one issue, and use the de-bathification as their driver. He stated that this shared focus has so far limited their ability to let the Sunni into the political process. Until their views of reconciliation change, it will put coalition plans on hold.

The CG asked the analysts try to further explore the Shia stated goal of protecting their population. He asked if it might also be true that they are trying to expand their influence, gain and hold territory, and control resources. GEN Casey is wondering if there could be an (b)(3), (b)(6) that Sadr may be wittingly or unwittingly part of that needs to be better understood, and countered.

19 July 2006

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GEN Casey and the Ambassador met for two and a half hours with the Presidency Council evening of 18 July at Deputy Prime Minister Barham Salih's residence...The objective was to urge these government leaders to move ahead with the national reconciliation plan, which has clearly lost momentum despite coalition efforts.

The CG said the meeting started hard and stayed hard. At the outset, Mahdi affirmed the need for the meeting, and then asked the CG how things had gone so wrong, that over the past three years, the coalition failed to protect the Shia population from relentless attacks. Hashimi also chimed in, and stated that the Iraqi Security Forces were completely corrupt and unable to provide security, especially in places like Mahmudiyah, which he claimed, is being especially hard hit and still struggling.

Casey said that despite the rhetoric, his sense was that, in the end, the Iraqis understood the need for real national reconciliation. They understood the need to commit to a process, a timeline, and a champion. The timing and scope of its implementation, however, remains still very much in question. GEN Casey urged the Iraqis to move on this, and warned them if they do not reverse course, they would end up with their own Lebanon. This seemed to get their attention, and Mahdi asked how much time he thought they had. The CG countered that they are in a better position to know the answer to that question. He asked them how many dead bodies a day are too many?

20 July 2006

GEN Casey traveled to Mosul to participate in the turnover of FOB Courage to the Iraqis in a short ceremony on 20 July. Following that, he traveled to QC for a three hour session with President Masud Barzani and his key leadership...

In Mosul, MG Turner and Governor Kashmulla officiated over the formal transfer of FOB Courage to Iraqi control. The palace itself was substantially restored, and the grounds readied for civilian occupation. The Iraqis have suggested that it be converted into a hotel/resort complex, but those details still need to be worked out with the Finance ministry who now controls the property. This transfer marked an important milestone in Mosul's post liberation transition. The city was nearly lost to the insurgents in late 2004, and there was great doubt whether the city would be ready to participate in the elections. The coalition put a berm around the city, flowed in additional forces, filled in for the police force that collapsed, and the city voted peacefully. Now the cooperation between the Iraqi Army Division Commander, the Governor, Deputy Governor, and Chief of Police is about as close and productive of any in Iraq, and could serve as a model for success in other cities.

20 July 2006

On 20 July GEN Casey flew to Qulah Chulan to meet with President Masud Barzani in President Jalal Talabani's residence...GEN Casey solicited Barzani's views of the current violence in Iraq, and specifically in Baghdad. GEN Casey observed he has seen a major change in the conflict. It has moved from an insurgency against the coalition to Iraqi-on-Iraqi violence. To illustrate, 60-70 percent of attacks countrywide are against the coalition. In Baghdad over the past month 40 percent are against civilians, 30 percent against the ISF and just 30 percent against the coalition.

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Barzani started off by stating that the Kurdish people are grateful for the liberation of Iraq. They are not unanimous about many things, but they are on this one issue. Coalition success, he said, is Kurdish success. Barzani said that the first phase of liberation is over and now it was time to move on to federalism and democracy. He stated up front there could be no retreat from terrorism. If this war is not led by the US it won't be led by anyone. US leadership is essential, and he promised Kurdish support. In order to understand the current environment, Barzani suggested it is important to first look at the reasons behind it. He cited the following major issues as central to the problem:

Coalition force mistakes made after liberation

Shia feel besieged in Baghdad and are attempting to gain and hold territory

Shia are now trying to compensate for oppression suffered over 80 years

Sunni misunderstood the situation and joined the process late

Sunni had no political organization to rally around. Their earlier structure consisted of the regime and the Bath party, and both are now defunct

The Iraqi culture of retaliation and revenge is growing stronger

1.4b, 1.4d

Barzani went on to explain that Saddam built a Sunni belt around Baghdad. The Shia, who feel besieged, now want to break that belt and are flowing their people into traditionally Sunni areas to do this. What they ultimately want is a safe corridor from Najaf and Karbala, up through Mahmudiyah and Yusifiyah, through the Karkh and Rusafa Baghdad neighborhoods (green line down the Tigris River) and north to Samarra. Now Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM), the Badr Organization, and the Muslim Ulama Council (MUC) all want control of Baghdad, and the killing is no longer just about identity, but about controlling the terrain and resources of the capitol city. Of note, Barzani described the MUC as the link between the Sunnis in government and the terrorists. The MUC, he said, instigates and provokes violence.

GEN Casey commented that the only other reference to 'belts' around Baghdad that he has heard came from some Al Qa'iada (AQ) documents seized in recent raids. He thought this could signify greater Bathist influence in AQ than he had earlier thought. Barzani agreed. He said that after the fall of regime, the Bathists joined the Salafists and the Iraqi Islamic Party. Most of AQ in Iraq is composed of former Bathists.

For the Sunni, Barzani said this score settling is organized and definitely not random. He specifically cited

1.4b, 1.4d

Referring to earlier comments by Barzani, GEN Casey asked whether the Sunni, who joined the process late, believe they can be partners in government. Barzani replied that some never will reconcile, but that

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some Sunni have changed, and there are enough who want to be partners. Their problem is that there is not enough power among this group to influence anything, and translate this desire to participate in the political process into action.

Regarding the Shia, GEN Casey observed that this government appears to be in less of a hurry to compensate than the last government. He also noted that this Shia coalition is trying to consolidate and control their influence at the expense of their ability to govern even handedly. GEN Casey further commented that the Shia leadership asserts the coalition could not protect the Shia population for the past three years, and are supportive of the death squads how are at last providing that protection. They do not view them as criminals and murderers. This combined drive for compensation and for protection makes it difficult to reconcile with the Sunni population. Until there is reconciliation, the violence in Baghdad will not stop.

Barzani replied that these two groups are not ready for negotiations or peace. They have no desire for those now and, in any case, do not have the decision in their hands to stop it. 1.4b

1.4b

GEN Casey asked Barzani how this process can be moved forward. CG noted that the situation is complicated. In the last four weeks AQ has escalated attacks and the death squads are responding. The level of killing in Baghdad is reaching an unsustainable level. A unified political and security effort is needed to change the environment, and to provide room for longer-term discussions about the future that need to occur. Barzani suggested a security conference in Iraq to include participation by the key religious and political leaders. He thought this should be a GOI initiative. He suggested that the US and NATO nations should publicly warn 1.4b against interference in Iraq. He stated there should be no publicity surrounding negotiations with insurgents as this just boosts their morale. He suggested that the personnel in the MOI and the Army be thoroughly vetted. Finally he proposed a six-month trial period.

Gen Casey noted that this new government has only been in power 60 days and so it is hard to judge now, how it will ultimately fare. There are a lot of people who want to see the government fail, but there is no choice but to deal with the realities we have. Barzani agreed, and further noted that there are a lot of pressures inside and outside the UIA for this government to fail, but cautiously added that we all have to help it succeed. GEN Casey agreed that there is a lot of pressure on the PM to support the UIA agenda.

20 July

...GEN Casey engaged President Masud Barzani and his key advisors on the subject of Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC) for the three Kurdish provinces of Irbil, Dahuk, and Sulaymaniyah. President Barzani, KRG Deputy President Kosrat Rasul Ali, Deputy Leader of the PUK Nawshirwan Mustafa Arnin, General Ali, (b)(6) from the Office of the KRG PM, all participated in the afternoon sessions. The Kurds agreed to think more about the proposal, and said they would send a delegation to Baghdad in the near future to discuss the issues in more detail with the GOI.

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As GEN Casey explained the concept of PIC, it was clear from their blank looks that this was the first time the subject had been raised with them. GEN Casey then asked them if they could envision the Kurdish provinces going through such a process. Barzani rather flatly stated that the situation in the north, is not similar to any other parts of Iraq. For the last fifteen years, since 1991, Baghdad had exerted no control over Kurdish territories.

GEN Casey acknowledged those realities and confirmed that the coalition was never sure how to apply PIC to the Kurdish provinces, as they had achieved security and local control years ago. He confirmed that participation in PIC would be for them, a political statement and would not be reflective of any change on the ground. GEN Casey also confirmed that PIC would not mean subjecting the three provinces to central government control. GEN Casey offered that he was looking for advice and insight on what they wanted to do with respect to PIC. He did note, however, that while the US and Europe were well aware of the very different conditions that exist in the Kurdish provinces, going through PIC would be a way to state to the rest of the world that these areas are safe and ready for investment. He further added that he thought it would be important for all Iraqi provinces to make this declaration, as a way of marking progress in Iraq. In summary, GEN Casey said that going through PIC had essentially three advantages:

It confirms the local security conditions are good and that the provinces are open for business

It is a visible demonstration of Iraqi progress toward stability and good governance

The coalition also provides \$10 million dollars in connection with PIC for local investment

The Kurds wanted to know if PIC would affect the State Department travel advisories. The CG did not know, but offered that it would certainly help to positively certify stable security conditions in their region.

President Barzani said he would further discuss the issue with his advisors and would send a delegation down to Baghdad to engage with the Prime Minister and others on the issue, to which the CG readily agreed...

GEN Casey surfaced the possibility of moving two Iraqi army brigades from Irbil and Sulayrniyah to Baghdad to assist with the security situation. He said both those brigades are capable, and both are over 90 percent Kurdish. He stated that the Iraqi army is the one national institution in Iraq, and that these two brigades could be of great use in securing the capitol city.

Barzani stated that the General Staff had advised him of this possible request a few days ago. He stated that while he agreed that the army responded to central leadership, the fight in Baghdad was a Sunni versus Shia fight, and Kurdish involvement would be counterproductive. Barzani predicted that the Kurds would be blamed for taking sides, and they feared a Kurdish-Arab conflict. Barzani offered to provide two brigades for a task that did not involve sectarian issues. He also offered to send two brigades to relieve two unnamed IA brigades in any other part of the country that would be better suited to assist in Baghdad. He recalled the problems that the Kurdish units had in the Fallujah battle and he did not support putting them through it again. Moreover, he stated it could preclude their roles as a future intermediary in Sunni-Shia disputes. Finally, Barzani stated that this was a political issue and not a military issue.

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GEN Casey stated that Iraq couldn't have a national army that cannot be used across the country. Either this is an army of Iraq or it isn't. As the only national institution, it is the only one that can help Baghdad out of this problem. GEN Casey said it might be possible to tailor the mission in Baghdad to put the two brigades in a position where they aren't in the middle of the fight, but still would contribute to success. He offered to possibly partner the two brigades with US forces to reduce their footprint. Iraqis have told the CG that they tend to view the Kurds as neutral players. GEN Casey emphasized that they need to change the dynamic in Baghdad now, in the next two weeks, and he needs two more Iraqi army brigades to do it. Finally, GEN Casey told Barzani that these are hard decisions, but these are hard times.

Barzani replied that the two brigades are part of the Iraqi army and are ready for any duty. But sectarian violence and religious confrontation is the issue, and the Kurds do not know how to fight this fight. During the day the people in the government are part of the political process, and at night they are running death squads. Both groups are part of the government. Whatever happens, the units will be labeled Peshmerga, and one side or both will blame the Kurds.

GEN Casey continued to press Barzani on the issue. He told them that the greatest threat to Iraq right now is sectarian violence. If not controlled, it can eradicate all the progress to date. The time to act is now, and all available resources must be applied. Soldiers do not get to pick the threat that they will agree to fight. It does not work that way. He understands there is risk, but doing nothing is also risky. If this is not addressed, it could rip the country apart.

Barzani countered that the Kurds had never been frightened of a challenge. He said perhaps if the Council of Representatives called on him for assistance that he could respond positively to this re-deployment. He said he needs time to study the issue. His initial thought is that two additional brigades in Baghdad will simply be lost. A fight and a half, and a fight, is the same. He stated with some passion, 'let's do the fight.' He went on to say that the Kurds would have to send enough force to avoid defeat. Kurds, he said, cannot fail, as it is a matter of history and pride. Barzani also stated that he would send a delegation to Baghdad to further discuss the issue.

In a separate sidebar as the CG was departing, President Barzani and his advisors offered to send 150,000 of their fighters/soldiers to Baghdad. While this is clearly an overly enthusiastic and unrealistic response on their part, it did appear that they had genuinely signed on to GEN Casey's request for their support...

22 July 2006

GEN Casey chaired a 90-minute meeting of his senior staff on the morning of 22 July to discuss the results of the latest Red Cell Paper he directed "Rethinking Strategic Priorities in Iraq." The purpose of this discussion was to determine if the coalition should change anything it is doing to better address the current conflict. While it basically validated the results of the paper, the MNF-I staff also talked through a number of important issues not addressed in the paper. In the end, the CG tasked his staff to rethink and expand on the elements that should comprise the process of reconciliation. It should be more than bringing insurgents into the political process. He also told them to review the Baghdad Security Plan, along all its lines of operation, and determine what additional resources should be brought to bear on the problem. As a result of this latest review, GEN Casey will now weight the main effort on Baghdad.

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This is a change from the Joint Campaign Action Plan that directed the coalition to work the ten key cities simultaneously...

Sunni Extremists. The briefer started by identifying the four main groups in the conflict starting with the Sunni extremists. The group thought that the paper did not recognize the geographic strategy that both the Sunni and Shia extremists seem to be working to gain control of key terrain in the northern and southern belts of Baghdad. They are concentrating on mixed neighborhoods and districts, cleansing them, and then setting themselves up to protect their population. Baghdad is now a more difficult operating environment now with the increased Iraqi and coalition presence. As a result they are concentrating on easier areas like Diyala. The group tends to believe that there is a strong geographic component to the strategy that is driving the violence. Once again the idea of the green line, through the Tigris river, seems more and more valid as the sectarian divisions solidify. The group agreed that there has definitely been a shift of the Sunni population to link up with AQ for protection, as much as retaliation against the Shia. At this point, the CG asked how much the culture of retaliation and revenge play in to this? Is it so engrained that we cannot change it?

MG Zahner suggested that there has been an expansion of the Umar Brigade that targets the Shia, or at least some growth in the number of Sunni cells targeting Shia. He conceded that he has little else to attribute the increased volume of attacks, and their ability to sustain them given the disruptions to the AQIZ network that have been achieved.

MG Gardner suggested that both the Sunni and Shia now see their role as more than just providing defense. It now appears to be a power grab, through the use of force rather than the political process. The DCG, UK LTG Fry thought the Sunni had lost control over the process of escalation. The Shia response is now continuous and not just in retaliation for a specific Sunni attacks. Shia are retaliating now with a goal of winning, and they think they have the numbers to do it. This is no longer a fight over wealth and power. Shia now believe that they do not have to share, and can dominate the environment. The 'quietism' that once characterized the Shia landscape was destroyed after the Samarra mosque attack. As a result, the Sunni have lost their power to orchestrate the escalation. The Shia sense of entitlement is now out of proportion, and they want to control everything.

Shia Extremists. The other key component in the current fight are the Shia extremists. The group thought that Jaysh al-Mahdi was shifting away from their concept of defense, and were now on the offense. They are trying to create larger Shia enclaves, control the area, and dominate the geography and are doing so from Sadr City down into Dora. This is now about establishing an aggressive presence and ultimately ownership.

GEN Casey added that he has been hearing from the Shia leadership their theory that the coalition could have, but failed to protect the Shia against three years of attacks. They also think that the coalition is abandoning them in favor of the Sunni, as evidenced by the Sunni engagement effort. The Shia have been out of power for 80-300 years (depending on how you count) and now they are using their time in power to expand their influence, and ensure that the Sunni never dominate again. The Shia consent for coalition presence is weakening daily. Moreover, it could be accelerated by the conflict in Lebanon/Israel.

GEN Casey asked if the group thought that the Iraqis were moving away from the political process to solve their problems. Have they given up on the political process and resorted to force? The DCG thought the Shia may have thought government could deliver and are just seeing now that it cannot. He

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postulates that the Shia are suffering from an extreme case of failed expectations. SCIRI and Badr, because of the fractured political process, never obtained the political power that they envisioned. A more obscure Shia party (Da'wa) is in charge and the disillusionment is being manifest across the spectrum, and definitely on the street. GEN Casey thought both Shia and Sunni were suffering bad cases of failed expectations.

The third group that is responsible for some of the violence in Iraq is the national resistance. The group noted that until recently they thought this group was on the verge of entering into the political process. It has now shifted back to fighting. CG noted that this Sunni population in the middle is being attacked by AQ, by the coalition, and by the Shia. They are now making decisions based on survival. This, of course, is the dynamic in the mixed population centers far more so than in places like Al Anbar.

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The CG asked if this was civil war. The group thought this was now a self-sustained conflict between the two extremist groups. The population is now set on either side of the divide. This is no longer a scenario where AQ can pulse the action.

The discussion turned to reconciliation. GEN Casey said that reconciliation means more than bringing the Sunni into the process. Debathification and engagement is part of the reconciliation process, but it is not the whole thing. If reconciliation does not occur, then the political process cannot move forward. He does not believe that the Sunni and Shia have reconciled their differences after 35 years of under the regime of Saddam Hussein. The Sunni must accept their minority role and the Shia have to share power. The group thought that the COR should be made to play a role in this. Right now, this appears to be a sectarian balance of power rather than a functioning democracy. The COR is the key. All agreed, however, that moving Iraq from sectarian bloc politics to genuine reconciliation is going to be a difficult process.

In closing GEN Casey said he thinks they need to modify the Joint Campaign Action Plan (JCAP) to focus first on securing Baghdad, rather than all 10 key cities at once. In Baghdad, there should be more emphasis on securing neighborhoods. The group agreed the coalition needs to defeat the extremists militarily, while expanding the areas where the population feels safe. This is essentially phase two of the Baghdad Security Plan. GEN Casey tasked his staff to look across all lines of operation and determine what additional resources (US and Iraqi troops, Special forces dedicated to targeting Shia extremists, intelligence assets, UAVs, civil affairs, police transition teams etc) should be moved into Baghdad. The CG will help them prioritize the list, and would like to see it within the week. CG will weight the main effort on Baghdad, and once successful, will move out to the other nine key cities, and eventually to the borders.

GEN Casey also reminded that the job here is to help the Iraqis succeed. The ISF must emerge as the dominant force, and capable of protecting the capitol city.

23 July

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GEN Casey provided...highlights from the [meeting] last night that...was precipitated by sudden Washington concern about the security situation in Iraq and the fact that a majority of commentators have begun to describe it in fairly dark terms. GEN Casey said this was intended to address the 50 questions on the conflict...the NSC had sent over to MNF-I just the day before.

NSA Hadley pointed out that these are the questions that POTUS asks every day that he cannot answer. SecDef said if these are the questions he is asking, maybe there should be some changes to better support him...Following this exchange, GEN Casey proposed an agenda change. Rather than go through each of the 50 questions, he queried whether the real issue wasn't whether the change in conflict meant that there needed to be a change to their strategy in Iraq. Everyone agreed that was the heart of the issue. Both Ambassador and the CG then gave their view of the situation. CG said he basically reviewed the issues he surfaced during the Camp David meeting last month.

At one point, GEN Casey told the group he thought that at least part of the problem was the Sunni and Shia are not quite ready to work together in a unity government. The Ambassador thought it may not be quite at the point. He thought that they just had not figured out the mechanics of their cooperation, but that they recognized it a component of their environment.

Hadley then asked to address grand strategy and reconciliation.

24 July 2006

GEN Casey [said] that Prime Minister Nuri al- Maliki had been placed under intense pressure by UIA, Muqtada al-Sadr, and Shia government officials to cancel his travel to the US because of the security situation in Iraq and in the region...As an indicator of his concern, Maliki asked GEN Casey not to permit any large operations while he is away from Iraq.

GEN Casey...is concerned that a combination of events may cause JAM to surge against MNF-I at any time. He is looking for indicators that will allow his forces to organize the best response in advance of any conflict. These are some of the possible triggers that may prompt JAM to act soon against MNF-I:

Over the past two weeks the coalition has escalated operations against death squad members (mainly JAM leaders) in Baghdad and Basrah. The ISOF killed over thirty JAM members in Sadr City evening of 22 July.

Sadr's condemnation of Israel, and call for Shia support to Hezbollah through rallies after Friday prayer, and the dispatch of fighters from Iraq to Lebanon...Hizballah is increasing support to Shia extremists to attack MNF-I in Iraq in response to the Israeli/Lebanese conflict

Possible backlash for Prime Minister Maliki's absence from Iraq, in spite of Shia demands not to travel

GEN Casey confirmed that Maliki has been in close touch with Muqtada al-Sadr regarding the violence, especially in Baghdad. Last week Maliki said he was close to getting Sadr to issue a public statement on nonviolence. The arrest in Basrah of senior JAM commander Sijaad Badr caused Sadr to pull back. Nonetheless, the PM is hoping to keep Sadr engaged politically, and to exercise restraint and control over most of his organization. He believes he can do this, and obtain Sadr's consent for action against

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those rogue elements of JAM that are not under his control. Sadr's lack of support for JAM extremists Abu Dura suggests that this tack may be possible.

While MNF-I is hopeful that it will be possible to separate out the smaller rogue elements of JAM, and continues to encourage Maliki's engagement with Sadr, they will not go out of their way to avoid a confrontation. To the contrary, their mission is to protect the population, and they will confront these death squads as necessary. Ideally, the confrontation will come sooner rather than later, while the coalition presence is still quite robust. MNF-I has run a war game playing out various possible scenarios for confrontation and have made contingency plans for a possible fight...

25 July 2006

GEN Casey...acknowledged that until just a few weeks ago, MNF-I's effort was heavily weighted on AQIZ. Only recently did GEN Casey direct CJSOTF and the ISOF to fully dedicate their operations to death squad targets, in coordination with 4ID. In terms of Iraqi consent for working this set of targets, GEN Casey said that Maliki has so far agreed to gradually increase pressure on death squads. This is intended to give Maliki some space to work the political side, which he claims to be doing. His strategy is to let the mainstream Sadrists continue to operate as they have been, but to separate them from the criminal elements. Maliki, however, is still walking a thin line, and asked that GEN Casey not allow any large operations while he is out of the country. This clearly shows that Maliki, while not yet 100 percent committed to this effort, is edging forward in tandem with the political environment.

GEN Casey noted that MNF-I has picked up the pace against death squads, conducting some 20 operations last week resulting in the capture of 37 members and 8 cell leaders. The only backlash so far has been an increase in IDF attacks. CG said he did show National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai that the IDF is originating in Sadr City and that there needs to be some action taken against them.

GEN Casey stated that the coalition is not targeting the very senior, strategic JAM leaders. Right now the targets are brigade, battalion, and intelligence commanders, who are clearly linked to death squad activities. The strategic level JAM members generally distance themselves from these operations and the evidence against them for a target package is absent. That said, MNF-I is reviewing their 'no touch' list of 19 names created in the aftermath of the battle with Sadr in Najaf. There has been an initial review...about moving some of the individuals off this protected status. This will have to be coordinated with the GOI next. If they approve, this will facilitate additional collection, and the possibility for future targeting operations.

Regarding the Baghdad Security Plan, GEN Casey told the group that they are working to revise parts of it with the Iraqis. He showed a map of the city with the Kharkh peninsula and the Karada area that had recently been turned over to Iraqi army control. This area is fairly secure, and the plan now is to clear the areas north and south along either side of the Tigris river. The goal is to establish a measure of control in Baghdad by the time Ramadan begins on 23 September. GEN Casey also said he is working to ensure that the Iraqi army emerges from this as the dominant force. This is the main reason that the has not flooded Baghdad with a coalition presence, even though it would be easier, and produce faster results.

GEN Casey said he believes the Iraqis want ownership of this effort. Both the Iraqi Ground Force Headquarters and the Joint Headquarters will be operational on 1 September. This will give the Iraqis

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full command and control over the five Iraqi army divisions that are already in the lead. He thought that it might overload their abilities to control all five, and will provide some options. His preferred option is that the Iraqis take immediate control of the two Baghdad Divisions. This assumes the highest risk, but will force them to step up. Alternately, they may start with controlling the 5th, 8th, and 4th IA Divisions outside Baghdad. Finally, they could, of course, assume responsibility at once for all five divisions. The truth is, GEN Casey said the Iraqis are ready to get some breathing space from us, and we need to be prepared to give it to them.

GEN Casey said he would like Ramadan to be a turning point for the Iraqis, and for Eid (night of power) to be celebrated as the start of Iraq's new future. He solicited Station assistance in marking this as a watershed event that all Iraqis can support and celebrate.

MG Zahner noted that he had just met with the Minister of State for National Security Shirwan al-Wa'ili. He concluded that this ministry remains a Shia competitor for the INIS. He reminded all that while the Minister position was an official position, there was still no legislation establishing his Ministry. The plan, at this point, is to let that stand. This means there will be no funding for its operations. Wa'ili is much more open and willing to cooperate than his predecessor, but it is still not clear how this Ministry will add value. At present it is responsible for the management and support of the NJOC (National Joint Operations Center) and the PJCCs (Provincial Joint Coordination Centers responsible for coordinating local security operations) across the country. GEN Casey suggested that MG Zahner look at its possible role in the National Counter Terrorism Force. Fact that they have connectivity with the regional PJCCs might justify its continued operation in a new role...GEN Casey...wants warning on whether/when JAM is planning any large scale operations against the coalition in retaliation for recent detentions/arrests. He also wants some effort devoted to determining what, if any impact the war in Lebanon will have on the coalition in Iraq. Finally, he wants some focus on AQ's ability to generate so many suicide attacks, in light of the coalition successes against the network. Are more Bathisits and former regime officials joining the movement? He said he was briefed on the results of a Sunni and Shia focus group...When asked how Iraqis view Al Qaida, the answer overwhelming was that AQ is the leader of the resistance in Iraq. If this is true, then has AQ hijacked the insurgency?

26 July 2006

CG mentioned that he was satisfied with the results of the assessment of the Iraqi security forces conducted by US CENTCOM, Chief of Staff Assessments Team. At CG's request the team traveled to Baghdad from 20 June to 5 July to determine the ISF's ability to conduct counterinsurgency operations within the rule of law. They assessed elements of the MOD, MOI, Iraqi Army, Iraqi Special Operations Forces and the National Police. They also assessed the functional capabilities of logistics and intelligence. The team agreed that the Iraqi army is on track for transitioning battle space to all 10 Iraqi Army Divisions by Spring 2007, and they assessed the force structure of the IA to be adequate for the counterinsurgency (COIN) fight. They recommended an additional mechanized force for operational reserve. Some other key findings are as follows:

Iraqi army commanders are confident that their organizational structure is effective for the COIN fight, and most units possess weapons and transport to conduct effective COIN operations.

The Iraqi army is a tactically sound force but is not logistically and administratively self-sufficient, which makes it fragile.

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To sustain Iraqi Ar.my development, Military Transition Team commitment will be required beyond the termination of coalition unit partnership.

Loyalty to the Iraqi Army as an institution, and service to the nation, seems to be genuinely embraced by the officers and NCOs.

Significant work remains at the MOD and the MOI in order to provide the oversight and enablers required for a professional fighting force

Lack of an established rule of law hinders the effectiveness of all ministries to carry out their respective mandates.

Logistics is the primary area of concern that requires renewed emphasis and priority effort in order to sustain the forces that are being fielded.

The National police require substantial restructuring and improved procedures to provide effective law enforcement and gain legitimacy, trust and confidence of the Iraqi people.

The National police need to purge militia infiltration and curb internal corruption in order to be deployed with trust and speed.

The ISOF brigade is the most capable unit in Iraq. Their controlled expansion and development of the Iraqi Special Operations Command will provide significant capability at the national level for COIN and CT operations.

Iraqis are capable of intelligence source operations but require improved analytical capability and fusion with operations. An overarching intelligence architecture that codifies and links the intelligence community internally within Iraq and externally with partner nations is required and may take several years to develop.

Currently there is no central Iraqi direction or authority for the conduct of CT in support of COI operations, nor is there a national architecture that synchronizes the CT capabilities of the MOD, MOI, and INIS together. The emerging Iraqi Special Operations Command will help fill this requirement.

26 July 2006

GEN Casey has now scheduled meetings with his senior commanders on the Baghdad Security Plan every other day. He has made this a priority and is driving it forward personally and with certain energy. Following are some key issues associated with Phase Two of the plan that are being further developed by the MNF-I staff, MNC-I, and MNSTC-I.

GEN Casey wants a cooling off period in Baghdad in order to change the momentum and signal to the residents that a change is coming. He suggested that this cooling off period may include a driving ban for 48 hours, perhaps over a holiday, but he wants it tied to something else that puts the bad guys on their heels while the CF/ISF recalibrates for this bigger effort. Related to this, the CG wants a date, in next week or two, when the gears on the Baghdad Security Plan are going to shift. He told his staff they need

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to be agile, and need to turn this situation around quickly. Specifically, he told them that the forces (US and Iraqi) originally planned to be moved into Baghdad in the September timeframe need to be here by mid August.

The CG said he has Washington support for the extension of the 172 Stryker BCT in Mosul for 90 days. This will allow the CG to use their replacement, the 3/2 SBCT, in Baghdad for that same time period. Elements of the 3/2 are already in Baghdad, and when the entire brigade arrives it will add some 300 vehicles to the mix including 150 or so Strykers. The Strykers have a unique capability to conduct time sensitive targeting operations, and their muscular presence on a city street has deterrent value.

Iraqi and Coalition forces must feel responsible for a given area of the city so there is accountability. Therefore, the CG suggested that there should be discreet sections of the city blocked out and assigned to specific units. The CG passed out a paper drafted by an Iraqi colleague that suggested that each 'district' should have a joint HQS to include representatives from the MOD, MOI, INIS, and Coalition. They should meet regularly to assess security needs. They need to communicate with the people, reassure them, and involve them in the security plan. CG is deferring to his planners to operationalize this concept.

The Iraqi Security force leaders want a comprehensive plan for dealing with the militia, but CG reminded his commanders that this will not be delivered by the COR for some months. Right now, the CG is just looking for a statement of support for a plan to deal with the militia. This will be sufficient to give the ISF confidence to target death squads, enforce weapons bans, reducing illegal checkpoints, etc. Once the COR delivers that statement, the CG suggested it would be useful to have Prime Minister Maliki, as Iraq's Commander-in-Chief, address the ten IA Division Commanders, and tell them personally what he expects them to accomplish. GEN Casey urged his staff to move quickly and in advance of the COR August recess. CG has also been considering a proposal to ban any political party that has a militia, from participating in the provincial elections. This will take more work to develop before he surfaces this outside MNF-I.

Along the same lines, the CG said there needs to be a policy announced that addresses the Facility Protective Services (FPS) one of the largest, and possibly most misused security force in Iraq. The Iraqi Ministers need to comply with the guidance, and the police and MOI need to monitor and enforce it.

The CG wants a similar announcement on PSDs. He suggested that they be required to register by a certain date. Those not registered will not be considered illegal.

The CG wants an early announcement on the reform of the National Police, which the Prime Minister was briefed on and approved. He will have MNST-I discuss the three-phased strategy to 'balance' the performance of the national police with the MOI. Implementation needs to begin by the end of this month.

The CG has ordered a media plus up. He suggested two very focused messages to start with: the Iraqi Security Forces are protecting the population, and the second key theme should be to delegitimize death squads.

27 July 2006

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On 27 July, GEN Casey...received an update from (b)(6) and his staff on their work against the death squads.. (b)(6) acknowledged that they had not placed much focus on this target before the February mosque attack in Samarra. Subsequently, the late March raid on the Husaniyah in Sadr City (Operation Valhalla) caused them to stand down operations for 4-6 weeks while the Iraqi government dealt with the blow back. They have steadily increased their ops tempo since May.

(b)(6) said that the ISOF is now viewed as a credible force by the GOI, and cited a few examples to support his statement. He said that the ISOF commander personally received a congratulatory phone call from Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki on the success of a recent raid. In addition, the office of the Prime Minister has ensured that the ISOF received bonus for their recent performance. Finally, the Prime Minister recommended the ISOF commander for accelerated promotion from COL to BG. In addition, b 6 noted that the Minister of Defense recently had told the Council of Representatives that the only force working for the good of Iraq is the ISOF. As a result, the ISOF feels very well supported by the GOI, and continues to move aggressively against death squads regardless of their sectarian affiliation. CG noted that he has worked the PM hard to get his support for these operations, and he has agreed to gradually increasing the pressure. The GOI has likely been emboldened by these ISOF successes.

(b)(6) said that from 22 February to 27 July, they have conducted 678 Iraqi-led precision raids, of which 133 were focused on death squads. Of those 133, 61 of the targets were Sunni and 54 Shia. He acknowledged that their operations against Shia targets had ramped up in the last three weeks. They have 90 targets in development and 40 targets awaiting triggers. The targets are being actioned by the ISOF Brigade, and the MOI's Emergency Response Unit (SWAT equivalent), as well as special police units in Hillah, Diwaniyah, Al Kut, Muqadiyah and ten key cities forces.

CJSOTF assesses that there is a true schism within Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM). They believe that Sadr really does control JAM with some success...JAM elements are chafing at the restraint Sadr has imposed on them. CG added that the Prime Minister is working to engage Sadr, so that when/if there is a confrontation, that they will only fight 20 percent of JAM and not the entire militia.

(b)(6) told the CG that every time they enter Sadr City or As Shula, they face a tough gun battle. He showed some video clips to demonstrate the point. In the one example, within 4-5 minutes of arriving in a neighborhood, some 300-400 fighters mobilized. They took fire from both sides of the street, and from roof tops, for a mile long stretch of territory. He says they are well armed with the usual small/medium weapons, as well as RPGs, and in some cases dishkas mounted on roof tops. He assesses they are getting stronger, as each time they enter these two areas the response is more intense...After the session, the CG said that they will have to soon address this issue to prevent a Mogadishu-style environment from developing...

(b)(6) also surfaced his interest in working against target facilitation nodes that include mosques, schools, medical clinics, and OMS HQs. He stated they have strong target packages showing these facilities are supporting death squad activities. The CG acknowledged the sensitivities, and said he would be willing to exercise the system. He asked (b)(6) to provide him one or two of his best packages, and he would bring to the Prime Minister for his review/approval.

Over the past few weeks the CG has been working to balance the coalition level of effort against both al-Qa'ida and the death squads. While he has given direction to his commanders and encouraged them to reorganize their staffs to support this, he has decided to offer LTG Chiarelli control over [targeting of] death squads...He wants the death squads to feel the heat. Until several weeks ago there was a

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perception that they operated unconstrained. This needs to change and the Sunni need to see that the effort is making a difference.

[b 6] said he had established a small office in the MOD that is working to transition the ISOF to the MOD. This is really just intended to give MOD visibility into ISOF activities. CG said that when BG Phelan arrives at the end of the month, they could begin to develop relationships between and among all the Iraqi CT organizations. The long-term intent is to build an Iraqi National CT capability by integrating the existing Iraqi action elements - ICTF, ERU, STU, ICTU - under a common joint headquarters with a common intelligence fusion center with participation from all Iraqi intelligence services. He will give BG Phelan his thoughts on his arrival, and will ensure that all interested parties are involved in the process...

27 July 2006

GEN Casey traveled to Balad on 27 July for a...discussion that largely focused on the changes in AQIZ post Zarqawi...[Coalition forces see] an overt attempt by [b)(6)] to assert control over al-Qa'ida in Iraq. He is circling the battlefield, replacing leaders and establishing his control. He is encouraging his troops to demonstrate their presence by ratcheting up operations, and this has been manifest in Mosul, Bayji, and Ramadi. He is energizing fighters to do his bidding, and avoid target fixation in Baghdad. [Coalition operators] believe the relationship between AAM and core AQ will continue to grow closer over time. Both sides are reaching out. For example, AQ is dispatching its senior leadership from Afgan-Pak region to shore up the fight in Iraq. Post-Zarqawi, they feel pressure not to fail in Iraq. They see this as a decisive turning point and they are piling on now to win this fight. AQ believes they must be successful in Iraq, in order to expand the jihad into Sudan etc.

[AQI] are now drawing from a different pool. Rather than seeing the formation of former military regime members, they are seeing AQ tying together leaderless cells of families, tribes, and mosque based contacts, into neighborhood groups banding together for protection. CG asked if this means that AQ is moving away from its religious base. Has AQ hijacked the insurgency and become more acceptable to mainstream Sunni?...only in the short term, because a long-term caliphate is not an acceptable end state for most Iraqi Sunni.

[In Ramadi] AQ backed off after the initial operation in the city to take stock of their situation. They are now pushing back in, from outside the city...suicide bombers are [also] flowing back in to Iraq...[Coalition forces] are very focused on taking down the Abu Gadiyah foreign fighter facilitation network...Finally,...one quarter to one-third of the detainees...are re-captures. This updates the old 5.6% recidivist rate that has been accurate in the past.

28 July 2006

GEN Casey continues to focus on the Baghdad Security Plan. At this afternoon's Board of Directors lunch, where the CG brings together the General Officers from MNF, MNC, and MNSTC-I, he told them that in the two years he has served in this position, this is the most complicated environment he has ever seen. He said it is difficult to define it, understand it, and turn it. He told his commanders that his first, second, third and fourth priority is Baghdad. He wants a full court press, across all lines of operation...His goal is to bring some level of calm to Baghdad by the end of Ramadan and it will require intense work and focus by everyone and every organization to be successful.

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At this evening's meeting on the Baghdad Security Plan, the CG continued to drive his commanders hard. As previously reported, this is a full spectrum effort from MNF, MNC, MNSTC-I, the Embassy, and the GOI. Given his continuity in Iraq, the CG has acquired many useful lessons learned from previous efforts to control this city, and is using them to guide his decision-making. He wants the plan synchronized and coordinated and mapped out in detail, and responsibilities assigned. Above all, he wants this to result in a success for the Iraqi government with the ISF emerging as the dominant force capable of providing security to all segments of the population.

There are still a lot of moving parts and the plan. Following are some of the highlights from this latest session:

MNC has made the following top Request for Actions to MNF:

move two Iraqi army brigades from MND-N to Baghdad

GOI statement on militia and support for security operations

Consistent pay for the ISF, and bonus pay for units moving out of their AO to Baghdad

National police restructuring and reform

Investigative judges down to IA and NP Divisions levels

Complete electrical Summer action plan

Rapid contracting capability

Ministry of Finance release of DFI

Institute a weapons registration system that include weapons cards renewals

Develop and implement public information plan that supports the BSP

The staff is working hard on producing a timeline for the Baghdad Security Plan that will serve as the forcing mechanisms for all the major military, political and economic events associated with this effort. The CG laid out his notion of what needs to happen in the first week of August to set the conditions as follows:

COR and/or PM statement on empowering the ISF National police reform

PM address to the country post CONUS visit and focus on future

Help Iraqis organize an event for their political leaders to come together in support

Help Iraqis organize an event for their religious leaders to come together in support

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Large military operation to begin in one of the Beladiyahs (Dora) that presages the Baghdad Security Plan

PM visits the security forces and gives them his guidance as commander in chief

In closing the CG tasked his staff to prepare a briefing for the Sunday evening Ministers Council for National Security on the GOI deliverables for August/September. He reminded his commanders that this would be perhaps one of the most painful parts of the plan, if his experience with past efforts is any guide.

Finally, in closing the CG said he is drafting a new "Commanders Intent" that he plans to circulate for comment. Very generally, it will identify three key tasks as follows:

Stabilization: reducing violence before Ramadan

Consolidation: completing all military operations and placing the ISF in control

Transition: by the end of the year transitioning Baghdad to capable Iraqi security forces.

30 July 2006 - Basrah

GEN Casey traveled to Basrah to receive an update from the new UK MND-SE Commander and his staff. MG Sherriff and GEN Casey worked together in Bosnia, so this will be a comfortable transition for both. This new command has only been on the ground in Basrah for three weeks, but they seem very familiar already with the core issues, have London backing for kinetic operations, and are working on a new concept of operations to address the security for both Basrah and Maysan. The CG said he supported their strategy and encouraged them to keep working on it.

MG Sherriff provided an overview with the following key points:

UK intent is to stay as long as there is an MNF-I role for them

The end state they are looking for in MND-SE is Iraqi lead under 'good enough' conditions

The militia violence is intended to force a humiliating coalition withdrawal

Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC): Muthana achieved PIC in July, Maysan is not ready, Dhi Qar is possible in August per the Italians, and Basrah in 6-12 months.

Basra. MG Sherriff provided the most negative assessment of the situation in Basrah to date. GEN Casey thought he might have somewhat overstated the problem, as sometimes happens when incoming commanders review the work of outgoing commanders. In sum, MG Sherriff put up a powerpoint slide that read:

No security

No freedom of movement

No comprehensive approach linking security, governance, and economics to address point one and two

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To illustrate the point, MG Sherriff stated there has been a steady level of contact between UK forces and the militia. Last week they launched four UK companies to conduct raids in Basrah proper. Each of the four companies was ambushed by a company of JAM militia, and he said they were tough fights. As a result of these conditions, the British believe it will be necessary to lock down Basrah to regain control over the city. MG Sherriff said to accomplish this, he will need more armor and more air assets. He has already approached the Corps commander LTG Chiarelli for assistance, as he does not think that the UK will be able to support him in the timeframe he needs. MG Sherriff is considering major operations in Basrah not earlier than September. GEN Casey added that Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki wants to send two additional Iraqi army brigades to assist in securing Basrah. MG Sherriff thought the IA was absolutely part of the solution. The police, he said, were definitely part of the problem.

Maysan. MG Sherriff identified the key threats in Maysan province as militant JAM cells, the EFP network of (b)(6) tensions between the Badr Organization and JAM, border security and weapons smuggling. MG Sherriff said they are looking at ways to generate force to bring Maysan up to a level of security that will allow the Iraqis to take over.

Muthana. Since PIC, which occurred the first week of July, there have been no coalition forces present in Muthana. The CG thought this was noteworthy, and told the group that when he wants to project how other parts of the country will look six months out, he looks to MND-SE as the model to watch, and finds it very instructive. The UK noted that the Australian battlegroup in Talil is conducting over watch in Muthana, and it appears to be going well. CG made a note to visit the Australians, again, to get some visibility on how over watch eventually will run in the rest of Iraq.

Dhi Qar - The Italian force commander was present in the briefing, and confirmed that they believe Dhi Qar can achieve PIC as early as next month. The Italians will plan to flow their forces out in the late Fall time frame. The Australians have not yet agreed to accept over watch responsibility for Dhi Qar, but they will continue to pressure them to do so. MG Sherriff said that UK reinforcements to fill that role are unlikely.

GEN Casey gave Sherriff some guidance in a separate session noting that Basrah represents Iraq's crown jewels. It can be a model for development. If Basrah is stabilized, achieves PIC, it will attract foreign investment. Getting Basrah to this point should be their goal. In the short term, he told Sherriff he should try to achieve something significant in Basrah before the start of Ramadan. He told Sherriff that there will be an effort to promote Ramadan as a peaceful start to a fresh beginning for a new Iraq.

30 July 2006

GEN Casey traveled to Camp Bucca, situated just 1.5 km from the Kuwaiti border, for a short update since his last visit nearly five months ago. CG arrived just as a new MP brigade was assuming responsibility for Camp Bucca. CG noted that the transfer of authority, unfortunately, coincided with the closure of Camp Suse, and the transfer of all those detainees to Bucca. This much churn at once is not something the military ideally would have wanted to burden any new unit with managing. But, he said this is an example of one of those intangibles that cannot be predicted and can unhinge otherwise thorough planning. CG acknowledged the tough situation they stepped into, but said it was extremely important and thanked for what they do every day. He also noted that keeping 10,000-12,000 Iraqis in detention is a coalition vulnerability that can and is exploited. They need to just stay focused and

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continue their good work...From a facilities standpoint, Bucca is still in transition. It has eight compounds complete, with four more scheduled to be complete by September 2006. The additional compounds are being built to assume control of the Fort Suse prison Population as the military is closing down that facility permanently. They expect that that last detainee from Suse will be transferred to them by the first week in September. There are 8173 detainees in Bucca now, and they will hold in excess of 10,000 when construction is complete. They now have 80 JAM detainees in detention in an overwhelmingly Sunni extremist population. They have about 120 foreign fighters. Their guard ratio is 19:1 assuming a single shift of guards only. The ratio slides to 8:1 counting two guard shifts and the administrative support. Their main external threat is from IEDs on the main supply routes.

Probably the biggest story at Bucca right now is the hiring, training, partnering of Iraqi Correctional Officers (ICO). This facility is projected to turnover to Iraqi control by the end of 2007, so MNF-I has been focused on developing a competent prison management system for them. They currently have 833 ICOs trained and on duty. Their target is 1938 by April 2007. The commander said they had received 'no staff benefit' yet from the ICOs and identified a number of issues that concern him. He said, in an agreement with the Ministry of Justice, the ICOs work five days, and take ten days off. This has caused some retraining problems to surface with such routine extended absences. He also said that their competence level is low, and they are not disciplined enough. Of interest, he confirmed that because most of the ICOs are recruited locally from MND-SE, they are largely a Shia work force. The prison population is 99 percent Sunni, so there is more concern about the ICOs 'over administering' justice. There is no concern about facilitating prison releases/breakouts. ICOs are in the lead in maintaining Compound One, although the US troops have not fully backed out. The Iraqis are on track to assume the lead in the management of four more compounds by September.

Commanding General's Intent for Baghdad Security

We are undertaking a concerted effort to help the Iraqi government established long-term security in their capital. Our effort will confront Sunni and Shi'a extremists, the Resistance and 1.4b surrogates who are competing to expand their control and influence over Baghdad. To be successful, we will assist the government of Iraq in developing and sustaining a well-orchestrated security effort that integrates all elements of national and coalition power. We will focus on turning the population of Baghdad against violence as we protect them and help them achieve enduring security in their neighborhoods by the end of the year. This is our main effort. It will be the key to ensuring the success of the Iraqi government and restoring the confidence of the Iraqi people in their future. As such, it will be the decisive operation of the campaign.

We will use the Campaign Plan construct of Unity, Security and Prosperity to frame our operations and we will accomplish our objectives in three phases:

Phase 1 Stabilization: Our goal is to bring a substantial and rapid reduction in lawlessness and sectarian killings before the start of Ramadan.

Phase 2 Consolidation: Our goal is to establish the ISF as the dominant security presence in Baghdad and begin economic revitalization efforts

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Phase 3 Transition: Our goal is to transition security of Baghdad to capable Iraqi Security Forces by the end of the year.

In each phase we will accomplish these critical tasks at the tactical, operational and strategic levels:

Delegitimize violence

Protect the population and expand secure areas

Improve the credibility of Iraqi Security Forces in the eyes of their population

Deny extremists freedom of movement and political, religious and physical sanctuary.

Employ political, religious and media support to lessen sectarian tensions

Focus offensive efforts against terrorist cells and death squads

Integrate economic initiatives to restore basic services into security areas.

Establish integrated command and control arrangements that facilitate accountability, rapid reaction and military- police integration

Continue to demonstrate progress in areas outside Baghdad

Our end state is a stable Baghdad where long-term political and economic development can continue by the end of the year.

2 August

GEN Casey recently remarked that Prime Minister Nuri al- Maliki has been increasingly willing to discuss his private views of the security and political situation in Iraq, and is not as consistently in the receive-mode as he has been in the past. In addition, CG noted that Maliki continues to show increased confidence, and clarity of purpose, regarding next steps to move the country forward.

This new confidence, and increased dialogue between the two men has been enormously instructive. Last week, Maliki said very decisively that the problem in Iraq is the Bathists and the al-Qa'ida terrorists. The solution, he said, is to focus maximum effort against these two groups, and everything else will resolve itself. The Shia death squads are only responding to the Sunni extremist provocations. They will stand down when they no longer have to protect themselves, their families, and neighborhoods from attacks.

Maliki's view that the Shia death squads only exist in reaction to the Sunni extremists is cut and dry to a point. GEN Casey has steadily worked Maliki toward the view that the GOI must protect the population against kidnappers and murderers, whatever the ethnic identity, and that the Shia death squads are now responsible for the death of more Iraqis than car bombs. These discussions have had some impact and Maliki has given his approval to 'gradually increase pressure against the death squads.' GEN Casey has

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taken him at his word. Maliki still remains conflicted, however, as the following incident demonstrates.

On the evening of 2 August, MNF-I had planned a raid to capture Jaysh al-Mahdi Commander Abu Miriam in Sadr City. STRATOPS the plan to National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai, and also to Maliki in advance. They provided their support. Subsequently, Rubai called STRATOPS to say that Maliki now felt uncomfortable with it, but was not disapproving it. When the ISOF unit arrived at the target location in Sadr City, all they found was an elderly woman with a young child alone in the apartment watching TV. The target likely had been tipped. Because all operations are now joint with the Iraqis it is hard to know where the leak originated. But this vignette is instructive as it underscores Maliki's persistent discomfort with working against Shia. He believes the Sunni extremists are the enemy, not the Iraqis trying to protect themselves. He wants the coalition to focus on the enemy.

Still Maliki pursues this dual track approach, and GEN Casey encourages him to continue these outreach initiatives. On the afternoon of 2 August, Maliki told GEN Casey he had spoken with both Muqtada al-Sadr and the IIP, and he secured their formal agreement to stop the killings. Maliki did not provide additional details, but this is consistent with previous statements in which Maliki said he was close to getting Sadr's consent for a statement of nonviolence.

Maliki is very much aware of the discussions about coup plotting against him and his government by the National Salvation Front. He surfaced the issue to the CG and acknowledged his concern over their activities. CG commented that this just feeds their suspicion that the Sunni are planning a power grab that will restore their domination over the Shia. GEN Casey did assure Maliki that MNF-I would crush any armed effort to bring down his government.

Also, of interest, Maliki has completely reversed his position on the Iraqi Special Operations Force (ISOF) who have been involved in most of the death squad raids, to include those in Sadr City. Maliki is now a big supporter of the unit, regards them as a very professional force. He told GEN Casey he is so impressed with their work that he wants to visit them personally. MNF-I will organize this soonest. This is significant because in May, Maliki blamed the ISOF for the fallout that occurred from the raid in Sadr City (Operation Vallhalla) and directed a temporary stand down of their operations.

GEN Casey said that Maliki was planning to travel to Najaf on Saturday 5 August to see both Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani and Muqtada al-Sadr. He plans to continue the dialogue on ending the violence and reconciliation with these key players.

2 August 2006

Afternoon of 2 August GEN Casey met with the former al Anbar Governor Shaykh Faysal al-Ga'ud, at the request of Minister of State for National Security Shirwan al-Wa'ili. Ga'ud was accompanied by b 6

b 6 The purpose of the meeting was to obtain GEN Casey's support for the GOI to sanction the council they established on 3 March, as the official Provincial Council of al Anbar. They do not recognize the current Governor as legitimate, and believe they can provide a stronger, more effective, and representative governing body. In exchange for this official recognition, the three said they pledged al Anbar free of terror, and continued close cooperation with US forces to fight Saddamists, Takfiris, and terrorists.

The Minister of State for National Security, Shirwan al-Wa'ili spoke with GEN Casey on 31 July and

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brokered a meeting between him and Ga'ud. Ga'ud was accompanied (b)(6) (b)(6) Ga'ud stated they represented the Governing Council of al Anbar. He said this council was formed on 03 March after the last governing council was dissolved as a result of assassinations and intimidation of its members by AQ. In March, a group of 1,500 Anbaris came together and selected 41 members to serve on the council. They selected Ga'ud to be their leader, (b)(6) as their deputy, and (b)(6) a general member. The council is comprised of tribal shaykhs, educated and prominent residents of al Anbar. Ga'ud sent a notice on the establishment of this new council to the Prime Minister, MOI, MOD, and Minister of State for National Security. (b)(6) assured the CG that while it was not possible to hold a regular election, that this would be their goal as soon as possible.

(b)(6) stated that they created this council because there was a need for a strong governing body in al Anbar to fight the Saddamists, Takfiris, and terrorists. They want to continue their cooperation with the US against terrorists and work toward prosperity in the province. They requested GEN Casey's support to represent their interest to the GOI. In short, they want to be recognized as the official governing body of al Anbar. Since May, (b)(6) said that the cooperation between the people of Ramadi and the US forces has been outstanding. For the first time in three years, the people of Ramadi are now providing information on terrorists. US forces have already captured/killed a large number as a result of this close cooperation. There are now continuous meetings between the two sides, with increasingly productive results. In addition, they said they had sent over 1,000 men from the Albu Nimr tribe to join the Iraqi police and army. They claimed these young men are loyal and determined to reclaim their province, but would be even more successful with more and better vehicles and weapons. (b)(6) stated they also want more IP stations in the province, and more security on the highway between Ramadi and Rutbah.

GEN Casey asked them about their relationship with the Governor of Al Anbar, Mamun Samih Rashid al-Alwani. (b)(6) stated that Mamun was cooperating with the terrorists and so did not trust him. (b)(6) pointed out that Mamun was never elected in a free and fair election. Only 3,000 Anbaris voted in the January 2005 election to select a Provincial Council and a Governor. As a result, some side deals were cut to provide leadership for al Anbar, but they do not consider Mamun a legitimate Governor. Ga'ud accused Mamun of being an Islamist, in collusion with the same people trying to destroy Iraq. GEN Casey recalled that Mamun, from a lesser tribe, has not been very successful in establishing himself in a leadership role, so was not surprised that these Shaykhs do not recognize his position and won't work with him. GEN Casey asked what they would provide in exchange and they pledged they would rid al Anbar of terrorists and return a safe province.

GEN Casey thanked them for the visit. He stated up front that he does not approve the establishment of provincial councils, but he wanted to work with them to achieve their goals of defeating AQ. Neither side can be successful alone. AQ wants to create a caliphate in al Anbar to project terror inside and outside Iraq. No one wants them to succeed. The question now, is how can the Coalition work with this group to be successful.

The CG described the GOI/coalition plan to clear sections of Ramadi,, establish police stations, man the stations with locally recruited officers, re-establish life services (water, electricity etc) and move to the next area. With the cooperation of the people of al Anbar they can be successful, and then ultimately turn over security responsibility to them, and move the coalition outside the city. The CG went on to say they have an approved plan between the GOI and the Governor of al Anbar to hire 11,000 police and another 6,500 for the army. Recruiting for the police is going well, but not so with the army. He told the

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group that the MOD is working on a plan to allow locally recruited Anbaris to serve the first year or two in the province, and then be available for duty in other parts of the country. The CG said they need quality, loyal men to serve, and this is a way for the people to assume responsibility for their city and their province.

Finally, the CG stated that he planned to go to Ramadi tomorrow and will discuss this further with his Commanders. He promised to contact the group early next week to discuss next steps.

2 August 2006

GEN Casey said he had a very interesting conversation with national Security Advisor Muwafiq al-Rubai about the security situation in Iraq. Rubai surfaced the topic of the Sunni belts that Saddam had imposed around Baghdad to protect the regime. Rubai said the current conflict is all about controlling Baghdad. He said he believes the Sunni are now posturing themselves to neutralize the Baghdad Shi'a population, in preparation for the coalition withdrawal. He indicated the Shi'a elite are gripped by the prospect. They believe that the Bathists will return to power and that they are laying the groundwork for that day by moving into key terrain in and around Baghdad. Rubai clarified that they are not anticipating the return of the old regime, but a Sunni dominated power structure that will once again subjugate the Shi'a.

Also, and perhaps of most significance, is Rubai's final statement that the Shi'a do not trust the American strategy in Iraq. They are convinced the Americans will abandon the Shi'a, just as they did in 1991, and they are planning for that contingency now.

GEN Casey told Rubai he needs to be the honest broker in these discussions about security strategy. Is the strategy to transition the security to Iraqi control the right strategy? Is it working? Rubai referred to a quote from Henry Kissinger that military force drawdowns cannot be stopped once they start. GEN Casey acknowledged this was true for Vietnam, but it is not true now in the Iraq context. GEN Casey reminded Rubai he has already stopped the off ramp of three US brigades. The earliest next window for a draw down will not likely be available until November. GEN Casey reminded him that this is the reason for the establishment of the joint committee on force reductions. These decisions need to be made together.

2 August 2006

GEN Casey is working to address some of the issues that Maliki surfaced in London regarding his command and control over the operations and deployments of the security forces. In a conversation earlier this week, GEN Casey restated that Maliki is the Commander-in-Chief (CINC), and he defined in some detail what he thinks that means in order to help alleviate some of Maliki's concerns. GEN Casey explained that as he sees it, there are decisions that need to be made at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. GEN Casey and the PM need to stay at the strategic level. LTG Chiarelli and the MOD need to make the operational decisions. Coalition and Iraqi Army Division commanders need to jointly decide the tactical issues. It works best, if the CINC only makes the strategic decisions. Making decisions at the other lower levels tends to introduce uncertainties into the process that can be unhelpful, result in mixed messages, and lost opportunities. (Maliki has been phoning IA division commanders and giving them his guidance, which is often in conflict with the guidance they are getting in their normal chain of

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command.) GEN Casey went on to explain that his relationship with the Prime Minister is best described as a partnership. The mechanics of this partnership have to be constantly exercised. GEN Casey thinks that the discussion was a useful one that they can continue to develop, so that Maliki becomes more comfortable with his own span of control.

On the subject of military operations, Maliki told Gen Casey that he believes they are hurting his efforts at reconciliation. CG told him they are in a fight with a tough enemy, and the enemy won't stop until they no longer have any military options. It is essential, he said, to keep up the military pressure, and work the other lines of operation at the same time. Maliki was unconvinced and said that he is talking to both groups, and the military operations are hurting the discussions. Interestingly, Maliki specifically included Ramadi as an example of kinetic operations he objected to, even though GEN Casey had sought and obtained Sunni and government approval for the operation in advance.

GEN Casey said that his recent meetings with the MOI and MOD were fairly even keeled. He did not detect in them any sense of great anxiety over the Baghdad Security Plan or the security situation overall. They have had a few days of breathing room so the pressure on them has been slightly reduced. Of interest, is that the two ministers claimed that the Council of Representatives (COR) needs to direct them to disarm the militia. GEN Casey responded to the contrary, and told them clearly that the PM has directed them to disarm the people, and they need to take their direction from him, and not the COR.

CG acknowledged that there is increasing chatter about replacing the MOI Jawad al-Bulani coming from the COR and other quarters. His own position is that Bulani is well aware of the problems in his ministry and is trying hard to resolve them and restore its legitimacy. Bulani has an enormous challenge in front of him, and little experience to fall back on, and no strong party constituency to support him. However, the CG believes he is a man of character, and someone with whom the CF can work. CG pointed out that the Maliki government is only 75 days old. It is probably unfair to judge these Ministers so harshly this early in their tenure, under such extreme conditions and pressures. He also underscored that the coalition and the Iraqis could, and probably would, do much worse if Bulani is replaced.

3 August 2006

On 3 August GEN Casey traveled to Ramadi to meet with 1/1 AD Commander (b)(3), (b)(6) and BG Neller from 2 MEF. The purpose of the visit was to receive a battle update. After the update, (b)(3), (b)(6) organized a trip for the CG to meet the police chief in the Jazeera district of Ramadi. He also traveled to the al Anbar University, that 1/1 AD had taken away from the insurgents just one day earlier, with no shots fired.

(b)(3), (b)(6) stated that AQ is working very hard to prevent them from gaining control of the city. Ramadi is key to their goal of maintaining freedom of movement through Al Anbar province in order to support insurgent operations throughout the zone, and into Baghdad. GEN Casey agreed that this has become a much tougher battle than originally anticipated. As an example, (b)(3), (b)(6) described a complex attack that occurred mid-afternoon of 24 July. There were fifteen separate attacks in a span of 32 minutes (14 attacks in 22 minutes). The result was 28 EKIA, 2FKIA. He estimated that there were between 85 and 100 enemy fighters involved in the attack. (b)(3), (b)(6) said that as his forces establish permanent combat outposts in the city, and squeeze the insurgents, they react. (b)(3), (b)(6) said they remain focused on gaining control of the population and pushing out the enemy strongholds. The people of Ramadi are responding positively to US force presence, and are providing increasing volume of

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actionable intelligence on locations and identities of the enemy. They are cementing this with an ambitious civil affairs effort that includes water treatment plants, power generation and fuel distribution, neighborhood cleanup, street repair and battle damage repair projects.

(b)(3), (b)(6) said he had a few more decisive operations to achieve before Ramadan. He plans to establish two more combat outposts before 10 August. He will run another IP recruiting drive in mid August. They will reduce the vulnerabilities of Government Center by removing key structures. They are planning clearing operations in Ta'meem, Jalayba and Sufia.

(b)(3), (b)(6) said the Al Anbar University had been used by AQ as a staging area, just as the hospital had been. Evening of 2 August, his troops occupied the University without firing a single shot. As part of GEN Casey's visit, (b)(3), (b)(6) organized a trip out to the University. It was a sprawling campus of decrepit and largely vacated buildings in a flat, dry and dusty setting. There was evidence of new construction for faculty housing that looked decent, in context. (b)(3), (b)(6) is very conscious of the negative optic that US occupation of this facility will soon generate and is working to minimize their overt footprint, while ensuring that the insurgents don't return. Of interest, just five minutes after the CG's convoy departed the University, it was attacked with several mortar rounds.

Iraqi Police. (b)(3), (b)(6) said they now have several IP stations open and staffed in Al Jazeera, Al Juriyah, West and N. central Ramadi. Recruitment has improved substantially, but it is still below target goals. In both April and May they recruited just about 30 volunteers. In June the number spiked to 124 and in July the number again jumped to 231. He attributes the numbers to their increased presence on the ground, which he expects to continue to generate additional volunteers as security improves. As a baseline figure, Ramadi is authorized 3084 IPs.

(b)(3), (b)(6) also organized a trip to the Jazeera IP station to meet with the IP Station Commander (b)(6). (b)(6) He was as impressive an officer as any the CG has met. (b)(6) stated that he has about 100 officers on duty out of a total of 140. He had no officers just three weeks ago. He said the insurgents are not liked by anyone, and as a result IP recruiting has improved. He predicted the insurgents are breathing their last breath. He has vehicle, and foot patrols out in the city and said the insurgents are cornered. He said he coordinates with the other two IP stations to improve planning. He feels well supported by the Americans, and with the delivery of equipment and weapons for their station, the trust between the two sides has increased. (b)(6) agreed that the only ones who can stabilize the city are the people of Ramadi itself. He claimed they want stability and security.

GEN Casey thanked (b)(6) and added that the US will help them achieve objectives. He told (b)(6) that this is the best chance they have to reach their goals. (b)(6) agreed and said he needs to enlist the support of every decent citizen in Ramadi. He said the people know that the insurgents have only brought death and destruction. (b)(6) said he is ready to hold another IP recruiting drive. (b)(3), (b)(6) concurred, and indicated that their long term plan is to build in a permanent recruiting function into each IP Station.

Iraqi Army. Recruitment for the Army is still slow. (b)(3), (b)(6) said that the problem is that they only want to work near their homes. GEN Casey told them that the MOD is working on a proposal that will allow locally recruited Anbaris to work in the Province for a year or two, and then be available for national service nation wide. (b)(3), (b)(6) did not think this was going to provide the needed incentive. They don't want to leave their homes, and he was not sure that extra pay would improve the recruitment numbers.

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GEN Casey asked (b)(3), (b)(6) about the Governor of Al Anbar, and (b)(3), (b)(6) said he is earnestly trying to govern. Even without a constituency and no influence, he shows up for work every day. Reflecting on the poor voter turnout for the January 2005 elections (less than 3,000 in al Anbar) GEN Casey asked if there would be any interest in trying to hold a special election in al Anbar after the Ramadi campaign to reinvigorate local governance. (b)(3), (b)(6) answered affirmatively, but also stated that the Security coordinating committee of the Governing Council had made plans to convene soon, and there is a Mayors meeting scheduled to be held in Fallujah.

5 August 2006

On 5 August, MG Zahner briefed GEN Casey and his senior commanders on his assessment of the current threat. The focus was on ethno-sectarian strife and insurgency effects.

MG Zahner opened the session by stating the Sunni and Shi'a extremists are contesting control of key areas of influence in Baghdad, Diyala, and Kirkuk. Sunni extremist goal is to leverage sectarian strife to radicalize the population, and generate support. Further, Shi'a extremists seek to secure, expand Shi'a enclaves through sponsoring death squads. This prompted a discussion about the surge in Shi'a violence. MG Gardner recalled that after liberation there was an expectation that the Shi'a would retaliate against their Sunni oppressors. They did not, and for several years after that, with continued guidance from Najaf, failed to respond to Sunni extremist attacks against them. MG Gardner thinks that after 35 years of subjugation under Saddam, they were incapable of organizing themselves for the fight. But three years later, they have organized, and we are now seeing a late but anticipated backlash against the Sunni. GEN Casey thought that was interesting, and commented that when he discusses the motivation behind the violence with Prime Minister Maliki, he asserts it is tit-for-tat revenge killing and not an effort to control territory in places like Baghdad and Diyala with mixed population centers.

GEN Casey asked if there is any evidence that the sectarian conflict is affected by the perceptions of coalition force withdrawal. Do the Shi'a have a strategic plan? He elaborated that the Shia leadership has told him that they believe the coalition will abandon them, just as they did in 1991, and are trying to solidify their position in preparation for it. Asked another way, if AQ attacks stopped, would the death squads stop? The commanders did not think so. They thought they are seeing two separate fights. The recent attacks in Mosul and Ka ada against the ISF are designed to weaken the reputation of the Iraqi security forces and the GOI, and are clearly generated by AQ. For AQ this is a must win, and they are piling on to make sure the Shia are not successful.

There was some discussion on the impact of Lebanon conflict and the success of the Shia Arabs at tapping into the anti-zionist culture. Will this conflict serve to reshape Arab Shia identity and further tie them to 1.4b Is there a Shia revival in the region that will impact the conflict in Iraq? There was additional discussion about the 4 August Wall Street Journal article by Vali Nasr "Rising Academic Sees Sectarian Split Inflaming Middle East." His thesis is that Shia Muslims are asserting themselves as never before. "Followers of this brand of Islam, generally backbenchers in the region's power game, are central players in Lebanon 1.4b and Iraq - often acting out against traditional powers such as 1.4b the US, and Sunni Arab states."

GEN Casey commented that Prime Minister Maliki's biggest flaw is his reluctance to use force. GEN Casey has told him that they are fighting hard men, and they will not stop until they run out of military

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options. Maliki seems to be more comfortable with working reconciliation from the engagement side. He has enlisted the support of both President Jalal Talabani and Muwafuq al-Rubai to assist. GEN Casey's impression is that he has been very active in this area, and claimed he has an agreement between Muqtada al Sadr and the [1.4b] to stop the killings. It is hard to know at this point, just how effective he has been or can be. CG thought Maliki may be too captive to the Shi'a position, and can do little more than nod in the direction of the Sunni. Along those lines MG Gardner indicated that he had received direction that small detainee releases were fine, but the GOI does not support large releases as they analogize it to putting terrorists back on the street.

GEN Casey said he thought it might be time to take more risk with the Sunni in the engagement effort. He just received the UK debriefing reports from their early August session with [b 6]. Both GEN Casey and Ambassador Khalilzad wanted to take another run at [b)(6)] to determine if there was an opportunity there to enlist his support with his Sunni constituency. GEN Casey was not all that encouraged, but has not ruled out further discussion with [b)(6)]. He did say that the Sunni want to be recognized as 'the honorable resistance'. He thought the Coalition could do this for them, although he doubted that the Maliki government would or could.

At the end of the session, the CG gave his commanders a couple questions to think about. Are we doing the right things in response to unfolding events on the ground? Have we done something, or not done something, to cause this sustained increase in the levels of violence? Has our transition to Iraqi lead allowed this increase to happen? What is responsible for the increase in attacks? GEN Casey thinks that some of the answer might be extracted from analysis of the type of attacks, their location and their targets. MG Zahner will task this to the [staff].

15 August 2006

GEN Casey had just returned from a meeting with the MOI and MOD. The MOI had little to add as he just returned from Jordan. The MOD, however, said that he is looking at some candidates to IA Division Commanders. He wants to put a Sunni in Mosul, which the CG fully supports. He is also looking at providing a new commander for the Headquarters Support element but is running up against LTG Babakir al- Zibari, Commander of the Joint Forces Command, who watches carefully after Kurdish interests. In any case, the CG has said that the Iraqis have been able to make some pretty good personnel decisions without any help from the Coalition.

Baghdad Security Plan. The CG said there are some early indications that the Baghdad Security Plan is having some initial success. He said there have been no attacks reported in the areas that they are clearing since Phase 2 commenced on 7 August. He also said that the MNF-I commanders are reporting that the response from the Baghdad residents in both Doura and al-Rashid has been largely positive.

Basically, their plan of action is to flow forces into a defined area, set up a cordon, with two checkpoints on either end that control access, essentially creating a gated community. Joint MNF-I and IA units then clear the area, one house at a time. Inside these cordoned areas, the Iraqi army, Iraqi police, and the neighborhood or district advisory councils (NAC/DAC), set up regular meetings to discuss and monitor the security situation. The NAC/DACs then assume full responsibility once MNF-I departs the area. When that happens, there will be a strong effort to immediately improve basic life services such as water, sewage and power. GEN Casey had just visited Doura (one of the first neighborhoods cleared under Phase 2 of the Baghdad Security plan) and reported that there was a massive effort underway to

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clean up the debris and trash that had served as local checkpoints/blockades, and that the Doura market itself had been cleared and looked good. He also said that MNF-I has engaged DPM Barham Salih on the need to support these improvements and quickly. Salih is on board, and is looking at waving the three bid rule to expedite contracting services. Nonetheless, CG acknowledged delivery of these services by the Iraqis will require a Herculean effort, and may not be possible in the preferred timeline.

GEN Casey was also quick to say that there still will be attacks where they are not concentrating their main effort, and cited the complex attack in Zafraniyah that occurred on the 13 August. It appears that a car bomb might have ignited a gas line explosion that collapsed a building, but they do not know for sure. A total of three buildings were destroyed, and ca 50 Iraqi nationals were killed and 70 injured. The Iraqis will assemble a joint committee to investigate the incident.

GEN Casey again stated that the PM continues to deny approval for operations in Sadr City. So far, he has vetoed a total of five operations. Actually, Maliki approved one operation with the caveat that there be no AC-130 air support. The CG told him he would not allow the ISOF to go in without air support, as it has been necessary to support their safe exfiltration. Thus, the CG told Maliki he is essentially disapproving this operation as well. (GEN Casey plans to show Maliki the effects of an AC-130 on the roof of a house, to demonstrate that this is very limited damage and not the aerial bombing campaign he seems to think that it is.) In response to these denials, GEN Casey sent a letter to Maliki. He noted that when Maliki had denied approval for the apprehensions that he said it would be possible to request the delivery of the individuals to coalition control. The CG has requested delivery of the following three individuals:

(b)(6) - reported to control elements that conduct kidnapping, torture, and murder of Iraqi citizens throughout Baghdad area

(b)(6) reported to have participated in torture, kidnapping and murder of loyal Iraqi citizens, performed IED attacks against the ISF and coalition

(b)(6) reported to use his car dealership as weapons storage site and conducts rocket attacks against the green zone and other IA/CF compounds.

GEN Casey said the PM's Sadrist military advisor had told one of his US Colonels that works in the PM's situation room, that Maliki had given Muqtada al-((Sadr)) his word that there would be no attacks in Sadr City for a period of 2-6 months (note: it was not clear if the deal was for two months or six months). GEN Casey tends to think that there is some truth to this, as Maliki has told him repeatedly that the attacks in Sadr City are interfering with his reconciliation plan. In addition, he has referred to deals he has made with Sadr and the 1.4b to stop the killings. GEN Casey suspects that this arrangement underpins the PM's refusal to allow operations in Sadr City. In any case, the CG continues to work the system in an attempt to round up death squad members despite the obstacles that Maliki continues to place in front of him.

At the end of the meeting GEN Casey summarized his current...priorities. He said that the Baghdad Security is his top priority. His second is Rarnadi. He said they are in a tough ground fight there, a little tougher than they anticipated and wants to stay informed on developments. His third area of interest is AQIZ. He continues to watch it carefully and currently is interested in whether or not AQIZ has hijacked the Sunni insurgency. He is seeing a trend that Sunni, never previously involved in the insurgency, are

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linking up with AQ for protection. He is also concerned over a possible merger between AQIZ and Ansar al Sunnah. Bottom line is that he sees more Sunni wrapping themselves in an AQ banner, and he wants to better understand what is happening, and what level of consolidation has occurred.

16 August 2006

GEN Casey traveled to Western al Anbar for an update with RCT-7. He visited Haditha, Combat Outpost (COP) Rawah, COP North and Camp Gannon on the Syrian border. The purpose of his travel was to receive an overall update on the status of operations. He was specifically interested in whether the border was still being carefully protected, as suicide attacks were up by about one-third over the past 60 days. He also was interested in an update on the recruiting for the army and police. Finally, CG was interested in discussing with his commanders their view of the current fight in the far west, and specifically why they are still fighting.

Overall, the CG was fairly satisfied with the status of operations in the west. Dulab and Baghdadi are the most peaceful in the AO. The marines categorize Rutbah, Akashat, and al Qaim as either friendly or secure. Hit, in particular appeared to have been brought under control and 200 of its residents will graduate from the IP academy next month. It is nonetheless, still prone to IDF, SAF, and IEDs. Rawah and Anah are still comfort zones for the insurgent leaders and financiers. Haditha is still unsecured and remains the most challenging area in the AO. GEN Casey agreed to send National Police to patrol the main supply routes in and out of the Western Euphrates River Valley.

Iraqi Police. One of the most promising updates was the success the marines have had with their IP recruiting effort, which generally reflect improved security conditions. The marines reported they have recruited and trained 1200 IPs in the Al Qaim area, and assigned them to locations in Ubaydi, New Ubaydi, Rumanah, and Rawah. Five more IP Stations will be constructed by mid September. Given their success, the marines project they will need 15 Police transition teams to man 16 stations and seven districts by the end of August. Overall, the [1.4a] commander [b 3, b 6] and his subordinate commanders, strongly believe that in this region, putting IPs on the street presents the best shot at changing the dynamic. GEN Casey agreed, but noted that the IPS need to be protected to keep them on the job, and the marines may want to consider berming more cities to accomplish that.

There is less good news for Iraqi army recruiting. As in Ramadi, the potential recruits just do not want to be deployed away from their homes. The marines are currently partnered with the 2nd brigade 7th Iraqi Army Division. The marines were very pleased with the level of performance. The second battalion is clearly the best in the brigade and is operating independently at the company and platoon level. The only obstacle preventing them from achieving TRA level 2 is manpower, which was at about 50 percent of authorized strength. GEN Casey told the marines he was well aware of the shortfall, and recently gave LTG Dempsey guidance to try to bring the First and Seventh Iraqi Army Divisions up to 90 percent of authorized strength by 1 November.

Recognizing the difficulty in recruiting for the army, as well as the need for a more capable force in this tough region of Iraq, GEN Casey is thinking about the possibility of trying to recruit locals to become part of SWAT units. Unlike the army, these SWAT teams would have the recruiting advantage of remaining locally base, and with a better compensation may be attractive to unemployed locals. GEN Casey thought the best areas to initiate this program would be in al Qaim, Haditha, and Rumanah .

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The Border Fort Border Transition Team commander provided a very positive picture of his situation. 1.4a is partnered with the 2d brigade Department of Border Enforcement "desert Wolves" and it is currently assessed at TRA level 3 after some six months in the current battlespace. He said the Iraqis are working this seriously. They show up every day, and attentively work the border. There are the usual problems with fuel and life support, but the marines will take this over if the Iraqis fail to deliver. The border forts are complete, with the exception of one still under construction. They have some routine interaction with the Iraqi army as planned. The main problem is smuggling of sheep and cigarettes. In three months, they have engaged just six foreign fighters attempting to cross the border illegally. They will continue to squeeze the smugglers, however, as they are key to identifying foreign fighter facilitation networks. (b)(3), (b)(6) intends to request ground sensors to emplace along the borders to span into "no man's land", as well as some additional ISR to determine if there is anything they are missing.

The CG was generally satisfied with the status of the effort on the border and could see real progress over the last time he visited. Despite that, the CG note there had been 12 suicide attacks in the 1.4a AO in the past three months and asked (b)(3), (b)(6) for his assessment. (b)(3), (b)(6) stated that 10 of the 12 suicide bombers were confirmed to be local Iraqis. The other two were inconclusive. This tracks with what the CG was told in Tal Afar last week. At that location, they reported that local Iraqis and not foreigners conducted six of the 10 suicide attacks. This is an important data point that MNF-I will begin to factor into their analysis and threat assessments.

The CG engaged (b)(3), (b)(6) on the nature of the conflict in the far west. (b)(3), (b)(6) believes that the areas of the most intense fighting are former Ba'athist neighborhoods and that they are still intent in removing an occupation force, and restoring Sunni leadership of the country. This is mixed in with AQIZ facilitators seeking to retain their freedom of movement. GEN Casey is not quite convinced that this is the full and current picture and will likely task [MG Zahner] to look more carefully at the problem.

18 August 2007

On 18 August GEN Casey chaired a seven hour Commanders Conference at Al Faw Palace...GEN Casey opened the conference by stating that this is an opportunity to look forward 6-8 months, and to figure out how to have a decisive effect, that will put Iraq on an irreversible course. He acknowledged that the environment is more complex than it ever has been. Given the complexity, CG said he was looking for a dialogue with his commanders on how they see the situation in their parts of the country, and how best to deal with the variety of threats they are now facing. Following is the substance of the CG's brief to the conference...

Situation. The CG started off defining the current situation and stated that sectarian violence is challenging the ability of the coalition to accomplish its strategic objectives. The CG strongly believes that the illegal armed groups threaten the future of Iraq, just as AQIZ and the Sunni extremists. He noted, however, that the Iraqis don't agree, and that is a problem when they view the threat differently than does the coalition.

CG noted that 73 percent of the Iraqi army is now in the lead. This is a key transition, and at a decisive time. Is it the right time? Should we slow down? His commanders strongly recommended pushing ahead. Over the next six months the CG stated that the focus must now shift to quality and loyalty of

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the army. CG cautioned that if they lose the army as a unifying national force, then it will move the coalition back to square one.

1.4b, 1.4d

Finally the CG noted that the complexity of the situation makes decisive action hard.

Circle Chart. Next, the CG put up his circle chart that depicts the conflict as a struggle for the division of power and resources among ethnic and sectarian groups, and also depicts the external pressures from the Sunni and Shia extremists, the resistance, and [1.4b]. The CG stated the Sunni and Shia extremists are the biggest threat right now. The resistance is a threat mainly to the coalition, but it seems to be fragmenting. [1.4b] is still a question, and he referred to the Ambassador's earlier query on whether or not the coalition can succeed in Iraq if [1.4b] does not want it to.

The Campaign. The CG said that he believes the coalition must force the Iraqis to come to agreement on the fundamental issues that are dividing them before provincial elections. He noted that the national compact, and reconciliation all must occur before the elections, and if all three milestones were achieved, it would have the potential for a decisive impact. The CG would like to see stability, the restoration of civil authority and a national counterterrorism force established by late 2007. The coalition, at that point, will continue to provide support in developing capacity that will lead to self-reliance.

Fundamental Issues for Iraqi Agreement. Following are the CG's list of the key issues that the Iraqis need to come to agreement on, that will become the basis of their national compact, and will define what kind of country Iraq will become:

Reconciliation - insurgent dialogue, amnesty, deba'athification
Militia and other Security formations
Fighting Terror
Federalism - region formation law, provincial powers law
Constitutional Review
Hydrocarbon Law
Kirkuk
Coalition withdrawal road map

Mission. The CG presented the mission statement, copied below, that he and the Ambassador had recently drafted and asked if it was still valid.

"The US mission and coalition forceS will, in support of the GOI, contribute to an environment where Iraqis can develop representative and effective institutions capable of meeting the needs of the Iraqi people, creating conditions for rule of law, defeating terrorists and irreconcilable insurgents, bringing other insurgents into the political process, reducing sectarian tensions and militia, and denying Iraq as a safe haven for terrorists."

Everyone agreed that this was still the valid long-term mission statement. The CG said they would pursue these objectives through the five lines of operations {security, governance, economic development, communication, transition} in order to achieve their end state. He also stated that he

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thinks there is the potential to be there by the end of next year. This means the coalition needs to reduce the threat levels, and before that can happen, Iraq needs to have a national compact.

GEN Casey acknowledged there is tension between the complexity of the work needed to be done, and time allowed to accomplish it. And there is still no certainty that these critical issues can be reconciled. However, the CG believes if he can put some structure to the process, it can force a decision on some of the key issues and drive the process forward. Without structure, they surely will not make any hard decisions. The Ambassador and GEN Casey will continue to discuss the necessity of the establishing a political timeline to deal with these issues with the Prime minister and the Policy Council.

GEN Casey then identified the key security tasks for 2006/2007. They are:

- Defeat al-Qaida
- Neutralize the insurgency
- Put the Iraqi army in the lead
- Build the Iraqi police
- Secure the borders
- Secure Baghdad and the nine key cities
- Disarm the armed groups
- Enhance infrastructure security

Transition concept. The transition concept consists of four phases. It starts with partnership, which they have accomplished, and then focuses on placing the IA in the lead. Right now 75 percent of the IA is in the lead. The next step for the coalition is to focus on building quality and loyalty in the army, along with an ability to operate independently and a logistics system to support their operations. The third phase is provincial Iraqi control (PIC). He noted that Muthana already had achieved PIC. Dhi Qar likely will achieve PIC before Ramadan and the Kurds are considering a statement on PIC for their region. The fourth and final stage is Iraqi self-reliance.

- Projections and Goals for 2006/2007. COIN force by December 2006
- 90 percent of Iraqi Army Divisions in the lead by December 2006
- Ground Force HQS take over in September 2006 (they will provide C2 for two divisions per month, and will take over Baghdad November 2006)
- Provincial Iraqi Control - seven or eight provinces by December 2006
- Abu Ghurayb, Fort Suse, Bucca, Cropper turned over to the Iraqis by end of 2007
- Combined Corps and Force Headquarters established by end of 2007
- Securing nine key cities by March 2007
- Border Security by December 2006
- Defeat AQI by June 07

The Way Ahead. CG defined the way forward for his commanders as follows:

Mass effects to secure and sustain Baghdad. This is the forth effort to clear Baghdad and this one needs to be successful.

Sustain progress "away from the ball". Win your fight. Help Iraqis protect the population and prevent civil war.

To this the CG added a suggestion for placing a berm [around] Baghdad and asked the Corps to start planning. It worked in Mosul, Tall Afar, Ramadi and a number of cities in Western Al Anbar.

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Keep Iraqis in the lead. But watch the pace of change and focus on improving quality and loyalty.

Sustain countrywide pressure on terrorists, illegal armed groups, and irreconcilable insurgents.

Build and sustain pressure on 1.4b, 1.4d

Help Iraqis resolve fundamental issues for sharing economic and political power.

Sustain offensive mindset. This is getting more complex. The Iraqis respect strength. We will win this on the offensive.

21 August 2006

GEN Casey met with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki along with the Ambassador on Friday 18 August. Maliki told GEN Casey he had heard that MNF-I had reported to Washington his reluctance to approve operations against Shia death squad members, and that this had been passed to the President. GEN Casey acknowledged that POTUS had asked him about this issue at a SVTC. He clarified that he had told POTUS that Maliki believed these operations were interfering with his reconciliation efforts, and for that reason, was reluctant to approve them. Maliki appeared to be genuinely unhappy with the prospect that POTUS might be dissatisfied with his leadership. Maliki was indignant. He pushed back. He tried to explain, again, why he is trying to focus first on reconciliation. The CG actually was very encouraged by Maliki's reaction, as it showed commitment, character and concern about being in synch with the President, and his whole effort in Iraq. At the same time, the CG was struck by the excellent and timely sources that Maliki appears to have in Washington.

Further to the issue of Sadr City operations, GEN Casey hand carried to Maliki the letter he had earlier drafted requesting Maliki's assistance with the apprehension of three death squad members in Sadr City, after denying approval to conduct military operations to capture them. Maliki accepted the names and requested further information on addresses, which was provided. Maliki added that if he could not produce these three through his own (likely Sadrist) channels, then he would allow MNF-I to run a capture operation in Sadr City. GEN Casey thinks he may give Maliki a week or so to produce the individuals before he tests Maliki's willingness to support military ops in Sadr City. If this is successful, GEN Casey will provide Maliki additional of Sadr City death squad members.

21 August 2006

GEN Casey pointed out that the media had incorrectly reported the casualties associated with the Shia march to commemorate the 7th imam yesterday. They estimate that between 200,000 and 300,000 followers marched. GEN Casey said that the coalition could confirm only seven deaths and 12 wounded. The media is reporting 20 deaths and more than 200 wounded. The march was largely secured by the ISF and the results are encouraging.

The Baghdad Security Plan continues to consume much MNF-I focus. GEN Casey said that he is very focused on showcasing the economic development efforts in the neighborhoods of Doura, Gazaliyah, Shula and Ameriyah, where the Iraqis and MNF-I have just completed clearing operations. He wants a

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visible improvement in the lives of the residents to serve as an example for the rest of the city, and the benefits of the Baghdad Security Plan. The military is focusing their CERP funds, the Embassy and MNF- I are encouraging the Iraqi government to provide their assistance soonest, and State department is also contributing to the overall effort.

MG Thurman is ready to advance his operations, but the Iraqis are having trouble fielding the IPs needed to work with the neighborhood advisory councils to protect the people after the clearing ops. The CG regards this phase, as perhaps the most important so is reluctant to push forward if the Iraqis can't deliver. GEN Casey told MG Thurman that he will try to force the issue with the Prime Minister and tell him that the coalition would like to move faster, but the Iraqis are having trouble delivering the police force for Ameriyah.

GEN Casey said the Maliki mentioned the coup plotting again. CG assured him that they had spoken to the 9th IA Division commander and had been assured that he was not part of the plotting. Maliki joked that this was just a 'military view', and GEN Casey added that they had told the Commander he would be crushed if he tried. Maliki thought that as a much better answer and seem satisfied. Still, it is clear that Maliki and his Shia brothers are concerned that the coup will hatch again as soon as the coalition departs Iraq.

21 August 2006 - Baghdad Security Plan

GEN Casey chaired the Monday night O&I, which focused on the Baghdad Security Plan. MNF-I continues to refine their timeline for the operation, and it currently stands as follows:

Phase One Stabilization: August-start of Ramadan

Focus areas complete

4 th Iraqi Army (IA) and g th IA to Iraqi Ground Force Command (IGFC) command and control (Sept)

Phase Two Consolidation: October - December

National Police uniforms and transformation training starts

Baghdad Barrier complete

liA and SIA to IGFC command and control (October)

6 IA and 9IA to IGFC command and control (November)

Phase Three Transition: December - January

Corps and MND-B RIP TOA

2 IA to IBFC command and control

3IA to IGFC command and control

MNF-I had identified the Key Tasks as follows: Delegitimize violence

Protect the population and expand secure areas

Improve credibility of ISF

Employ political, religious and media support Offensive operations on terrorists and death squads

Integrated economic initiatives

Integrated C2 for accountability and rapid ISF reaction

Continue to demonstrate progress outside Baghdad

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For each neighborhood or focus area, MNF-I's strategy is to clear, protect and build. In the clear phase, IA and CF initiate cordon and search operations, and it is complete when each home has been cleared, the IA/IP take over and the CF is in tactical overwatch. The 'protect' phase begins with the ISF in control, cordon in place, the neighborhood or district advisory council (NAC/DAC) is linked to the ISF, CERP work is started and weapons registration begins. The 'protect' phase ends when the IP is in control, the IP and linked to the NAC/DAC, a neighborhood watch is established, and essential services work transitions beyond CERP. The 'build' phase focuses on the restoration of key essential services. In this final phase the Government of Iraq (GOI) addresses, sewer, water, electricity, trash¹ fuel, housing, VOTEC, IDP returnees, IP station rebuilds, IP Stations to Transition Readiness Assessment (TRA) 2.

Baghdad Barrier. MNF-I has made a decisions to establish a 'Baghdad Barrier' around the capital city. This will consist of 123km belt tied to the existing water canal network and the rivers. There will be 11 additional enduring checkpoints (for a total 27). They plan to establish thirty blocking obstacles at canal crossings. Finally, there will be 17 km of triple standard concertina obstacles integrated with the canal network southeast of Baghdad. The purpose of the Baghdad Barrier is to:

Provide a visible sign of the Government's commitment to security

Increase visible security measures and restrict the flow of traffic to disrupt the movement of terrorists and death squads in order to protect the populace.

Reduce sectarian violence, murders, kidnappings, and VBIEDs

The current implementation plan is as follows:

Reinforce natural terrain and obstacles (river, canals) Block secondary roads to impede egress/ingress

Establish checkpoints in depth along major thoroughfares

Employ ISR to identify breaks in barriers and bypasses

IO focused on improving Iraqi perception that access control does not single out one segment of the population

Phased implementation:

Phase One: establish initial obstacle belt (pre Ramadan)

Phase Two: complete berm and barrier (Ramadan) Phase Three: Obstacle Improvement (post-Ramadan}

22 August 2007

It was noted that the indirect fire in the international zone had noticeably decreased, and GEN Casey thought that the PM's efforts to rein it in, may be responsible. He also added that the reduction could be the result of an ordnance shortage due to a recent operation in Shula that netted a cache of 600 mortar⁹ launch tubes, 33,000 machine gun rounds, and EFP materials. Nonetheless, on the plus side, the CG noted that while operations against Sadrists (outside Sadr City) have been ongoing for some time, there has been no measurable backlash. It seems the PM has been successful in achieving some consent from Sadr that some JAM elements need to be arrested, and that an operation against one of the rogue elements should not be viewed as an overall attack against his organization. GEN Casey believes there may be something to Maliki's efforts, and while we still lack...the specifics of the reconciliation deal, it seems to have manifest itself in these measurable ways. Moreover, the CG notes

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that Maliki is seeing that it is possible to simultaneously run military and reconciliation efforts with a positive result.

GEN Casey said that while it is not entirely clear the extent of Maliki's reconciliation efforts; it seems to have at least three components. The first is the governmental effort through the Minister of State for National Dialogue. A second is Maliki's personal effort with Sadr. And a third is through National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai's efforts with the Sunni. On that note, the CG mentioned that UK LTG Fry had a meeting with senior Sunni (b)(6) on 21 August. Fry said the tone and tenor of this meeting was very different, and his sense was that (b)(6) wanted to be on the winning side, and hetow that that AQIZ was losing. (b)(6) produced the names of a few lower level AQIZ individuals as a gesture of good faith. Fry intends to meet him again on 22 August.

GEN Casey noted that there were starting to see some positive metrics from the Baghdad Security Plan. He said that there were three days last week when the levels of violence in Baghdad were lower than the average for the pre Samarra days. This week, the levels of violence were lower than they were in March during Scales of Justice.

GEN Casey updated the group on the plans to place a Baghdad barrier around the perimeter of the city (pls see previous traffic). He commented that whenever these berms were used in other cities (i.e. Mosul, Tal Afar, Samarra) they have resulted in reduced levels of attacks. He noted that the CF in Kirkuk has recently expressed interest in establishing a berm to protect their city.

GEN Casey also noted that MND-B had reported that the Sadrists appeared to be out in force yesterday flexing their muscles, and heckling the IA. The IA recognized the bait and did not respond, but notes there was some tension on the street.

GEN Casey also updated the final count of casualties that occurred during the 7 th Imam march in Khadamiyah. He said that there were ca 10 killed, and 50 wounded. Maliki is also disturbed by the discrepancy and is asking for a review, and a correction for the record.

GEN Casey said he continues to focus on AQ and whether or not it has hijacked the insurgency. He thinks something is happening between AQ and the former regime elements. He said LTG McChrystal believes he is beginning to see evidence of the formation of two separate groups. One group is tied to AQSL and supports the ideology that seeks to create a caliphate in Iraq. The other group consists of the hard core former regime elements, who seem to be leveraging the AQ organization and financial resources, to strengthen themselves and attack the Shia. This latter group appears to be more of a nationalist splinter group, that does not support the AQ mainstream ideology. GEN Casey thinks that the organization and the leadership are in transition and that it needs to be better understood...

MG Zahner showed a recovered handbill that, upon translation, was shown to be JAM tip line. According to the locals, who provided this flyer to MNF-I, the tip line really does work. When that number provided is called (in the event of an attack by Sunni), then protection is sent, and fairly quickly...

23 August visit to 2nd National Police Division

GEN Casey visited the 1st battalion, 8th brigade, 2NP Division on the afternoon of 23 August. His intent

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was to speak to the leadership about the 'quicklook' inspection program and get a feel for its value and its progress. The quicklook is designed to take each NP battalion off line for three days to vet their leadership, re-equip their units, provide new uniforms and administer the oath of loyalty. Later, there will be a more thorough unit carabinieri-style retraining, that will last 2-3 months. As readers may recall these were the original 'commandos' trained as a light infantry, and subsequently never received specific police training.

GEN Casey arrived via ground convoy to scores of waiting national police officers in and out of uniform, some lounging in the back, and on the tops of their brand new American pick up trucks. A swarm of AK-47 toting escorts greeted the CG and accompanied him to the briefing room. It was a display of undisciplined, and largely enthusiastic young and middle-aged men with nothing to do but wait for the Commanding General to arrive.

The briefing took place in what was likely a recently 'procured' residence that was converted for use by this brigade. (CG noted that this often happens when units are not provided their own headquarters.) There was a large conference room table, no air to cool the 120 degree temperatures, and plenty of flies. Despite all the distractions, the briefings were professional and informative. The senior Iraqis in attendance were MOI National Police Force Commander Adnan Thabit, commander of the first national police division General Rashid Falayah, and commander of the second national police division General Mahdi al-Gharawi.

The first briefing was from the battalion commander whose men were undergoing their first day of the quicklook inspection. He briefed their mission, status, and the battles they had fought since they stood up in April 2005. He noted his battalion had lost 28 men in action and 92 WIA. Gen Abbas, in charge of the quicklook inspection program, said that this was the ninth battalion they had reviewed so far. He said the inspections have produced excellent results (one battalion has failed). It allows Ministry level visibility on unit deficiencies, and the shortcomings identified are addressed. Everyone thought that the three-day inspections were producing important and tangible results.

GEN Casey also addressed the Iraqis. He noted that the national police were the first Iraqi security forces trained and equipped by Iraqis. There were the commandos, and were the first and best Iraqi forces when they stood up. He also said that they may have kept them in the fight for too long, and so it makes sense now to take the units off line for this review. GEN Casey went on to say that it is clear that the national police are very courageous, and so it is hard to talk to them about the things they need to do better. However, the CG said there are two important issues they must immediately address. The first is loyalty to the country. He said others might try to attack their name and reputation and claim that the national police work for one group or another. GEN Casey emphasized that this is about leadership, and the generals must assume responsibility for instilling loyalty in their units. The second issue they need to work on is discipline. He said he could see the need with his own eyes (referring to the gangland atmosphere outside). There needs to be more attention to this across the board. These may be good men, but their appearance does not build the confidence and trust of the people they encounter, and are charged with protecting. He encouraged the leadership to work hard on developing strong loyalty and iron discipline. If they can do this, the CG assured them they could continue to help move Iraq to a better future.

Following the briefing, GEN Casey was escorted outside to inspect their vehicles, and then to oversee the issuance of the loyalty oath to the first battalion. This ceremony was again a bit chaotic. The men squeezed into a courtyard and tried to look professional and somber, but they were clothed in at least

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four different uniforms, some with kevlar, some not, some with weapons, some not. It was a pretty rough assemblage of tough guys. They all took the oath in very loud voices, and seemed proud to do so. In the end one of their leaders began an impromptu chant that ended with everyone cheering and waving their AKs skyward. It was a useful trip, very Iraqi, and very memorable.

23 August 2006

Evening of 23 August GEN Casey chaired a meeting with his senior staff on the Baghdad Security Plan. The State POL- Mil counselor, Baghdad PRT Chief, and the IRMO chief attended. The CG made clear his concern with their ability to deliver economic development and revitalization services in the cleared areas of the city. He is now considering some organizational changes that will better assure a positive result in this most critical phase of the plan.

The 'protect' and 'build' phase of the Baghdad Security Plan is what worries GEN Casey most. He has seen this part of the plan lose momentum before, and is applying those lessons learned to prevent a repeat performance. GEN Casey carefully reviewed the list of CERP and economic development projects for Doura (and the other recently cleared neighborhoods) including funds from the USAID Community Stabilization Plan. He queried what the Brigade commander might know about the 19 ongoing projects in Doura (total of 8.1 million dollars). The staff was not able to assure the CG that this connection had been made. GEN Casey emphasized that the brigade commanders must be the executors for all development projects in their AO. MNF-I and MNC-I are not currently organized in a way that will assure this essential linkage, and the CG wants it fixed.

The second point the CG made is that this is going to be a months long effort. There is one billion dollars that need to be spent in Baghdad over the next 6-8 months (500 million from GOI). It may require a flag officer to take ownership and effectively manage it. He asked his commanders for their recommendations on which general officers had the right mix of skills and abilities to take this over.

The Corps has identified three of the four Iraqi Army (IA) battalions still needed for duty in Baghdad. 4/1/4 IA will be taced to 2/9 IA beginning 1 September. 2/4/10 will be taced to 1/9 IA beginning 1 September. 3/1/3 will be taced to 2/9 IA by 7 September. These units have been declared staffed, trained, and ready to deploy. Corps is still working to identify the fourth and final brigade.

MNSTC-I advised they had delivered 100 of the 260 police vehicles and trucks for the Baghdad IP. The five MP companies are on the ground to enhance performance of the IP and National Police. They noted that the Shula IP was manned at 182 percent of authorized strength. The Gazaliyah IP was at 92 percent, but they thought they could get it up to 100 percent in the next few weeks. The IP stations in Kadhimyah, Mansur and Doura were all manned at over 100 percent of authorized strength. They have completed construction of 17 new IP stations, and another 35 should be complete before the end of the year. They reported that the police had 100 percent of authorized radios and 93 percent of authorized weapons. They will transfer excess weapons/ordnance from the IA to fill out the gaps.

Finally, and separate from the Baghdad Security Plan, STRATEFF provided an update on the constitutional/legislative process. Their main message to the CG was that on the fundamental issues before the Iraqis (reconciliation, militias, terrorism, federalism, hydrocarbon law, Kirkuk, coalition withdrawal) constitutional review is not required. The GOI may act through legislation in the COR, party agreements, or referendums to decide these substantive issues.

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They also highlighted the fact that the COR has a very heavy legislative agenda. Almost sixty provisions require implementing legislation from the six sections of the constitution (fundamental principles, rights and liberties, federal powers, powers of the federal government, powers of the regions, final and transitional powers).

24 August 2006

On the evening of 24 August, GEN Casey met with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, Minister of Defense 'Abd al- Qadir Jassim al-Mufraji and Interior Minister Jawad al- Bulani. Maliki's chief of Staff (Tariq LNU) was also present. The main purpose of his meeting was to seek Maliki's approval for the Baghdad perimeter. Maliki provided his approval and GEN Casey told him they could have it in place before the start of Ramadan. GEN Casey also sought and received Maliki's support to begin clearing operations in Adamiyah. On other topics, Maliki indicated willingness to accept media interviews with US networks. He requested GEN Casey's assistance to visit both Mosul and Ramadi, and to attend the transition ceremony in Dhi Qar

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Baghdad Perimeter. Mufraji was already in with Maliki when GEN Casey arrived and, as agreed to earlier, was briefing Maliki on the concept of operations for the Baghdad perimeter. The main points are as follows:

Baghdad security perimeter is 88km obstacle belt tied to existing water canal network and rivers

Eight additional enduring checkpoints (28 total enduring checkpoints)

44 Blocking obstacles

4 km ditch and berm integrated with the canal network on the south section near Checkpoint one.

GEN Casey told Maliki that if it is done properly, it won't stop everything, but it will make it harder for terrorist, cars and car bombs, to enter the city. They have had positive results everywhere they have emplaced berms, such as around Mosul, Tal Afar, Samarra, Rutbah, and most recently Ramadi. Maliki noted that the insurgents already have bases of operation inside Baghdad, but a perimeter could control the flow of new elements into the city, and allow the Iraqis to focus on clearing out those already inside. GEN Casey told Maliki that upon his approval, they could have the perimeter complete before Ramadan, and that this would coincide with the completion of clearing operations in Baghdad. These two activities would reinforce each other as they work to push the terrorists out of the city, and then make it harder for them to get back in.

Maliki readily provided his approval and said he thought there were three positive aspects of the plan. First, the vehicle checkpoints will deter the terrorists. Second, the way MNF-I has it organized, the perimeter will not create traffic jams. Finally, Maliki was especially pleased that the perimeter does not target one specific area, and could not be considered aimed at any ethnic group. GEN Casey agreed, and also added that it would send a very positive signal to Baghdad residents that the GOI is serious about providing security to the capitol city. Maliki commented that this double layer of security would likely result in the return of displaced persons to their homes, which is something he very much wants to

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happen. GEN Casey said they would plan to start the work immediately, and if they run into problems, will adjust accordingly.

Clearing Operations in Adamiyah. GEN Casey then told Maliki that MG Thurman would be ready to start the next clearing operation in Adamiyah on Saturday, pending his approval. He noted that Adamiyah is now the worst neighborhood in Baghdad, and that the operation had been postponed because of the 7th Imam march. The Prime Minister turned to the MOD and said he was concerned that this was a Sunni area, but the MOD said he supported the plan. Bulani said the MOI has 17 target packages (bank robbers and criminals) in Adamiyah they would like to action before the operation began. Maliki then surfaced the possibility of giving Council of Representative (COR) members from Adamiyah advance notice of the operation, in order to reassure them that it would be conducted with care, as had been done in other areas. GEN Casey cautioned that he expected there would be more of a fight in Adamiyah because of the considerable AQ presence. Maliki acknowledged that, and also noted that this could jeopardize the secrecy of the operation and endanger the soldiers. Maliki said this was hard, as he wanted to protect everyone, but that if the only option were to clear Adamiyah in a no-notice operation, then he would provide that approval. GEN Casey told Maliki he would present this to MG Thurman, who will determine if there is a way to leverage this to their advantage, and advise Maliki of his response next day.

Displaced Persons. Maliki noted the problem of displaced Sunni and Shia populations. He highlighted that the terrorists first target the shopkeepers and businessmen with protection and extortion schemes, and that this important part of the community tended to depart neighborhoods first. Returning these shopkeepers to their neighborhoods and reopening their business was something Maliki wanted to see happen quickly. GEN Casey noted that this was already happening in the cleared areas in Dora and Ameriyah, and that their respective business districts are starting to look fairly robust. Maliki said he was aware of some 1100 Sunni families that had fled Ameriyah for Abu Ghurayb, and were now living in the abandoned homes of Shia that had fled Abu Ghurayb. He said he very much wanted all these displaced persons to have the opportunity to move back in to their homes.

Sunday Talk Shows? GEN Casey referred to Maliki's comment earlier in the day when he indicated his concern that the American people did not really understand what was happening in Iraq. He acknowledged some of this could be due to election year politics, but Maliki told the CG that his view is that Iraq is on the right track, and moving in the right direction. GEN Casey suggested one way to address this would be to accept some interviews with US news programs, and offered to organize it for him. Maliki was very receptive and noted that he had an interview scheduled with FOX News already. Mufraji showed his support, and also offered to make himself available for interviews or talk shows.

In-Country Travel. Maliki advised GEN Casey that he wanted to go to Mosul and asked for his assistance in organizing a trip. He wants to meet with the Governor, Provincial Council, and the military and police leadership. Maliki also said that while he has met with the Al Anbar Governor and Council members in Baghdad, he now wanted to visit them in Rarnadi. Maliki stated that he is aware of the fight the tribes have had against the terrorists and he wants to go there to show his support. GEN Casey concurred that it would be a good visit, and would also serve to connect the province to Baghdad. Maliki commented that it would be important to deliver some assistance and development projects to the province to cement that Baghdad connection.

Dhi Qar. Maliki asked GEN Casey when Dhi Qar province would transition to Iraqi control. CG thought it would be soon and before the start of Ramadan. Maliki said that he planned to attend the ceremony, so

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the date should be coordinated with his office.

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24 August 2006

...GEN Casey accompanied GEN Abizaid to all his meetings. The first session was a morning meeting with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki on 24 August. The other meeting of interest was with President Talabani that afternoon.

Overall, GEN Casey had the impression that Maliki was trying to pump up GEN Abizaid about the situation in Iraq. He attributed this to Iraqi concern over GEN Abizaid's congressional testimony during which he stated that sectarian violence was as bad as he has seen it, and that civil war was a possibility. Maliki told GEN Abizaid that he does not think that the American people have a clear understanding of the situation in Iraq. Maliki stated he believed that Iraq was on the right track, and moving in the right direction. He also stated that "Voices from the States hurt us."

On the subject of Iraqi security forces Maliki stated that he thought the Iraqi army was making progress, and noted the number of battalions already in the lead. He asked GEN Abizaid if there would be any chance to withdraw two more US brigades from Iraq by November. GEN Casey actually has been contemplating this for a while, but he had not raised it with Maliki. The fact that Maliki initiated the exchange was very welcome news to both Generals. GEN Casey said that the Iraqis know they did well providing security for the 7th Imam march (despite bogus media reports) and are buoyed by their success. This recent suggestion to off-ramp two brigades is likely a reflection of that confidence.

Also on the subject of coalition presence, they discussed the progress of the Joint Committee for Iraqi Self Reliance. The committee has been formed and they have had initial meetings. MG Cichowski, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Planning and Assessments, has the responsibility for MNF-I. GEN Casey had briefed Maliki that it might take about 90 days before this joint committee would produce an interim report on the plan for coalition drawdown. Maliki asked if they could have that done in 60 days. Once again, GEN Casey was very pleased with Maliki's initiative to move this forward, and believes that it is another positive sign from this government.

Maliki made the point that [REDACTED] GEN Casey's impression is that the Iraqis are most worried about [REDACTED]

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Maliki told Abizaid that he has received reports that there will be an attempt to kidnap Saddam Hussein during his trial, and was worried about the possibility.

GEN Abizaid's next meeting was with President Jalal Talabani. GEN Casey provided the following highlights of that session.

- Prime Minister Maliki is serious about facing the militia problem.
- The Sunni resistance is coming back to the table after a self-imposed hiatus. He expects that discussions with Talat 'abd al-Karim al-((Wizzam)), head of the Iraqi National Unity Party, and UK DCG LTG Rob Fry will resume shortly.
- The PKK announced a cease fire.

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- Talabani said that he is in touch with a Sunni sheikh...and that this sheikh claims that b 6 b 6 wants to rejoin the political process. GEN Casey suggested that the only way the coalition would support his return is if he agreed to stand trial.

-- b 6 ..the highest ranking member of Saddam's regime still at large, is likely hiding out in the Tikrit or Baqubah areas of Iraq...reporting since April indicated (b)(6) is focused on rebuilding the Ba'ath party and so it is not surprising that he is looking for a way back in to the process.

Talabani stated that all the main groups in the government are talking to each other, and they all agree that the US is not the enemy. GEN Casey commented that it was interesting that they could agree on friends, but still weren't sure about their enemies.

26 August

On the afternoon of 26 August GEN Casey traveled to Baqubah to meet with MG Turner (101st Cdr) and (b)(3), (b)(6) (3 HBCT Cdr) to get an update on the situation in the province. GEN Casey also met with the 5th IA Division commander and the Governor. Violence in Diyala continues at a fairly constant level, and the conditions in Buhritz and Baqubah remain especially difficult. GEN Casey suggested that Turner and (b)(3), (b)(6) consider a version of the Baghdad Security Plan (BSP) for Baqubah. Coincidentally, and in a separate meeting, Governor Ra'ad requested GEN Casey's support for a version of the BSP in Baqubah.

b 3, b 6 provided an overview of the province pointing out that Diyala is "Little Iraq" "Big Baghdad" in terms of the ethnic composition, sectarian fault lines, and presence of AQ and other Sunni and Shia extremists. Their goal is to gain control of the province, and they are targeting the population to achieve that end state. (b)(3), (b)(6) highlighted the AQ presence in the province and noted that AQ continues to build on the AMZ vision that Diyala should become part of the caliphate. AQ is also active in 1.4b, 1.4d and, the brigade is developing better fidelity on those rat lines. They are tracking 12 top targets in the AQ network (b)(3), (b)(6) so reported that the sectarian

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violence continues apace and AQ seems to be pulsing the cycle of violence. During the week of 18-25 August, (b)(3), (b)(6) reported 63 acts of intimidation to include kidnappings, murders, drive by shootings, and discoveries of dead bodies. As a result of the violence, shops and businesses are being closed and boarded up.

In summary (b)(3), (b)(6) told GEN Casey that he thought they, in conjunction with the 5th IA, MOI police and DBE forces, were just treading water. He stated they still must focus on the kinetic fight, but he also said they need delivery of basic services for the people to reduce some of the pressure. He stated that the provincial council is weak. They have developed poor, and corrupt contracting practices, which have failed to produce positive results for the people. Diyala Governor Ra'ad Hamid al-Mullah Jawad al-Tamimi knows this is happening, but may be part of the problem.

GEN Casey asked (b)(3), (b)(6) and MG Turner if things have changed so much that they need to rethink what they are doing in the province. He asked what the biggest problem was, and (b)(3), (b)(6) responded that attacks against the civilian population were his greatest concern. He thought that the impact it was having on commerce, and the semblance of normal life, was significant. GEN Casey noted that the center of gravity in Diyala is the city of Baqubah. If Baqubah was stable, he asked, would it help the overall situation in the province (b)(3), (b)(6) thought it would, but noted that the AIF is inside and outside Baqubah, and the city of Buhritz is especially bad. GEN Casey described the concept of operations for the Baghdad Security Plan and asked if they thought something similar, but appropriately tailored, might be a fix for Baqubah. MG Turner said he thought there were different dynamics in play in Diyala. The key, he said, is getting the ISF to take the lead and handle the problem. He wants (b)(3), (b)(6) in more of a supporting role, and the 5th IA Division Commander General Shakir Hilail Husayn Khalaf to continue to aggressively work it.

From FOB Warhorse, the party moved via ground convoy in GR-31s (more IED-survivable than Humvees) to FOB Lion to meet with the 5th IA Commander (b)(6) and Diyala Governor Ra'ad. GEN Casey was warmly greeted by the Iraqis. Inside their headquarters (b)(6) (b)(6) the 2nd Brigade Commander, provided an overview of the activities of his four battalions.

Governor Ra'ad then addressed GEN Casey. He said he wanted greater integration between the Iraqi civil and military sides. Relations have worsened since he took office in 2007. The governor lamented his lack of insight and visibility into what was happening in the province. He wants more involvement in security decisions and operations. Finally, Governor Ra'ad told GEN Casey that he fully supported the Baghdad Security Plan, and he very much wanted a similar plan to be implemented in Baqubah. He asked for GEN Casey's assistance with this.

GEN Shakir's response confirmed the fact that there were no working relations between the IA, the IP, and the Provincial Government. He stated that he has been unable to work with either the Chief of Police or the Governor since he took command. He accused the IP of abandoning them on the one joint operation they ran in Muhdadiyah. He stated that the IP was infiltrated by militia, and that the force was corrupt. He told GEN Casey that he has passed his assessment to GEN Babakir.

GEN Casey said he was glad everyone was in the room together. The only way that the situation in the province is going to improve is if everyone works together. He underscored the criticality of the IP, IA,

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and Provincial government working together. The first step in accomplishing this, he said, is to build trust between the groups. This is their responsibility, as leaders, to do this for the good of the people they serve. He then presented each of the leaders with the MNF-I coin, inscribed with the motto "United Commitment" in Arabic, and urged them to resolve their differences.

26 August

On 26 August GEN Casey chaired the Effects Assessment Synchronization Board at Al Faw Palace. The EASB is intended to measure progress against the joint campaign plan over the April-August time frame. The original EASBs were MNF-I only events. After the Ambassador and GEN Casey drafted the Joint Campaign Plan, the EASBs became joint efforts. April was the last EASB and MNF-I briefed the joint results. In this EASB, the owner of each effect presented their assessment, and so State Department had the lead in the program. State Dept was well represented with Ambassadors Speckhard, Saloom, and Yellin. UK DCG Fry, LTG Dempsey and the MNF-I General officers also attended. British and Australian representatives attended... GEN Casey noted that most of the people in the room were new arrivals and he welcomed them. He said the most important aspect of the work here is that Iraq, the Mission, and MNF-I are integrated. This is the only way to succeed. The Iraqi component is becoming more prominent every day. This is not about us, he said. This is about the Iraqis. We are here to help the Iraqis execute their part of this program. The EASB, he said, is an opportunity to step back from the daily work, and see what we all need to do better...

The group first reviewed the end state to see and agreed that it remained valid. The end-state for Iraq is: "Iraq at peace with its neighbors and an ally in the War on terror, with a representative government that respects the human rights of all Iraqis, and security forces sufficient to maintain domestic order and to deny Iraq as a safe haven for terrorists."

The following are the effects, and a short narrative on assessed progress in achieving them. The words in parenthesis were modifications the group proposes and that will likely be adopted in the October EASB.

Effect 1: Terrorists defeated, irreconcilable insurgents and illegal armed groups neutralized. We have denied terrorist goals, but have seen delays achieving our objectives as sectarian violence and insurgent attacks escalated. We were slow to adapt to the environment, but work since 1 July against the death squads helped.

Effect 2: Capable ISF Assume Security Lead. ISF generation is on track. The ISF logistical system is proceeding according to original plans, but lags operational needs. MOI issues undermine confidence. We are 18 months in to a 36-month program. The Quicklook assessment of the National Police is achieving results.

Effect 3: (Functional), Representative Government that Promotes National Unity. Government formation and national reconciliation were significant steps forward, yet momentum is slow. Gains remain vulnerable to sectarian violence. Baghdad security effort appears to have improved climate for reconciliation.

Effect 4: (Iraqi Government able to) Meet Basic Needs. Some progress, but results have not met expectations. Iraqi satisfaction with basic services is low, and ability to deliver electricity and fuel is

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inadequate. Budget execution and other shortcomings hamper ministerial performance.

Effect 5: Economic Reforms Initiated (and sustainable growth). Some progress, but economic reform legislation will be key to Iraq's long term economic success. Relaxation of fuel subsidies combined with anticipated fuel import legislation should help undercut persistent corruption and black marketing.

Effect 6: Strengthen Rule of Law. Little progress. Coalition and GOI implementing programs and training to increase judiciary capacity, but results will take time. MOI and MOD detention facilities remain overcrowded and fraught with human rights abuses. Political and sectarian interference continues in corruption cases.

Effect 7: International Support for Iraq Increased. Some progress. Efforts with international community, particularly neighbors, required some coalition diplomatic support. Arrival of first Arab Ambassador since the fall of Saddam was very significant. We anticipate a boost from the International compact.

Effect 8: Violence Discredited. Violence is conditionally discredited: minority of Iraqis supports violence against the GOI and MNF-I. Iraqis now perceive the two greatest threats to security as AQI and Shia militias. Iraqis are frustrated by lack of progress toward unity, security, and prosperity.

Effect 9: Enhanced Understanding of Coalition Efforts. GOI success is overshadowed by security and basic service shortfalls at the domestic, regional, and international level. Perceptions of ineffectiveness could be counterproductive to coalition aims of a legitimate GOI and establishing ISF as dominant security force in Iraq.

Conclusions. At the end of the five-hour session, the following overall conclusions were presented.

We are on track to achieve some, but not all, elements of Joint Campaign Plan Phase 1 end state by early 2007.

Campaign strategy remains valid, even as conflict has grown more complex

GOI must be perceived as becoming more of a full partner in realizing Iraq's future - benchmarks are indicator of commitment. Corruption undercuts progress in virtually all lines of operation.

Window for strategic success will close unless sustained by real progress - imperative that we maintain momentum. The next 1-6 months will be crucial.

Recommendations. The group identified the following four general recommendations as the most important. We must more effectively execute our campaign strategy and ensure integration of our efforts across all lines of operation.

Need to focus on 'building, enhancing, modernizing' to complete our mission of helping ISF units attain TRA level 1.

Persuade the GOI to establish budget execution as their top capacity development priority across all ministries.

Develop with the GOI a strategic master plan to revitalize Iraq's electrical and oil infrastructure.

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31 August 2006

On 31 August GEN Casey met with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. Also in attendance was Maliki's Chief of Staff Tariq NAJIM 'ABDALLAH. GEN Casey planned to provide Maliki with a status report on the progress of the Baghdad Security Plan and to coordinate with him on the next neighborhood clearing operation. Maliki had a few agenda items of his own including an ops lead to a Saddam era cache of hard currency. He also offered his thoughts about the fallout from the Diwaniyah clash between the Iraqi army and the militia.

After exchanging greetings, Maliki stated he had just suffered a dizzy spell and was feeling a bit weak. GEN Casey encouraged him to take care of himself, and asked about his blood pressure and his ability to get routine exercise. GEN Casey may send a physician over to examine Maliki if he consents.

Before GEN Casey could start with his agenda, Maliki stated that he wanted to discuss a very important issue with GEN Casey, and asked his aide close his door. He proceeded to describe a possible cache of gold/hard currency located in a sealed box at the bottom of the Tigris River (near SCIRI headquarters) that may have belonged to the former regime. The source of the information, per Maliki, had some knowledge of the former regime so he was inclined to follow up on the lead. He told Casey he wanted the coalition to help them secure the location until divers could confirm/deny the reporting. GEN Casey is very familiar with the series of false claims of hidden caches over the past three years, either associated with money or WMD, but chose not to surface these with Maliki. He did, however, agree to send a 4ID unit to the location, establish security and assist as needed.

GEN Casey told Maliki that he thought it would be useful if they set up a weekly meeting on security issues. The CG said he could use additional time with Maliki, outside the MCNS, to bring him up to date on security conditions in the country, and coordinate on projected operations. Maliki concurred and agreed to start these sessions week of 4 September.

GEN Casey provided Maliki with a couple of briefing slides that provided the latest results from Operation Together Forward Phase 2. The first chart summarized ethno-sectarian violence over the past seven days. CG noted that it had been slightly elevated in Baghdad at 69 incidents, which is a 21 percent increase. The good news is that the casualties (86 KIA and 71 WIA) are still down, and represent a 42 percent reduction. Executions continue to decrease, with 58 total last week, which is about half of its peak in July. Moving on to the clearing operations, GEN Casey emphasized they were going well, but the big challenge will be to get the IA and IP into the areas to protect and hold it. GEN Casey took his time with this point, because so much will depend on the ability of the Iraqis to deliver the force and the services they promised. GEN Casey then updated Maliki on their efforts to improve electricity, water and sewage systems in all four cleared areas (Doura, Ghazaliyah, Arneriyah, Adamiyah).

GEN Casey told Maliki that a joint US-Iraqi force entered the Abu Hanifa mosque and found none of the ordnance they expected. GEN Casey described their entry, explaining that the division commander and his officers first prayed, then advised the mosque leadership of their plans, and finally conducted their search. GEN Casey has been careful to highlight the manner in which all the BSP operations are being conducted, and the fact that there have been virtually no incidents as a result. Maliki acknowledged the care they had taken and agreed it was done very well, it was organized, and people felt confident in the motives of their security forces.

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GEN Casey showed Maliki a storyboard on an IED facility discovered during clearing operations in Adamiyah on 30 August. They recovered large quantities of timers, phones, circuit testers and other IED materials. Significant, however, was the sophistication of some of the equipment to include frequency spectrum analyzers, likely designed to defeat coalition IED jammers.

GEN Casey next showed Maliki that the indirect fire attacks on the Green Zone had virtually stopped. From 15-30 August there was just a single attack in the green zone and it did not launched from Sadr City. GEN Casey congratulated Maliki on his success in turning this off, and left Maliki time to acknowledge, or even elaborate on the deal he struck. Maliki, however, plays his cards very close to his chest and simply smiled and agreed it was a good news, and that they needed to keep the pressure on. GEN Casey showed Maliki that IDF also was significantly reduced in Basrah.

Maliki transitioned to the 28 August fight in Diwaniyah between the ISF and JAM militia. He stated that as a result of the operation, the people realize that the GOI is serious. Diwaniyah, he said, is a good example of government commitment to the use of force if required to achieve security for all. Maliki stated that another positive result is that it showed that the people, including the leaders like Sadr, are against the illegal armed groups. Maliki stated he had signed an arrest warrant for the Shaykh accused of issuing the order to execute the Iraqi army soldiers. Maliki said he expects there will be some tribal revenge taken by the friends and family of the dead soldiers. He was disturbed by this, but once again, he noted that the people are clearly on the side of their security forces fighting terrorists and illegal armed groups.

GEN Casey agreed it was important for the government and the Iraqi Army to publicly commit to bringing to justice the murderers of the dead soldiers. He added that he has moved a coalition battalion down to Diwaniyah to assist the Iraqis in finding the perpetrators, and agreed to keep Maliki informed of their progress. Maliki reacted to this, and asked whether Iraqi forces weren't sufficient for the task. GEN Casey replied that the problem is the police. The Chief of Police in Diwaniyah told LTG Chiarelli that he did not have confidence in 50 percent of his force because of the militia influence. Maliki added that the other half of the force just don't have enough weapons, ammunition, vehicles, or communications equipment. GEN Casey stated that the coalition will work with the Iraqi army in Diwaniyah, and Maliki concurred as long as the coalition remained in a supporting role.

GEN Casey advised Maliki that they were ready to start thinking about the next area in Baghdad to conduct clearing operations. Maliki looked at the Baghdad map and noted that the neighborhood of Bayaa is a mixed group of Sunni and Shia residents, and also that there were a number of displaced families from Bayaa that should be returned to their residences. For these three reasons, Maliki thought Bayaa was the best place to start the next series of operations, and GEN Casey concurred. Maliki continued to study the map and GEN Casey said that they would have to start thinking about Sadr City clearing operations. At present, the CG noted they are isolating the area and cutting their access along the Army canal. Maliki acknowledged this, and suggested one possibility was to clear New Baghdad next, and then possibly the area in Shab, north of Sadr City. This would essentially put Sadr City inside a cleared ring, which could have some advantage. GEN Casey was encouraged by Maliki's thinking, and apparent willingness to acknowledge the need to clear Sadr City at some point. He is attempting to set the conditions for that now, and bring Maliki along with him incrementally.

2 September Travel to Fallujah

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GEN Casey traveled to Fallujah to meet with MG Zilmer on 2 September. He wanted to speak to MG Zilmer personally following the submission of his G2's assessment of the "State of the Insurgency in al Anbar" ...GEN Casey received Zilmer's assessment, and it is a very different product from the G-2's. He describes the enemy situation as still threatening, but not so much that he won't be able to accomplish his objectives. Nonetheless, the marines still sees AQ as far more capable than does TF-1.4a who also operates in the area. As a result of this discrepancy, GEN Casey has tasked MG Zahner to pull together a red team, with all the relevant interagency players, to assess Al- Qaida's presence and strength in al-Anbar. This will be underway in the next day or two.

GEN Casey told MG Zilmer in a private discussion that his G2 has a very defeatist attitude about the intelligence picture in the province. This is a problem for the warfighter who needs an offensive mindset to win. They need to be looking at the enemy's weaknesses and vulnerabilities so that the force can exploit them. This G2, however, is convinced he can't win, so MG Zilmer has a problem he needs to deal with. Zilmer acknowledged the problem. GEN Casey reassured him that this incident has not resulted in any loss of confidence in him.

3 September 2006



During the extended session, Salih offered the CG a number of interesting comments and observations on a range of topics. Some highlights follow:

- Salih told the Baker Iraq Study Group that Iraq was in trouble. It was suffering from a crisis of leadership. The Shia agenda is very dangerous. This must end, or there will be no security.
- The responsibility of a Prime Minister must be to create political order, but Maliki was slow to address the tough fight. Salih has told Maliki that the greatest threat to the GOI is militia who are undermining his government. The militias have created a 'balance of terror' claiming to be the protectors against the Sunni. They may, in fact, be the end of the government.
- The only way to break the sectarian agenda is for the Prime Minister and the GOI to remove the militia. However, the key to removing militia is political will, and at this time there is little. A confrontation with Sadr could only work if the Prime Minister fully backed it. To push these leaders (principally Maliki and Hakim) off the fence would require a tremendous effort because these Shia leaders are still wedded to their sectarian agendas.
- Regarding Muqtada al-Sadr and JAM, Salih asked if GEN Casey planned to move against him, and whether he planned to go it alone. He warned that it would be an impossible political situation. Maliki and Hakim may personally want to go after JAM, but Salih strongly warned against doing so without their political cover.

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- Salih thought Sunni Deputy Prime Minister al-Zubai's contrarian views were helpful to the Ministers and he played a useful role in forcing ministers to consider non- Shia views...



- Regarding the MEK, Salih said he thought Maliki was serious about ridding Iraq of this group of detainees in Camp Ashraf over the next six months. Salih thought that this could be part of the solution between the two countries.

5 September 2006

On 5 September GEN Casey and UK DCG LTG Fry met with senior Sunni and Council of Representatives member Khalaf Ulayan al-Khalifawai at his request...

Ulayan has several specific proposals that he believes are necessary to advance this work. He requested weapons and financing for his people. He also requested some form of universal identification to use

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with coalition forces to avoid confusion. He also wanted to establish operational planning meetings between the two sides. Ulayan then elaborated on his thinking. He said he planned to organize into small groups of three to five operators, so that they could act without drawing attention from al-Qa'ida. These operators know the terrain, and the residents, and can easily identify the terrorists. Ulayan claimed they had already killed 30 AQ operatives in the past 30 days using this system. If this works in his area of Kaldiya, Ulayan suggested it could be expanded to the areas of Haditha and al-Qa'im. This will serve to force the terrorists to withdraw from populated areas, and his people will then be able to provide information on their movements to CF for capture/kill operations. In addition to the email addresses for exchanging time sensitive targeting information, Ulayan also requested a personal POC in areas where email would not be possible. The mood of the people, he said, is now anti-al-Qa'ida. He assured the CG that he could bring people over to the side of the government.

GEN Casey queried what end-state Ulayan envisioned for the province. Did he see government security forces providing security for the province? Ulayan stated that he did, but these forces should be created from the local population. CG reminded him that the GOI had agreed to recruit 14,000 Anbaris into the security forces, which is almost two divisions worth. The police recruiting has been good, but the army recruiting has not been successful to date. The opportunity, he emphasized, is there for the locals to participate in their own security, and GEN Casey asked for Ulayan's support to improve the recruiting.

GEN Casey restated the need to balance Ulayan's proposal and the long-term plan to put the ISF in charge of Anbar security, as this is the endgame for the CF. GEN Casey then asked Ulayan whether he would accept some small contingent of coalition forces to embed with Ulayan's men. This would serve to unify operations, provide situational awareness, and allow deconfliction, and reinforcements or QRF if needed. Ulayan seemed to be caught off guard by this proposal, and did not immediately agree. He also deflected the idea of imbedding Iraqi Special Forces into his operations. Both GEN Casey and LTG Fry urged Ulayan to give this further consideration. They asked Ulayan to consider developing a pilot case, in one area, over a specified time frame, in order to work out the legalities and procedures. He agreed and will be prepared to discuss it at the next session.

Ulayan suggested they start operations in the area between Rarnadi and Fallujah. Specifically, he stated that operations should begin in Kaldiya where he is from and where he has the most influence. He indicated he could stand up some 100 teams immediately comprising some 300-500 men. He thought they could start ops immediately, expand, and then officially connect their activity with the IA or the IP.

The two sides agreed to reconvene in about one week to work out final proposals, geographic definitions, liaison arrangements for deconfliction, and a framework to facilitate the process. GEN Casey encouraged Ulayan to consider his proposal carefully and reminded him that his forces could assist with communications equipment and QRF if his men were outnumbered or overrun.

GEN Casey is aware...that Ulayan may be trying to establish his own 'militia' and using the coalition to facilitate it. The CG clearly will factor that in to future planning. the CG's conditions for further cooperation -- embedding coalition forces into Ulayan's group -- means the CF will have good visibility into their operations and will be able to adjust as needed. The next meeting with Ulayan should be in the coming days as the new UK DCG LTG Lamb is on the ground and has been given the engagement portfolio to work.

13-14 September 2006

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GEN Casey is very pleased with the Ambassador's success in obtaining Iraqi government support for a political timeline for reaching agreement on de'bathification, militia, hydrocarbon law, federalism, and the constitution. The current plan is for President Talabani to announce the details of this new timeline at the UNGA on 18 September.

GEN Casey is preparing for the possibility that there will be both a constitutional referendum and a separate provincial election. While he had thought it would be better to combine them in one day of voting, he now thinks that if they are held within 60 days of each other, that all the security elements, infrastructure and election personnel can be held in place without too much effort. Moreover, the GOI could benefit from getting two positive bounces.

In connection with this national compact, the Ambassador has asked GEN Casey for ideas on a venue where the conference could be held. They are tentatively thinking about opening the conference during the first week of October. They are planning for the leadership to meet in private for as long as a week. During this time, it is hoped that the leadership will be able to accomplish the bulk of the work up front, and then bring back a fairly well developed product for their parties to execute.

Baghdad Security Plan. GEN Casey said that attacks are up slightly, mostly outside the secured areas for example murders in Bayaa. The insurgents are definitely punching back. He noted a substantial decline in civilian sectarian violence (executions and murders) from July peaks. In the last couple of weeks they have increased. There were 13 ethno-sectarian incidents a day (down from mid-20s in July). Civilian casualties are currently running 40-50 per day. The Baghdad barrier is half way done and will be complete by Ramadan. GEN Casey is going to ask the Iraqis to use their aviation assets to patrol the barrier. The CG expects that the clearing operations in Shaab Ur (northwestern corner of Sadr City) will fire up Sadr City residents. He or the DCG may try to phone Baha al-Araji, a senior Sadrist and COR member, to assure him of their current limited objectives in hopes he will be able to calm some of the anxiety and reduce the backlash.

GEN Casey acknowledged that the media had recently written articles about the 1 MEF G2 assessment of the condition in al Anbar. He said that MG Zilmer would also do some media that would clarify that the marines are not losing in Anbar, but are making progress against the campaign plan. CG noted for the record that the marines have three times the troop to population ratio of any other Division in Iraq.

GEN Casey said he had been contacted by the Deputy Governor of Salah ad Din. He wants a private meeting to discuss the role of the Ba'ath Party in the new Iraq. This new Ba'ath party would specifically exclude both Saddam Hussein and Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri.

GEN Casey traveled by convoy through Adamiyah on 14 September to see the current status of the build phase in this district. The BCT commander showed some of the progress made with electrical power generation, and the installation of transformers in the neighborhood. GEN Casey also met with the IA, IP and DAC leadership in the neighborhood. They all seem to be coordinating as envisioned, but there is still little progress on life services beyond that noted above. The DAC chairman said that after electricity, their greatest need is with the sewage system, and finally trash pickup. Believe the CG was a bit disappointed with the slow progress here and will energize the system.

The Adamiyah residents that CG spoke to all said they felt safer in their neighborhoods, but were still afraid to travel between neighborhoods. The BCT commander said he needs the DAC to encourage the people to call in tips on the anonymous tip line. Right now the residents are providing no help at all. He

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said they would watch murders take place in front of them, and would still be too afraid to call it in. With a little help, the soldiers feel they can make some solid progress on ensuring neighborhood security.

14 September 2006

COR member and Hawza insider (b)(6) invited GEN Casey to dinner evening of 14 September. The two men have a genuine relationship having worked together for the past two years, and occasionally meet for a private conversation. GEN Casey said this exchange was perhaps one of the most interesting he has had in Iraq.

GEN Casey said that (b)(6) can be counted on to push the Shia line, which he did not fail to do this time. He said that he believed that the Ambassador was turning the Sunni against the Shi'a. Gen Casey challenged him on this point and reminded (b)(6) that both he and the Ambassador are here to help create a democratic representative government that respects the rights of all Iraqis, both Sunni and Shia. The CG told (b)(6) that the Shi'a need the Sunni to succeed in governing the country. If they marginalize them, they will lose the whole thing. The Ambassador's efforts are designed to ensure that all of Iraq succeeds. (b)(6) persisted, and claimed that the Ambassador had drawn a red line on the selection of Maliki as the Prime Minister. He said he had called Rida al-Sistani to inform him. Rida became upset and accused the Ambassador of trying to break the alliance.

GEN Casey told him that the Shi'a have not yet demonstrated they can govern. This is the start point for all future success in Iraq, and the UIA is not making any effort to ensure that Maliki is successful. The US, on the other hand, is working diligently to provide Maliki as much support as he is willing to accept. He urged (b)(6) to think about interests and not issues.

Late in the evening (b)(6) told GEN Casey that the next big confrontation with Sadr must have an endgame, and the endgame must either be his death or exile, and the US has to do it. He further stated that the reason that Sadr is pushing so hard for the coalition withdrawal is so that Sadr can take over the country. (b)(6) stated he is not the only one that believes this. (b)(6) stated that Ayatollah al-Sistani is 'suffering from Sadr'.

GEN Casey is thinking about (b)(6) message and suspects that this was the whole reason for the dinner. He recalls earlier arguments that Sadr should have been dealt with in 2004, but this is clearly a much more complex environment and Casey will take his some time to sift through the issues.

In continued discussions about the problem of militias, GEN Casey told (b)(6) about his idea to have the COR pass a resolution that would prohibit participation in provincial elections of any party with a militia. GEN Casey said that this proposal clearly resonated with (b)(6) and he is hopeful that (b)(6) can help advance it in the COR.

(b)(6) also commented that many Iraqis view federalism as little more than a (b)(6) family plan to take over the south, and there is very little enthusiasm for it...

16 September 2006

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GEN Casey traveled to Dhi Qar province with MG Sherriff on 16 September and was hosted by the Italian Joint Task Force Commander MG Pascale at their headquarters at Camp Mittica. GEN Casey was interested in talking to the senior coalition and Iraqi leaders before Dhi Qar is turned over to provincial Iraqi Control at a 21 September ceremony.

GEN Casey started with an office call with MG Carmine de ((Pascale)). Pascale said he had no special concerns regarding the upcoming transfer to Iraqi lead. He stated that the IA and IP are working well together, and cited a recent example of their success in managing a recent clash with JAM in the city of Al-Bhatha'. He also noted that in the last few weeks both the IA and IP have shown great interest in achieving their independence through the PIC process. The Governor is equally anxious to take this next step soonest.

Regarding PIC, Pascale stated the Operational Overwatch (OOW) begins on 21 Sept and ends for them in November with the transfer of Camp Mittica to the Iraqis, and the redeployment of Italian troops back to Italy. By mid December their redeployment will be complete. In OOW Pascale said his main tasks/challenges would be to maintain situational awareness, continue to mentor and monitor the ISF, provide QRF, and assist reconstruction. The Italian PRT has been established, and will be key in supporting this last element of OOW. MG Sherriff informed the CG that the Australians have agreed to assume OOW when the Italians depart.

The MOU that will define the post-PIC relationship between the CF and the Provincial authorities is close to being signed. This MOU differs in some areas than the first MOU worked out when Muthana province achieved PIC. GEN Casey understands that each province will have local issues to address, but wants a template of what must be in such an MOU for all other provinces. His main concern is continued access to the province, areas around CF bases, and use and control of the MSRs. Pascale assured the CG that this MOU provides for complete freedom of movement in the province.

Pascale has worked out a detailed security plan for the 21 September PIC ceremony to prevent its disruption. He is mindful of the need to put an Iraqi face on this, and to minimize coalition presence. That said, the Italian MOD and some other officials from Rome will attend. GEN Casey said that Prime Minister Maliki is likely to attend. Pascale noted that Dhi Qar authorities will be greatly disappointed if he does not.

Pascale stated the Governor and Police chief are former military and members of SCIRI/Badr. He also stated that their relationship, along with the IA commander is excellent. He noted that the 3rd brigade IA commander fought in Fallujah in November 2004, and has the type of experience and leadership that would allow him to become future IOth IA Division commander. All three leaders are determined to keep order in the city. Just yesterday, at a joint IA/IP checkpoint they killed two terrorists.

The next meeting was with Dhi Qar Governor 'AZIZ KADHIM 'ILWAN AL-'AKILI, Commander of the 3rd IA brigade BG Sa'ad Ali Ati, and the Chief of Police 'Abd al-Hussein Hassan Thimir.

The Governor said his biggest concern regarding militia is the need to disarm them. He, and the provincial council leadership, only want weapons in the hands of official Iraqi security forces. He stated emphatically that 'anyone with weapons is against my government.' CG asked whether he had considered a weapons amnesty program, but the Governor quickly stated that this initiative could only come from Baghdad's central government. He said he is not strong enough for that.

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In preparation for PIC the Governor recently brought together all the provincial senior leaders (religious authorities, politicians, tribal shaykhs) for a conference to work out how the Iraqis will secure the province. At that meeting they came to 10-point agreement they subsequently titled "Understanding and Honor". Very briefly, it is a code of conduct that recognizes they will be guided by the principals of Islam, but reject the use of weapons and violence to solve problems of any kind, and demands allegiance to the rule of law. It ends stating that "We need to work with poise and serenity. We need to maintain a dialogue and not fall into violence and fanaticism in the case of arguments." A final reminder is that "a mosque is God's house, and not an armoury". All members of the conference signed the document and have committed to working in support of the province.

The Chief of Police said his biggest problem was that he was only authorized 8,500 police by the MOI, but had hired over his limit and now had a force of some 13,000. As a result, 3,000 IP do not have weapons. Some of them bring their personal weapons to work, and he noted that this was not all bad as it took some weapons off the street. Nonetheless, he wanted more weapons and vehicles. Also, he has been using IA to train, and what he really wants is a police training academy. He acknowledged the excellent support of the Italian Carabinieri to bring them up to this level of performance. However, they do not want to continue to use army training facilities modified for police use. GEN Casey agreed the province should have a dedicated training center, and asked Pascale to get this going before he departed. Other than that, Hassan assured the CG that his police were loyal and implementing his orders without fail.

CG asked BG ATI if the IA was ready. He confirmed that it was. He complemented the Italians on their training and mentoring program. He stated that the secret to their success is the level of cooperation between them and the great leadership of the governor. Regarding loyalty, ATI said that he and his command work hard to help their troops and in return they get their full loyalty. He noted with some pride that two of his battalions have deployed to support operations in Basrah. Those that remain are manning checkpoints and running patrols daily. He noted no serious issues of concern.

Travel to Basrah with GEN Casey on 16 September

GEN Casey traveled to Basrah to meet with the UK MND-SE CDR MG Sherriff, and to receive an operations and intelligence update from his staff. The big focus now is getting approval for, and moving forward on executing Basrah clearing operations.

Elements from both MG Sherriff's and GEN Casey's staffs were in Baghdad meeting with National Security Advisor Muwafiq al-Rubai to brief him on their operations package for clearing Basrah, codenamed Operation DATE PALM. Rubai was convinced that the operation must go forward, and clearly understood the urgency. The same group was scheduled to brief Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki later that evening in order to obtain his approval. GEN Casey anticipated that he would approve, as it is a logical extension of Maliki's own plan for Basrah. With Maliki approval the UK planned to start immediately and by 17 September. Part of the urgency is that they already have forces forward deployed in IDF-vulnerable locations like the Shatt al Arab hotel. Also, they will lose their ready reserve force (of two companies) in November. Both issues argue for immediate commencement of operations despite the fact that now falls during Ramadan. (The UK will seek a fatwa that will exempt Iraqi troops from fasting during the holiday.)

In essence, this operation will be done very much like the Baghdad Security Plan using the clear, protect, and build template. However, the Basrah plan will be largely non-kinetic. No reconstruction will take

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place until UK forces have completely vacated the areas and turned them over to Iraqi ISF control. GEN Casey noted that if Maliki approves there would be three simultaneous operations, with blowback potential, underway in Sadr City, Basrah and Diwaniyah. The CG noted the need, more than ever, for their joint motto 'start together, stay together, finish together.'

The UK plans to continue targeting death squad activities during Op Date Palm, noting that the death squads and the militia had to be removed before PIC. They believe that this will eventually lead them to Basrah Governor MUHAMMAD MISBAH AL-WA'ILI as a major sponsor of death squad activity. While Wa'ili is overtly supportive of the Basrah clearing plan, it will soon lead to some hard choices for him. He will either have to comply or will seek to derail it. MG Sherriff expects the latter and is working his own information operations to counter anticipated efforts on the part of Wa'ili to undermine their operations. GEN Casey asked that everyone work hard to identify evidence that can be used against Wa'ili that will sideline him before the provincial elections.

MG Sherriff described his end state as: An adequately stable and enduring security environment within Basrah, delivered by ISF units that are 'fit for purpose' underpinned by an effective and fair judiciary, supported by legitimate and effective Governor and Provincial Council that together set the conditions for transition to PIC in Basrah and thereafter to Iraqi self reliance.

1.4b, 1.4d

MG Sherriff said despite their pull back from al Amarah in Maysan they still have good visibility. He thought the police chief had a good handle on JAM and did not believe that there would be any attacks on the ISF like there were during the late August incident in Diwaniyah. He thought that the province was slowly returning to what passes as normality. He did state that the Brigade commander whose 2nd battalion mutinied when asked to deploy to Baghdad, will be fired, and he also believes the battalion commander should be replaced as well. Sherriff stated, however, the soldiers were good material. They need to be built up slowly, provided good equipment, and training, and if this is done it will be possible to adjust their conditions of service. He would not rule out the possibility of their service anywhere in Iraq. GEN Casey tends to agree that this is more of a leadership issue than a problem with the service contract as does the IA Chief of Staff Babakir Zebrari.

17 September 2006

GEN Casey provided updates on planned operations in Basrah, Diwaniyah and Sadr City morning of 18 September. GEN Casey met with PM on evening of 17 September to discuss both...The coalition had expected that [Major General] Hamadi had been keeping Baghdad, and especially Maliki's office, informed of the planning for this operation, as he is Maliki's link to this effort. Harnadi, however, had not advised Maliki's office, and everyone was surprised that their 16 September briefing was the first Maliki had heard of this important operation. Hamadi aggravated the situation, by denying that he had

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ever being included in the planning for the operation. The meeting deteriorated further and closed without any approval from Maliki to commence operations.

GEN Casey met with Maliki on the evening of 17 September to discuss Basrah, and also the Diwaniyah operation. GEN Casey said that the Maliki identified two issues. The first is that Hamadi was not comfortable with the plan, although he acknowledges he can use parts of it. (GEN Casey took the opportunity to advise Maliki that the UK met with Harnadi at least 11 times to discuss Basrah clearing operations.) GEN Casey told his commanders it would be necessary to get Hamadi back in the game for this to go forward. The second issue is that Maliki believes the political situation in Basra needs to be dealt with quietly. The PM seemed to think the security situation wasn't that bad and was concerned that an operation of this scale would disrupt the political balance. Moreover, Maliki acknowledged there are still some simmering concerns about the British, and their detention operations, and he felt that a large UK operation could 'explode' the security situation. The problems in Basrah, he said, were political, economic, tribal and social.

Maliki said there were two areas that needed to be dealt with, the criminal gangs in north Basrah and the points of origins for the indirect fire attacks on coalition bases. CG told Maliki that the CF would come back to him by the end of the week incorporating his interests and concerns, and in coordination with Hamadi. Thus, GEN Casey advised his commanders that for planning purposes, it will be at least seven days before any part of the operation could start.

GEN Casey provided some guidance to his commanders on the way ahead. He wants the UK in Basrah to engage Hamadi and incorporate his insights into the plans and repackage it to meet Maliki's concerns. CG suggested that they think of this like the red team on the first Baghdad Security Plan, emphasizing that buy-in is important. Also, CG suggested that his staff might want to consider phasing in the operation by breaking it into smaller pieces, and coming back to Maliki with an assessment before moving to next phase. When the UK gets to the point where they are in agreement with Hamadi, then GEN Casey requested they bring Hamadi to Baghdad to brief the CG and the Corps Commander. Following that, GEN Casey will go with them to brief Maliki on the revised and coordinated plan.

Diwaniyah. For background, the late August clash between JAM militia and the Iraqi security forces left some 60 JAM tribal members dead, and 13 Iraqi army soldiers executed. This occurred just as the 1st IA Division became the first Iraqi army division to come under sole control of the new Iraqi Ground Forces Command (IGFC). At the end of the clash, the 1st IA Division commander requested and received approval from the MOD and Army chief of Staff to find and detain those responsible for the execution of his soldiers. This second operation in Diwaniyah was intended to accomplish this capture/detention objective. The IGFC, however, did not brief Maliki on their proposed operations, and when Maliki heard that the 1st IA had entered Diwaniyah, he reacted by disapproving it, and ordering the withdrawal of forces.

GEN Casey discussed the Diwaniyah operation with Maliki at this same 17 September meeting. Maliki feels that this is a tribal issue, and he is working it on a separate track...

GEN Casey provided some guidance on how to move this operation forward. He told Army Chief of Staff Babakir Zebari that MNF-I would help him draft a political-military plan for Diwaniyah. He emphasized, however, it was their lead to get back to Maliki, and by the end of the week.

GEN Casey summarized some lessons learned for his commanders on both of these incidents. In his own

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words, he noted:

- We got too far down the road on both of these without getting Maliki involved. Both Babakir and MOD need to keep their political leaders in the loop.
- We need to adjust planning cycles to engage Iraqi leadership on sensitive operations like Sadr City, Basrah, and Diwaniyah, before we move forces without political buy-in.
- We need to get an agreed picture of the problem we are trying to solve. Part of the problem is that we see the issues differently from Maliki.

GEN Casey said he is the one managing the Sadr City operations with Maliki, and he has not provided his approval to his commanders to start on 26 September. GEN Casey will meet with Maliki on 20 September for his usual Wednesday security update, and will further discuss it with him. Maliki's buy in is not certain, but he has recognized in previous meetings that all neighborhoods of Baghdad must be cleared, including Sadr City. Maliki may have input into the plan to include timing and tempo and shaping operations.

GEN Casey noted that his commanders are all blaming Maliki for these operational setbacks, but he does not believe that Maliki is the problem. The bigger issue is that the processes in place, to keep Maliki in the decision making cycle, have not been well developed or executed. That part needs to be fixed. Further, the CG cautioned his commanders months ago that the Iraqis would begin to feel more sovereign, and they would be making decision that the coalition may not agree with. But this is part of standing on their feet, and will be increasingly part of this environment.

GEN Casey said that last night Maliki disapproved a targeting package in Sadr City for an individual connected to an EFP network. GEN Casey plans to discuss this with Maliki on 20 September as well. He is planning to tell Maliki that in a case like this, when there are clear force protection equities for the coalition, he must take action, even if this puts him at odds with Maliki on the issue. He has no choice.

18 September 2006 meeting with Shaykh 'abd al Nasir al-Janabi

GEN Casey invited Shaykh 'abd al-Nasir al-Janabi, member of the Security and Defense committee of the Council of Representatives, to a private 90-minute meeting in his office on 18 September. GEN Casey wanted to discuss the coalition raid on his INDF office on 16 September and also the arrest of two of his PSD members for weapons violations in the Green Zone. Shaykh Janabi, however, quickly dismissed those as minor issues, and moved into his broader agenda. The tone and tenor of this meeting was very different. Janabi seemed to be urgently looking for an engagement partner for the resistance. At various times he mentioned the need for Iraq to stay united, for the coalition to depart but not if it means leaving the 1.4b in control, lack of balance of Sunni in the army and the government and their inability to affect change. These could all be factors in the change in Janabi's demeanor and the most serious effort he has made to date at meaningful engagement.

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Sunni Participation in the Iraqi Army. Janabi wanted to know if it was true that the size of the Iraqi army would be increased by an additional 30,000 troops. GEN Casey confirmed they were actually ready to hire an additional 50,000. Janabi was quite pleased, and stated that these recruits should come from the troubled Sunni areas to add balance to the army. GEN Casey noted that the MOD was willing to hire 11,000 from al Anbar but they had few volunteers. He added that Sunnis from Diyala, Salah ad Din, and Mosul also had the opportunity to join the army, and asked for Janabi's assistance to get qualified Sunni into the armed forces. Janabi agreed, and stated that recruitment drives should be run through Tawafuq and Hewar to ensure that Sunni, and not Shia posing as Sunni, would be hired. He also stated that the best approach would be to create IA units composed of the residents in the area they would be responsible for protecting and defending. GEN Casey suggested Janabi engage the MOD on these issues, but Janabi said he did not want to deal with him. In response, GEN Casey offered to have LTG Dempsey explain the recruiting program to Janabi, to which he agreed. GEN Casey told Janabi that the timing was right to bring the Sunni in to the army and the political process.

Regaining Sunni balance. Janabi stated that the Sunni needed to regain their proper balance among the Shia and Kurds, and until that happens the political and security situation would not be solved. The Sunni must return to their proper position in the ISF and government. Janabi stated that the Sunni DPM and MOD have no authority. Maliki controls everything. He accused the MOD of just appeasing Maliki, and unable to lead, and unable to make any progress against the militia. No one, Janabi, stated has stopped the militia. He argued that JAM should be designated a terrorist organization just like Al-qa'ida. Maliki should do this, or step aside.

Replacing the Maliki Government. According to Janabi, Maliki, as prime minister, has not achieved any accomplishments in Iraq. This is a failed government that needs a cure. The Government should fall with a no- confidence vote from the COR. If that does not happen, the only other choice would be to install a military government with former soldiers who fought the Iran-Iraq war. This crisis, Janabi claimed, will continue unless or until one or the other replaces the Maliki government. Janabi seemed to tilt toward a military government, which he would like to see headed by former Iraqi Army Chief of Staff General Nizar al-Khazraji...

GEN Casey firmly stated that he supported the elected government of Iraq. The Sunni participated in the elections and voted in a free and fair process. He acknowledged that the current GOI does not yet equitably represent the rights of all Iraqis. This is why there is a need to come to agreement on some of the issues dividing them such as de-ba'athification, constitution, hydrocarbon laws, and militias.

Janabi responded that there was no protection for the Sunni in Iraq right now. He claimed he wanted to end the security chaos in the country. Janabi claimed that Iraqi citizens are now asking for their resignation. If Tawafuq withdraws from the COR, the political process would be ruined. Janabi intended that they cannot change anything. Iran is the ruler of Iraq. The only solution is a strong alternative government. He claimed that this is not just his own point of view. He asked that this message be provided to the White House.

The Real Solution. Janabi stated that it was time to sit down with the real decision makers to find out what the US really wanted or needed from Iraq. GEN Casey assured him that he and the Ambassador are the ones to make those decisions. GEN Casey cited the joint end state for Iraq to Janabi in response to his query on what the US wanted. Janabi scoffed and described it as a dream. GEN Casey reminded Janabi that he and the Ambassador had engaged various Sunni groups over the past year and none have produced any results from the resistance. GEN Casey assured him of their continued interest in talking

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to anyone who could make a difference on the ground.

[b 6] As part of the real solution, Janabi wanted the US to release important detainees. He provided the CG a list of 70 names he would like released. He claimed these people can and will help the coalition. Janabi recalled CG's earlier willingness to consider sites outside Iraq for meetings with the resistance and resurfaced the proposal. This prompted Janabi to again request the release of [b)(6)] [b 6] from coalition detention. Janabi claimed this one individual could make a big impact on the ground. GEN Casey told him that they are still reviewing his case. The Ambassador had personally met with [b)(6)] very recently to try to determine his utility, if released. Janabi requested his release be expedited as it will make an immediate difference. The Iraqi resistance will view this as a positive confidence-building measure. [b)(6)] he claimed will help find a solution, will work the political lines, and will work to remove AQ. He claimed [b)(6)] is very well respected among the Sunni and his words will be heard and heeded. Further, and most important, [b)(6)] can negotiate on behalf of the resistance.

Janabi stated that behind [b)(6)] the three most important individuals in Iraq for the Sunni resistance were:

- [b)(6)]
- [b)(6)]
- [b)(6)]
- [b)(6)]

GEN Casey agreed they needed to get serious and start a process to get the Sunni population where it needs to be in this government. The result should be the end of the honorable resistance, to which Janabi emphatically agreed. Janabi again repeated the need to find a solution that allows the US to exit without losing, and Iraq to exist without being dominated by [1.4b] and with an honorable end for the resistance. Both men pledged to find a solution and accept responsibility for decision-making.

Janabi stated that one way to convince the resistance is to release detainees, stop raids, designate JAM a terrorist organization, restore ethnic balance to the IA, and allow displaced persons to return to their homes. Janabi stated that the Arab Sunni built Iraq and cannot hand it over to [1.4b] If, he said, GEN Casey helps them regain their country, without forcing any group out, then the Sunni will work to implement peace.

Way Ahead. GEN Casey told Janabi he thought it was a very useful session. He reminded him it was a two way street, and that he does not see that Janabi ever delivers. Janabi strongly objected and claimed to be holding the Sunni inside the COR from walking out, using his position to influence Sunni leaders, and other accomplishments not readily visible to outsiders.

Janabi and GEN Casey agreed that the first step needs to involve direct negotiations with the resistance. Janabi will try to set up a meeting or have an authority from Tawfuq who can represent the people legitimately. Gen Casey cautioned that the discussions can proceed, but ultimately there must be agreement with the GOI. This is for Iraqis to decide their future. GOI must be the body that pardons the resistance and accepts their role in the struggle. Janabi countered that the resistance does not accept the Government, the constitution, or anything after 4 April. CG explained that they could start discussions with the resistance, and run a parallel track on the political level. On the political level, the Iraqis of all parties will work to decide issues of de-bathification, constitution, militia etc. At the end of this process, Iraq may look like a country the Sunni may want to be part of. The next step would be for the GOI to grant amnesty and set up some re-integration programs. Provincial elections will help

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restore balance locally, and the Sunni can participate in the next national election to restore balance in the central government.

Janabi agreed to write down demands of the resistance, and the process and timeline needed to achieve results. GEN Casey said his side would do the same, and noted they had been talking about principals for too long. It was now time to talk issues.

19 September 2006

...GEN Casey had just returned from his regular Tuesday meeting with the Ministers. He said he polled them on their assessment of the Baghdad Security Plan. They generally felt that the BSP was achieving its goals but they all stated that it would only achieve lasting results if the militia were disarmed.

GEN Casey is working on making his case to clear Sadr City by the end of the month in his 20 September meeting with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki. He knows that Maliki is trying to stretch this out, and that is why he suggested that New Baghdad be cleared ahead of Sadr City. CG noted that they are in about 8 areas right now that form a ring around Sadr City. The choice is to go into New Baghdad and isolate Sadr city on either side, or go straight in. The CG's preferred course of action is to announce they will clear New Baghdad next, but actually go into Sadr City. He said that the clearing ops in Sadr City would resemble those in the other areas, although there is no intention of entering/clearing every residence. Instead, they will enter those locations where known bad guys are located.

He expects a backlash unless Maliki sets the political conditions. Maliki needs to advise the Shia leaders that every other neighborhood in Baghdad has been cleared, and so Sadr City must also be cleared. This is not about JAM, this is about criminals and terrorists and Baghdad will not be safe until Sadr City is cleared. CG said he expects Maliki to reject the use of coalition forces in Sadr City, but the CG is prepared to tell him that the ISF is not capable enough to do it alone. The CG's plan is to tee this up on 20 September, and then tell Maliki that he would like to have a decision by the weekend. CG recalls that it took some six weeks to get former Prime Minister Ayad Alawi's agreement to enter Fallujah in late 2004. He has only been working Maliki for the past two weeks.

GEN Casey said he has emphasized that the ISF must execute on the checkpoints through Ramadan. They must clear Shab/UR, and get the Baghdad Barrier completed before Ramadan. CG is very focused on setting conditions for a peaceful holiday, for which the GOI will be able to claim credit. He said the Ministers are ready to go and confident they can deliver as needed.

GEN Casey spoke a bit about levels of violence. He said it was important to separate attacks against the coalition from attacks against civilians. Inside the cleared areas, there are occasional IED and SAF against the coalition, but attacks against civilians (which was the purpose of the BSP) are way down in every cleared area with the exception of Dora. Dora was the first area they entered, and the insurgents are trying to return. The CG noted that there would be some re-clearing operations conducted in contested places like Dora to ensure they remain safe.

The ethno sectarian incidents and civilian casualties in Baghdad continue to go down by about 9-0 percent per month. Levels overall (against CF), however, are up. Nonetheless, 4th ID believes that the Baghdad residents definitely feel safer as a result of the BSP.

GEN Casey commented that neither the Diwaniyah or Basrah operations were dead, but that Maliki is

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still working through the issues. Related to that, the CG noted that the media reported on Prime Minister Maliki's proposed initiative to end violence in Diwaniyah. Political groups, religious and tribal leaders signed a pact and also agreed to end attacks on combined forces in the city. His point is that Maliki is working behind the scenes in a lot of areas and needs to be able to control kinetic operations, so that they don't conflict with his own efforts.

GEN Casey noted that he is beginning to see trends that suggest that 1.4b, 1.4d to the Shia in Iraq may be becoming strategically significant...

20 September meeting with Prime Minister Maliki

GEN Casey met Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki for his weekly update on security issues. GEN Casey made the case for moving into Sadr City in the next phase of the Baghdad Security Plan (SSP). With the right political conditions set in advance, violence could be minimized. He acknowledged it was high risk, but also high payoff. He told Maliki that he was not looking for an immediate decision, but wanted to tee up the issues for his consideration...

At the end of the one-hour session, Maliki told GEN Casey that he believes that GEN Casey has been second-guessing his decisions on military operations, which has affected his level of trust. Until that is repaired Maliki will view MNF-I initiatives with suspicion. GEN Casey assured the PM that he believes he makes decisions on the basis of political, religious, and security equities and not just along ethno-sectarian lines. The meeting ended amicably with Maliki stating that he would study the proposal on Sadr City and provide his answer to the CG in the coming days. National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai also attended...

He said he would not allow terrorists to win in Iraq. He emphasized that he firmly believed that the GOI cannot co-exist with the militia. It must be one or the other. Political reconciliation is the basis for success. Iraq will not be stable until the political process stabilizes. Maliki said he instructed the Iraqi delegation in NY to ensure that they disseminated this message clearly.

GEN Casey first reviewed where they were on the BSP. He stated they were still doing well, but it was clear that the terrorists and death squads are fighting back. He told the PM that there are some 70 million dollars of US and Iraqi money in projects started in the cleared areas. He noted that the barrier around Baghdad would be complete by Ramadan. The ISF is generally doing well, he said, but there are some areas where their performance needs to be improved. GEN Casey stated the ISF needs to maintain the momentum of the last six weeks as they go forward in to Ramadan to set conditions for a peaceful period.

GEN Casey then walked Maliki through a briefing on the next phase of clearing operations for the BSP. He assured Maliki that he was not looking for a decision tonight. This briefing was intended to identify the issues associated with the next set of decisions that need to be made on whether to first clear Sadr City or New Baghdad.

GEN Casey explained that the threat in Sadr City was greater than in New Baghdad. In Sadr City there are roughly about 400 rogue elements that do not respond to anyone's direction, and about 2,000-3,000 militant elements of Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) that may fight. In contrast, New Baghdad has about 50 rogue elements and 400 militant elements that may fight. It could take up to three weeks to clear Sadr City, and about 10 days to clear New Baghdad. The impact of clearing Sadr City would be to disrupt a major

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death squad safehaven, disrupt major EFP and IDF cells, eliminate a major threat to security of Baghdad and begin restoration of services to 2.5 million people. The impact of clearing New Baghdad would be to disrupt ca four death squad cells, disrupt smaller EFP and IDF cells, eliminate threats to local security, and begins restoration of services to local areas. In summary, clearing Sadr City is high risk, but high payoff.

GEN Casey stated clearly that they do not want to fight in Sadr City. Clearing operations in the BSP have been accomplished largely without a shot being fired. If the political conditions can be properly set, the CG thought it would be possible for the CF and ISF to clear and move on to reconstruction without much violence. He emphasized that the threat of military force can enhance chances for lower levels of violence.

GEN Casey said that the operations in Sadr City would be conducted as they have been in the other focus areas. They would establish a cordon, begin knocking on doors and searching the buildings. He estimated this would require 10 coalition battalions and 17 battalions of Iraqi army and police forces.

GEN Casey suggested that this could be a big win for the GOI if approached properly. While there is clearly risk in moving forward, there are equal risks of not doing anything. If he goes forward, it will show that Maliki is a prime minister for all Iraq and it will demonstrate resolve in confronting the militia. If plans are put in, the risks of limiting violence are good. GEN Casey said it would be important to get religious and political leaders to speak out, and to clearly state that this is designed to stop the criminals and murderers of Iraqis. This would likely dampen reaction countrywide.

Once the clearing operations start in Sadr City, the CG cautioned Maliki to expect violence from the rogue elements. He should be prepared for some damage to property and some civilian casualties. The ISF could also suffer casualties, as this is a tough environment for fighting. But once it starts, the GOI must finish and must win. GEN Casey urged Maliki to commit up front to start together, stay together, and finish together.

The risks of not doing anything in these areas are also real. It would allow death squad activity to continue. It would add to a perception that the government is unwilling to challenge JAM. The ISF needs to demonstrate that they are stronger than JAM politically and militarily. Sadr City, he said, must be dealt with sooner or later, and sooner means an earlier start to the economic development program. Maliki stated that he will continue to fight the militia until the end. He said he would study the proposal and discuss with his staff.

Maliki then stated he needed to discuss a very important issue that was integral to the continued friendship between the USG and Iraq. He stated that trust between Iraq and the USG is the foundation for their cooperation. He now believes that an issue of trust is developing between the two sides. Maliki said he has heard that GEN Casey believes he will only attack Sunni and not Shia. He cited the action he approved in Karbala, Basrah, and Diwaniyah as proof that he is dealing evenly with the country. Maliki stated he makes decisions based on his convictions, and not along sectarian lines. He said it is not important whether the issue is Sunni or Shia or what one political party may favor. The main thing, he said is he makes decisions based on what he believes is best for the country. The people's interests come before his own.

Maliki stated that when he was in the US, Grand Ayatollah Muhammad 'ali al-Husayni al-Sistani had asked him to make sure that the US had a balanced relationship with both Sunni and Shia. Now he

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stated there is a feeling that the US is losing trust in the Shia, and are now getting closer to the Sunni. Maliki said he was considering sending a delegation to the United States to look at the issue. The Shia are now afraid the situation will turn against them, and are very concerned they will lose their position in Iraq.

GEN Casey asked Maliki to clarify whether the problem was personal or state-to-state. Maliki confirmed it was on a personal level. He believed the CG thought thP was working and making decisions based on ethnic lines. Maliki said that when he stops or disapproves operations, he believes that GEN Casey attributes it to his unwillingness to work against the Shia. Maliki stressed that GEN Casey should not view his decisions in a Sunni-Shia context. That type of talk, he said, will ruin his reputation with the Iraqi people. He said his advisors in Washington had also heard similar descriptions of Maliki's decision-making style. He said if there is mistrust between the GOI and MNF-I, the country would burn. If trust is re-established then they can achieve success. Maliki stated this is why he decided to table the issue immediately, and not to keep it to himself. He wants the relationship to be put back on track.

GEN Casey told Maliki that he presents military options to him for decision. The important aspect is that Maliki makes the political choice. He assured Maliki that he believes he makes decisions for the right reasons and not just along ethno-sectarian lines. He acknowledged that Maliki has the hardest job in Iraq, and that his job is to help him. He will also tell him honestly what he thinks, whenever Maliki asks.

In closing Maliki reaffirmed he would never reconsider his decision to deal with the militia. He will never side with Sunni over Shia or vice versa. He pledged to fairly represent Sunni, Shia, and Christians. Maliki stated that he would discuss the Sadr City proposal with his advisors but from a backdrop of suspicion. He said the timeline for the operation was difficult for him to comprehend. Ramadan is supposed to be a period of calm. He planned to travel to Dhi Qar for the ceremony to transition the province to Iraqi Control on 21 September. When he returned he would work on correcting the misunderstanding between the two sides and repair the relationship. The meeting ended amicably with plans to regroup and continue to work the SSP.

21 September

GEN Casey described his meeting with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki on 21 September. This meeting was on the heels of his 20 September meeting during which Maliki expressed concern over issues of trust between the GOI and GEN Casey. National Security Advisor Muwafuq al- Rubai also attended. Maliki had just returned from the transition ceremony in Dhi Qar, and he met with GEN Casey in his residence. GEN Casey noted that Maliki physically looked far better than he had the night before and his energy level, and disposition, also was much improved.

Gen Casey told Maliki that the two of them are like two old men paddling in a rowboat. The CG has the military oar, and Maliki has the political oar. When the two row together, they move forward in a straight line. When one stops rowing, they both spin in circles. GEN Casey went on to tell him that he understands the Maliki cannot make decisions in a vacuum and that he must factor in all the other equities that bear on the issue. The only thing that Casey can do is give him his best military advice, which he has done, and will continue to do. It is Maliki's decision on how or if to proceed. He has the final decision on all security issues. Near the end of the session, GEN Casey surfaced the great military strategist Sun Tzu, who stated that in war, leaders and generals must be of clear mind and clear heart. GEN Casey told Maliki that he believes that he has both. GEN Casey said he could see that this resonated strongly with Maliki and he responded positively. The meeting ended very amicably. The next

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day, Rubai provided feedback on the session. Rubai said Maliki thought it was an excellent meeting, and that he felt great afterward. Rubai offered his congratulations on what he described as a very successful meeting with the Prime Minister. GEN Casey thought he had made progress at repairing the relationship, but acknowledged there is still a lot of work to do.

GEN Casey said that after the 20 September meeting that surfaced this problem, that he had recommended that the Ambassador place a call to Maliki. The Ambassador did phone Maliki, and found him in the same distressed state. Maliki again expressed dissatisfaction with his relationship with MNF-I and the CG. He was very direct with the Ambassador and asked him to return to Baghdad as soon as he was able. By chance, the Ambassador placed a second call to Maliki just after his 21 September meeting with GEN Casey. The Ambassador reported that Maliki's mood was entirely different. Maliki was upbeat, optimistic, and confident. He told the Ambassador that he had a great meeting with GEN Casey and felt far better about the relationship, and his ability to continue to work together on security issues.

Also during GEN Casey's meeting with Maliki, they discussed their views of the threat. Maliki stated the Iraqis believe that AQ and the Ba'athists were like a cancer that must be treated with chemotherapy. They believe these two groups are the greatest threat to Iraq's security. The militia he said, was more like pneumonia, and needed to be treated with penicillin. Maliki thinks that MNF-I is treating the militia with chemo and AQ/Ba'athists with penicillin. While Maliki has not been willing to share his plans for dealing with the militia/JAM to date, he did tell the CG that in the next week or so, he planned to go on national television and give the militia one last chance to disarm (nfi).

GEN Casey told the PM he would soon bring him a full presentation describing the magnitude of the level of effort they have against AQ in Iraq. While he still believes that the militia are the greatest threat to Iraq's security, he does want Maliki to know that they are working aggressively against the others. GEN Casey tasked [Coalition forces] to produce a briefing that will describe what they have done against the network, and how they are currently organized to defeat AQIZ.

GEN Othman ali Farhoud the 8th IA Division commander was summoned to Maliki's office on 20 September, and GEN Casey...saw him in the waiting room in advance of their own meeting. Maliki had earlier complained that even though Farhoud's division was now purely under IGFC control, he was still not taking direction from anyone except the Americans. Thus, there was some concern that Maliki may replace/remove Farhoud. As it turned out, Maliki encouraged Farhoud to keep working Diwaniyah and get after those that killed his soldiers. He reinforced his support for Farhoud and his Division and the way he was carrying out his mission.

21 September 2006 - GEN Casey's Meeting with (b)(6)

GEN Casey and UK DCG LTG Lamb met with (b)(6) on 21 September for a one-hour session. This meeting was intended to facilitate the first meeting between Lamb and (b)(6) as Lamb will be taking over the engagement portfolio for MNF-I in earnest. The meeting also advanced the previous discussion of 5 September during which GEN Casey asked (b)(6) to write down the specifics of his plan to rid al-Anbar Province of al-Qa'ida (AQ) elements. GEN Casey was pleased with the progress made at this session and has tasked his staff to operationalize the draft plan that (b)(6) presented.

(b)(6) stated that the Shi'a took control of the government and succeeded in convincing everyone the Sunni are not a majority of the population. He asserted that this was untrue and the Sunni have the

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documentation from the previous Planning Minister to prove they are still the majority. While he acknowledged this was a bit off-topic, he said this helps frame the issue as the Shi'a want to control everything and keep the Sunni powerless. (b)(6) stated that if they can regain balance in the government and security forces then this can be the start of peace and stability.

He transitioned to the issue of al-Qa'ida. He said it is very strong in al-Anbar. If AQ maintains its strength it will endanger Iraq, its neighbors, and the rest of the world. He claimed he was ready to eliminate these people, and once accomplished they could work to solve other problems.

(b)(6) stated that since the last meeting he had prepared a draft plan for operationalizing his concept to roll back AQ in al-Anbar. He apologized for not having translated it into English but he wanted to keep it as secret as possible and limit the number of people aware of its existence. He left a copy with MNF-I and then briefed the main themes as follows.

He said there were some emerging trends in al-Anbar that were favorable for moving forward on this plan now. He said the al-Anbar tribes hate AQ and are ready to fight them to rid their province and their country.

Similarly, the resistance also hates AQ and are ready to fight them. Finally, he said there are some groups currently working under the AQ umbrella that want to separate from them as they have become disillusioned by the criminal activities AQ has taken against the Iraqi people. (b)(6) said the time was right to capitalize on this mood, and quickly move forward with his plan. The plan (b)(6) clarified is his own, but it was drawn up in discussions with tribal leaders in al-Anbar....

Before operations can start, (b)(6) stated it would be necessary to demonstrate some good faith on the part of the GOI/CF. He requested:

- a. Large release of detainees from al Anbar province.
- b. Assure delivery of rations to the al-Anbar province.
- c. Improve the supply of fuel, gasoline, propane, and electricity and begin significant reconstruction projects.
- d. Pledge to hire al-Anbaris into the IA and IP.
- e. Withdraw coalition forces after the area has stabilized, to locations outside of cities in temporary camps.

With his plan summarized, (b)(6) offered a few parting comments. He said there is a serious problem of AQ infiltration into the Iraqi intelligence services and the MOD. They have access to targeting information and they use it to warn and notify (b)(6) stated the Sunni had little trust in the current GOI so would continue to rely on MNF-I. (b)(6) knows the Shia intention is to keep al-Anbar province in a constant state of conflict to prevent their participation in the political process.

GEN Casey thanked (b)(6) for his briefing and the work he had put into developing this draft plan. He told him that his staff would take his draft and operationalize it. They should meet again in the next seven days and discuss implementation.

Overall, GEN Casey still thinks that (b)(6) has credibility and as a former General officer from al-Anbar, has the capability to deliver what he promises. It seems that GEN Casey may be willing to take the next step with (b)(6) as he has commented recently that MNF-I has discussed principals for too long, and now it was time to take some action.

22 September 2006

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GEN Casey visited Kirkuk, Mosul, Tal Afar and Tikrit on a two-day trip beginning 22 September. His intent was to visit the new units in MND-N and provide his MNF-I 'Way Ahead' briefing, and also to receive an overview from the commanders on how the situation in their operating areas. As a result of this trip, the CG tends to think that the center of gravity in the north has shifted from Mosul to ¶ Kirkuk. Mosul, itself, has made great strides, and the Commander assesses that the violence in the city is now at a level that the ISF is now fully capable of handling on their own. They still lack confidence, and initiative to keep up patrols, and the CF will continue to work with them on this. Levels of violence in Tal Afar are now at insignificant levels at circa 1.5 incidents per day. The Mayor is still looking for support in getting Baghdad to release the 37 million dollars promised for the city's reconstruction. In Tikrit, the CG met with the Deputy Governor of Salah ad Din who is serving as the middleman for the New Ba'ath party and the coalition. The Ba'ath party is trying to re-emerge in the Iraqi political scene as a legitimate party.

Kirkuk. The Brigade Commander described the struggle power in Kirkuk between the ethnic/sectarian groups. Kurds are dominating the power struggle while ethnic extremist movements gain momentum. Arabs are being marginalized and humiliated, and the concerns of the tribes are being ignored. Kirkuk city is an Ansar al Sunnah operational area and JAM and OMS are attempting to gain and maintain contact with CF and ISF through EFP targeting. The JAM goal is to expand their influence and check Kurdish expansion south and the annexation of Kirkuk. The Kurds continue to shift the ethnic balance in Kirkuk to influence the referendum on Kirkuk's status. The Kurds are continuing their economic and development efforts. They recently hosted a trade fair in Irbil in which over 800 companies participated. They have also begun construction of a housing development called 'Dream City' with homes in the 12,000 square foot range. GEN Casey is beginning to think that the Kirkuk is replacing Mosul as the center of gravity of the north.

Hawijah is still a contested city and a largely kinetic fight. AQIZ and AAS are using the corridor the runs between Mosul-Bayji-Hawijah and Kirkuk to infiltrate their operators into the area, and they are supported by the Sunni Arab resistance. The tribal leadership overtly supports and enables AQ and former regime elements.

The second and third brigade of the 4th IA division are in the lead, and the Brigade commander has lined up behind them in their battlespace, which GEN Casey thought was a very smart way to position themselves to support the IA in tactical overwatch.

Mosul. This is the CG's strategic northern flank, and Iraqi's second city. The main take away from this briefing was that the levels of violence are sufficiently low that the Iraqi Security Forces are capable of handling it independently. The IA and IP work seamlessly together, and respond quickly to reports of violence throughout the city. They are better than they think they are, but still lack confidence. But MG Mixon stated that tactically they will not lose an engagement. They assess that the ISF needs to consolidate gains before the area is fully turned over to the Iraqis, but they are on a good course.

The Mosul PRT is the best in the country. The PRT leader said he thought that the Provincial council is now filling the void lost by the tribal shayks, and it seems to be working.

Tal Afar. The good news in Tal Afar is that attacks are down to an insignificant level of 1-1.5 per day. There is now no permanent coalition presence in the city. Rather they are running joint patrols from outside the city, which is working well for the all parties. They do expect more SVEST type attacks during Ramadan in an effort to discredit the good work in Tal Afar, and are organizing for that. They are

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focusing now on the Hold Phase of operations and are looking at ways to assist Mayor Najam in shaking loose the 37 million dollars from Baghdad that was promised to the city for reconstruction.

Tikrit. In Tikrit, the most interesting session was with the Deputy Governor of Salah ad Din, 'ABDALLAH JABARA, who had specifically requested a private meeting with GEN Casey earlier in the week. After a long overview of the situation in the GOVERNORATE and the country, he turned to the main point. Jabara stated that when Saddam Hussein was pulled from the spider hole without a fight, that everyone in Iraq lost respect for him. He noted, however, that there were still some 4 million Ba'ath party members, most of who have been inactive since the occupation. They have come to the conclusion, however, that most of the political parties have failed to provide basic needs for the Iraqis, and now they are asking for the Ba'ath party to return and to take charge. Jabara stated the Ba'ath party is still well organized and present through out the country.

Jabara said there had been a recent meeting of the key Ba'ath party leadership. They want to be recognized as a legitimate party by the rest of Iraq. In order to make that more likely, the leadership agreed to expel Saddam Hussein and Izzat Ibrahim al-Duri from the Party, and to stop insurgent activities against the CF and GOI. He claimed the Ba'ath party in the north had already ceased operations against the CF and GOI. He further claimed that the only way to officially remove Saddam and Duri was to convene a general conference of the Ba'ath Party and vote to relieve them of their official positions. They have, therefore, agreed to host the conference in Salah ad Din before the end of the year. The Ba'ath party he said, needs nothing from anyone, except recognition as a political party.

Jabara said the Ba'ath leadership predicted several future scenarios, that would all result in failure for the CF. They are: Iraq breaks up, Iran controls Iraq, or Civil War. The reinstallation of the Arabic Ba'ath Party is the only way to prevent these three scenarios. The Ba'ath party he reminded them includes Sunni, Kurds, Shia and is the only non-sectarian party. He said they wanted to discuss more details of their plans for the Ba'ath Party, but needed to retain secrecy.

He requested a meeting with Ambassador Khalilzad along with GEN Casey in the near future. He promised that if the Ba'ath party returns they will control and stabilize security for a long time, as well as improve US-Iraqi bilateral relations for generations to come. Left unsaid, was the implied threat to return/resume participation in the insurgency if not reinstated. The PRT chief said she had heard talk from some of the deputy governor's cronies that they would definitely resume fighting and, more ominously, had discussed plans to hijack the Bayji oil refinery to cause as much pain as possible for the central government.

24 September 2006

On 24 September Prime Minister Maliki approved most aspects of the Basrah security plan in a late afternoon meeting, which he chaired and very efficiently presided over. Attendees included MNF-I CG GEN Casey, MNC-I CG LTG Chiarelli MND-SE Commander UK MG Sherriff, MNF-I STRAT OPS MG Fastabend. Also attending as the head of the Basrah Security Committee MG 'ali Harnadi Tahir, accompanied by MG 'abd al-khadir Mahdi al-Tahir and BG 'ali Ibrahim

Maliki provided approval to enact Op SINBAD essentially as briefed, starting on the outskirts of the city. He approved going after safehavens for death squads and IDF cell members as the intelligence becomes available. He asked that they come back to him shortly with a detailed plan to clear the hot areas, with the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in the lead and MNF in support. Finally, Maliki asked the group to look at

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alternatives for resolving problems with the Iraqi Police (IP), with the focus on getting the right people in position.

MG Harnadi reviewed their joint progress 1 noting that while they had broad agreement on most of the big issues, there were still a few outstanding issues to be resolved. MG Sheriff then presented the full brief on Operation SINBAD. He stated that the goal of SINBAD is to get Basrah to Provincial Iraqi Control (PIC). The first step in this process is to identify the problems. They see the situation as deteriorating and characterized by a lack of rule of law. Death squads are operating against all section of the community. They abuse their official positions and kidnap, intimidate, torture and murder civilians. The terrorists and extremists conduct illegal vehicle checkpoints, torture and murder locals employed by MNF, and are responsible for rocket and mortar attacks in the city. Basrah, Sheriff stated, is a long way from achieving the needed levels of security for PIC.

OP SINBAD Key Points. SINBAD is a joint ISF-MNF operation designed to deliver reconstruction and training enabled by security. Security is to be provided by ISF and MNF. He emphasized that above all, it is not an attack on the people of Basrah, will not include mass house clearances, will not be a cover for major detention operations, and assured Maliki that MNF will only react if attacked. MG Sherriff emphasized that the key is the reconstruction operations. He stated that this would be reinforced by active media to demonstrate to the Basrah city residents the advantages and improved quality of life that would follow. Once these benefits were seen, he predicted other districts would want the same support.

Operation SINBAD Intent. SINBAD, he said, is all about increasing the safety of the people of Basrah. In addition to the focus on infrastructure and training, this would also improve the police performance, and the training and equipping of the Iraqi army. MG Sherriff underscored this is an Iraqi operation that will rely largely on Iraqi units.

How it Works. MG Sherriff stated that Iraqi and UK engineers will move into a district to conduct reconstruction and development projects agreed to by the Basrah governing council. The contracts will be awarded to Iraqi contractors, paid by MNF CERP funds. The Iraqi IA, IP, and MNF will provide security for the engineers and contractors. At the same time, the MNF police transition teams would visit the IP Stations to develop and equip them to prepare them for PIC. After 36 hours MNF will withdraw and the ISF will stay to secure the area to permit completion of projects that will last beyond 30 days. Work will start on the outskirts of the city and then move to other areas of Basrah. Regarding command and control, the Basrah Security Committee provides the direction. MG Harnadi commands the ISF and MG Sherriff commands the MNF. They will jointly coordinate to ensure the decisive effects are applied and results achieved. There will be two formal meetings each week, and as many other meetings as necessary.

GEN Casey told Maliki that he believes that this plan meets Maliki's intent to bring security to Basrah. Success would be enhanced if the political parties get behind this and support this effort. Unfortunately, as Harnadi, pointed out, the criminals in Basrah still need to be dealt with. The CG assured Maliki this would be done in a way that has the least impact on the city and its residents.

Maliki questioned the timeline. MG Sherriff clarified that they are organized to start work in a new district every 6-7 days, so that they would be able to work in all 18 districts and complete operations by February. GEN Casey noted that Maliki seemed to want this done on a faster timeline. He suggested that after a few districts

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have been completed, that MG Sherriff look again at the possibility of revising and shortening the timeline.

Maliki then asked the group to specify the challenges in Basrah and specifically how to deal with them. Hamadi stated the IDF against MNF and the gangs on the outside of the city were of highest concern. He noted that death squads and murders had recently killed five politicians and as many tribal leaders. He also stated that the IP stations were infiltrated and that some in the police, intelligence and QRF units are using their position to conduct violent acts. Outside the city, kidnap victims are sheltered and some criminal gangs hijack vehicles and steal the cargo. He said while they do not want bloodshed, it has already been spilled. He said that the attacks on MNF with IDF originate from three areas - Tamimi inside the city, the Old UK Cemetery, and by the Military Hospital. They do rotate areas, however, and also use the island across from the Palace.

Maliki stated that he wanted to focus on the areas of greatest threat to Basrah residents and the CF. Inside the city he wants to go after the IDF points of origin, and against the kidnappers/criminals on the outskirts of the city. He wants to focus on just these areas to calm the citizens, and avoid direct confrontation that could incite innocent people and areas that are currently quiet. He also stated he wanted to avoid operations in the city center near the Party and government centers. There is no need, he said, for a large-scale operation.

One of the Basrah Security Committee members tried to push for more from Maliki. He stated that weapons could only be in the hands of the government. He noted that the IDF launch points can be moved and there is a need to go after the trigger puller, the driver, the ordnance provider. The problem in Basrah, he stated, is part of the problem in the country as a whole. If we reject MNF assistance now, we may need it again. He urged the group to add, subtract or modify the plan until there is agreement. He noted that between 10-22 September that 50 rockets were launched in Basrah and many innocent Iraqis and CF were killed and injured. He urged movement forward, and supported the need to improve the capability and loyalty of the ISF with CF support now.

Maliki stated strongly that the most important issue in front of them is how to provide improved security. GEN Casey agreed and said that this plan will only deal with part of the problem if they don't maintain military pressure on death squads and terrorists. As noted earlier, large detention operations are not part of this plan, however there is every intention to continue to pursue terrorists and death squad members around Basrah. GEN Casey recommended that Maliki approve the start of this operation, and then ask the Basrah Security Committee for a more detailed military plan to go against the death squads and terrorists in the hot areas, inside the city center.

Maliki said that the timing of this operation during Ramadan is sensitive. However, he provided his approval for the plan to start operations from the outskirts of the city. These operations should include targeting of the safehavens for the death squads and criminals. After the outskirts are completed, they can then start working the hot areas. Maliki supported GEN Casey's suggestion that the BSC return to him with details for their military plan to do this. Iraqi forces will be in the lead, he said, on all operations and MNF in support. Inside the city, Maliki approved the search for those responsible for the IDF attacks. Maliki stated he was not optimistic about the MNF plan to deal with the IP. Reliable and loyal IPs should be identified and retained, the rest retired/fired. Maliki doubted that the corrupt IPs could be rehabilitated through training and mentoring. The issue he said is loyalty and anyone already loyal to death squads will not be changed through training. Maliki recalled being told by the Provincial Council Chairman that of the 15,300 IPs on the payroll, that maybe 2,000-3,000 were quality officers.

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Maliki told the group to look for them and get rid of the remaining unreliable officers. He said they should not try to simply put a patch on the problem.

GEN Casey recapped the Prime Ministers direction. He stated that they were clear to enact Op SINBAD as briefed, starting on the outskirts of the city. They are cleared to target safehavens for death squads and IDF cell members as the intelligence becomes available. They should come back to the Prime Minister with a detailed plan to clear the hot areas, with the ISF in the lead and MNF in support. Finally, they should look at alternatives for resolving problems with the IP, with the focus on getting the right people in position.

25 September 2006

On 25 September GEN Casey visited Ramadi for an update with 1 MEF and 1/1 AD... GEN Casey spent some personal time with [b 3 b 6] who had just received notice of his brigade's 45-day extension. (b)(3), (b)(6) said he had spoken with his battalion commanders and they took the news pretty well. He said they were going to miss Christmas anyway and this gives them a chance to get closer to finishing the ops they started in Ramadi. Following the office call, (b)(3), (b)(6) provided a status update on his Ramadi operations, and then 1 MEF MG Zilmer walked the CG through his plans to conduct operations in western al-Anbar during the second half of their deployment.

Overall, the CG left the session with some concern that this group has not sharply defined their objectives. As a result, their operations are not advancing the MNF-I mission to defeat AQ by summer 2007. He suggested they focus on major muscle movements, such as disrupting traffic across the border, controlling the lines of communications, identifying and targeting the facilitation networks, attacking the leadership etc. He thought that something more along the lines of OP SAYYID last year was needed. He directed CORPS, 1 MEF, and 1/1 AD to work with [other Coalition forces] to come up with an integrated plan to push back AQIZ in the province in advance of their rotation in February.

Ramadi Operations. [b 3 b 6] stated that the IED trends were down and that they are seeing an increase of command wire detonated IEDs. Remote control detonated IEDs have all but disappeared as a result of their counter-IED techniques. He said that enemy attacks per day have decreased 25 percent since their peak in late July. They attribute this to the increased presence in the city (several combat outposts have been established) and a larger ISF presence. [b 3 b 6] reported that the incidents of green on red attacks over the past month has been substantial and included the murder of their number two HVT (b)(6). (b)(3), (b)(6) expected to complete the decisive phase of operations in Ramadi by early October, and then begin working on ISF transition operations.

1/1 AD has begun to renovate the area around the Government center, to deny the enemy use of the buildings against the CF. More than 30 individual structures are involved. The money has been committed, and CG suggested the Prime Minister travel to the city to dedicate a plaque in the square. (b)(3), (b)(6) agreed this would send a very positive message to Ramadi residents that Baghdad is supporting them.

(b)(3), (b)(6) reported that the Iraqi Army (1A) combat power is still a work in progress. There has been a four percent addition but still under manned 42 percent of authorized strength. Iraqi police (IP) combat power is better. They now have five IP stations that are manned around the city. They assigned 185 new IPs since early August. (b)(3), (b)(6) remarked that the IPs are more or less resistant to murder and

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intimidation campaigns and are presenting a very credible police presence. These locally recruited IPs are known to the residents and so they are willing to provide tips and leads on terrorists identities and locations.

They also noted that AQ has essentially hijacked the oil distribution network that had been a key source of income for tribal shaykhs. (b)(3), (b)(6) also advised that they are working closely with the Shaykh's council that last met on 14 September with some 42 shaykhs present. The Shaykhs' goal is to defeat al-Qai'da and also to replace the current governor and council. They are aware that this was presented to the Prime Minister, but who did not respond, preferring to ask his Sunni Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi to manage this effort for him. (b)(3), (b)(6) stated that the shaykhs had identified Shaykh 'abd al-Sattar al-((Rishawi)) AL-Dulaymi as their leader and potential replacement for the governor, and indicated that they can and have already worked well with him. He is a long time smuggler. He is unabashedly pro-American and has even designed his residence to look like the White House, painted pink. GEN Casey advised them of the 30 September conference hosted by Vice President Tariq al-Hashimi and said that he planned to attend.

Al Anbar Province. I MEF Commander MG Zilmer then briefed their plan, developed from a recent commander's conference, for al-Anbar that was intended to carry them through their rotation in February 2007. He stated the insurgency remains essentially unchanged since September 2006 and addressed the following key points:

AQI remains dominant
Murder and intimidation continues unabated
AQI is self-financing through control of criminal enterprises
Insurgent attack levels remain high
AQI's grip on Ramadi weakened by red-on-red
Al-Qa'im region remains relatively stable
Haditha Triad remains embattled; new IP force improves security
Fallujah remains contested but is firmay under MNF/ISF control

GEN Casey asked the Marines to describe their plan to deal with the problems they described above. He reminded them that the mission he had given them was to defeat AQ by Summer 07. He suggested they ought to identify AQ weaknesses and vulnerabilities. They need to intimidate the intimidators. If they want to change the situation, they need to do something different. This is not about the application of basic military skills. It is harder.

More specifically, GEN Casey asked about their strategy to deal with murders and intimidations. GEN Casey offered up an idea to create a cell that takes on this issue full time. He thought this is more of an organizational issue, like the death squads were in Baghdad. In order to effectively work the issue, it is necessary to create an organization dedicated to it, so they feel ownership. This cell needs to be resourced and with the right talent, possibly to include some FBI investigators who could assist with exploitation of the crime scenes etc. The cell could include a direct action unit that could follow up the leads. In a sidebar after the session, both LTG Chiarelli and GEN Casey queried about the availability of the STU to assist, and possibly the ICTU to provide some investigative assistance.

Regarding AQ's financial situation, CG asked whether it would be useful to tell the GOI to take over the gas stations in Al Anbar to deny AQ of that source of financing. The marines will consider the pros and cons and provide feedback soonest.

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In closing, GEN Casey asked them to think about what they need to do to move al Anbar forward, to deny the terrorists support from the Sunni population, and deny the province as a safehaven before they depart. Ramadi is a must, he said. Holding Fallujah, Al Qa'im, and Haditha (the main elements of the MNF-W Operational Design) is good, but he did not see how it moved them toward the primary objective. He suggested they focus on major muscle movements, such as disrupting traffic across the border, controlling the lines of communications, identifying and targeting the facilitation networks, attacking the leadership etc. He thought that something more along the lines of OP SAYYID last year was needed. He asked the Corps, 1 MEF, 1/1 AD to work with TF 1.44 to create some synergy in their operations and get them to a better place in 2007.

25 September 2006

On 25 September GEN Casey met with Sunni VP Tariq al-Hashimi at his compound. GEN Casey last met with Hashimi on 4 September when they discussed al-Anbar security. GEN Casey wanted to follow up with him on the status of his efforts in advance of his trip to Ramadi that afternoon. Hashimi briefed GEN Casey on a conference he has arranged on Saturday 30 September in Baghdad that will include key al-Anbar tribal shaykhs and representatives of the central government. The goal of the conference is to develop a consensus on the political, economic, and security requirements for the province. Hashimi was aware of the proposal from Anbari Shaykhs to replace the current Governor and establish their own provincial council.

GEN Casey requested a meeting with Hashimi in advance of his trip to Ramadi that afternoon, in order to touch base with him on his al-Anbar initiative. Hashimi's brother, General 'Amr Ahmad Bakr al-HASHIMI, former army chief of staff, also joined the meeting. Both Hashimis speak English and so no translator was needed.

Casey noted that former al-Anbar Governor Shaykh Fassal Rukan Nijris al-Ga'ud al-Nimrawi al-Dulaymi had already suggested to Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki that his group be installed as the official al-Anbar provincial council...GEN Casey wanted to touch base with Hashimi to see if he was working on bringing the current Governor, Ma'mun Sami Rashid Al-'Alwani, and this group led by Ga'ud together to work together to bring stability to the province.

Hashimi was very pleased by the inquire, and said that the timing of GEN Casey's visit was fortuitous as he had just issued an invitation to GEN Casey to attend a conference he had organized at the Rashid Hotel on 30 September to discuss exactly this topic. Hashimi said he will attend along with representatives from the MOI, MOD, and MSNS. National Security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai will also attend. Hashimi said that he had issued invitations to more than 20 key Shaykhs from the province and that they had all indicated their intent to attend. Hashirni said he wanted this group to develop a consensus on the way forward. In preparation, Hashimi had drafted a paper that explained his own views on how to proceed in the province. Hashimi did not elaborate on his plan but provided GEN Casey a copy in Arabic of this written agenda. He did state, however, that the tribes are critical and must be given a pivotal role in the province. He proposed that economic development projects for the province be allocated to the tribes, and for them to assume responsibility for ensuring their completion. In addition, the tribes would supply the labor. At the end of the conference, Hashimi expects a committee to be formed to execute the decisions that will be made by the participants.

GEN Casey expressed support for Hashirni's plan and underscored the need to develop consensus for

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the Provincial government to act with the support of the tribes. This is clearly something that Governor Ma'mun had been unable to deliver, and has largely left the province in a political void. GEN Casey stated that the province needed money, some resolution of the political situation, and constant pressure on the security situation to keep it moving along toward provincial elections in the spring.

GEN Casey asked Hashimi what he thought the odds of success were. Hashimi said he thought it was encouraging. He noted that the tribes were very interesting in participating although he acknowledged there would be some conflicts of interest. (Ma'mun is an IIP member and the tribes do not support the IIP.) Nonetheless, Hashimi emphasized that the tribes must be involved through the economy; they must assist with the recruitment of the local Anbaris into the IP and the IA in order to establish themselves as genuine partners in the process.

If successful in gaining the cooperation of the tribes, Hashimi commented that it would be paramount to consider their security. If the terrorists discover they are working with the GOI, and against them, they will all be targeted for assassination as were the members of the al-Anbar People's committee. Hashimi was looking to GEN Casey for assistance with this part of the plan.

At this point Amr Hashimi joined the conversation and stated that he had heard from his local contacts that the US soldiers had been making a very positive impression on the local residents. They believe the soldiers are there to improve their living conditions, and not to attack them like the terrorists were doing. He did think, however, that while the senior levels of MNF and GOI were in synch, that the lower levels did not always work as well together. He thought that at the Colonel level that there were obstacles being placed on cooperation in the province. GEN Casey acknowledged that senior leader direction did not always filter down as smoothly as it should, and asked Hashimi if he did not experience the same problem when he was Chief of Staff. Hashimi easily agreed to that.

GEN Casey told Hashimi that he had attended the MCNS on the evening of 24 September and had told the Ministers that he thought it was critical that the funds promised by the GOI to Al-Anbar (75 million dollars) Tall Afar (35 million dollars), and Samarra be delivered soonest. Hashimi confirmed that he had Ministry of Finance confirmation just two days ago that 25 of the 75 million dollars had been released for al-Anbar. It was not the full amount but it was a start.

GEN Casey referred to his last meeting with Hashimi on the security situation of the city of Anah in western al-anbar. He told Hashimi that the CF assessment of Anah mirrored the one presented to the CG at their last meeting. More terrorists were moving into this city, and were using it as a base of operations. As a result the CF would be establishing two bases inside the city of Anah. They would install a camera in city center to monitor AIF activities and are considering establishing a berm around the city as Hashimi requested. GEN Casey noted that it would be useful to have specific intelligence on the identities and locations of terrorists, and Hashimi referred to a list of names he claimed to have provided at the last meeting. GEN Casey accepted this list and promised to provide it to his troops in al-anbar for follow up...

27 September 2006

On 27 September GEN Casey held his weekly meeting with Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki along with the Ambassador and National security Advisor Muwafuq al-Rubai. GEN Casey briefed Maliki on his proposed next steps in the Baghdad Security Plan (BSP). He obtained Maliki's approval to conduct targeted

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operations during Ramadan in Bayaa and Mansur, but deferred proposals for large neighborhood (focus area) clearing operations until after the holiday. Maliki was pleased the Baghdad Barrier was complete and urged that it be aggressively manned. Maliki also approved the targeting of nine of the ten top death squad leadership, who largely reside inside Sadr City, as intelligence becomes available. He asked that minimum levels of force be used, and that Iraqis conduct the operations...Maliki acknowledged the request and stated that his overall goal is to be free of terrorists and militia. From the outset, Maliki said, it was clear that they could not be defeated militarily, and other efforts would be required. Maliki cited his previous support for the de- ba'athification committee that he now balanced with a more lenient approach. He mentioned his meetings with key Ramadi Shaykhs who have recently agreed to work with the GOI to fight terrorism in exchange for GOI support to rebuild their city. This, Maliki said, is a good first step in fighting terrorism and it can be applied country wide as Iraqis are ready to rid their country of terrorists.

Even the Sadrists, he said, are showing interest in reconciliation, and now may be looking for a dialogue on militia. Neither they, nor the religious authorities, want to use force against the militia. The Iraqi people, he said, do not believe this is the right way to resolve the issue. Maliki cited the proposal he received yesterday on SCIRI Popular Committees. Maliki stated he considered this just another militia and rejected it, even though he was assured that members would not be armed. Maliki stated that they may be unarmed today, but it would be too easy to reverse that decision at any time.

Maliki continued that as part of his reconciliation program he called a meeting between the leadership of the Sunni and Shia political organizations to address the cycle of violence between the two groups. Maliki planned to talk to both sides and get their agreement that any attack against the ISF and MNF-I is a terrorist act. Maliki said that in Diwaniyah the Iraqis had pledged that the murderers involved in the late August fighting would be detained, punished and disowned. These types of agreements are important foundation to achieve political goals. Maliki stated that the COR had met and agreed that anyone carrying weapons should be detained. This, he said is the type of support he is building to assist the GOI deal with the militia, and to be successful in doing so. Maliki stated the Ba'athists had sent a message that they want to quit fighting and join the process, but he acknowledged with a smile, that he does not yet trust them. Maliki then stated that it would be most helpful to him for military operations to focus on terrorist safehavens, and to position themselves to respond if attacked. But the main effort, Maliki, emphasized must be on the political line of operation.

GEN Casey then provided an update on the Baghdad Security Plan. He noted that the BSP plan was progressing and sustaining success in the cleared areas. For the most part, al-Qa'ida and death squads were operating against civilians outside of the cleared areas. Murders and executions remain the number one cause of civilian deaths. He noted that they had committed another 100 million dollars for reconstruction projects in Baghdad. The Baghdad barrier is complete and in being manned. The Iraqi Security Force (ISF) performance is generally good, although there are discipline problems with the police that are being addressed. Finally, GEN Casey told Maliki that it was important to maintain momentum and not allow the terrorists back into these areas.

GEN Casey then reviewed the trends in ethno-sectarian violence in Baghdad, which the BSP is designed to address. Attacks against civilians continue to trend downward. High profile attacks are still too high. Executions and murders are down but still too high. Attacks in cleared areas of Baghdad are significantly lower. Based on the status of the effort, CG recommended the following next steps to maintain momentum while keeping the enemy off balance.

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GEN Casey advised Maliki that he was prepared to show him an alternative to the clearing operations he had proposed for Sadr City last week that Maliki had deferred, in order to maintain momentum on the Baghdad Security Plan. GEN Casey stated that it would be useful to disrupt the al-Qai'da and death squad activities in Bayaa and Mansur, and after that, move to clear the two areas of Jisr Diyala and New Baghdad east of the river. Additionally, GEN Casey stressed the need to maintain the Baghdad barrier and disrupt enemy freedom of movement. GEN Casey told Maliki that they also need to maintain the gains in the focus areas, and this is where the GOI must show up and deliver money and projects for basic services. Finally, he stated that they need to continue to set the conditions for restoring Sadr City government control.

Maliki expressed concern for large scale clearing operations during Ramadan, and clearly stated his desire to avoid friction during this month. He preferred that military activity be limited to raids on identified targets. After Ramadan, he said it would be possible to resume operations. He encouraged a strong effort to maintain control over the Baghdad barrier as he thought that the terrorists would try to attack them to regain their freedom of movement. GEN Casey told him that the Iraqi air force was flying missions to monitor the barrier.

Hurriyah. Maliki encouraged focus on the Hurriyah district which has experienced a rise in ethno-sectarian violence. Maliki said that he had spoken with Adnan al-Dulaymi and agreed to set checkpoints to detain anyone bringing in weapons. He noted that it all started when the Sunni IIP angered the Shi'a residents by opening a branch office in this largely Shia area. Maliki said he would like the office closed temporarily while the GOI works on getting the two sides to discuss their differences, possibly over an IFTAR dinner that he will host. Once that happens, Maliki indicated it might them be possible to reopen the office.

Death Squad Leaders. Gen Casey provided Maliki a list of the top ten death squad leaders, noting they were all based out of Sadr City. He asked for Maliki's approval to action these targets as intelligence becomes available. GEN Casey pointed out that some of the names are involved in EFP cells. He added that while September is still not finished, they have already experienced the highest number of EFPs by a factor of twelve. Ten soldiers have been killed in September. Maliki requested that one individual be removed, at least temporarily, from the list (b)(6) as he had previously been on the 'No Touch' list. Maliki further specified that these should use the minimum amount of force required, and that mainly Iraqi security forces should conduct these operations. GEN Casey assured Maliki that they always use the minimum force required, but that if they are attacked, that they will fight back, and he should be prepared for collateral damage. Maliki concurred.

Maliki stated he had discussed some issues with unidentified Sadr City/JAM leaders on 26 September. These leaders pledged to assume full responsibility for stopping small arms fire, and rocket attacks from Sadr City. Maliki said they pledged that no harm would come from them, against the Iraqi people, the ISF, or the coalition.

Maliki also stated that he would like command and control over a Special Forces unit that his office could dispatch as needed. He requested only coalition assistance with logistics and intelligence. Gen Casey told Maliki that he is more than willing to work with him to bring the ISOF under control of Iraqi leadership, but cautioned that this could not be done well overnight.

DDR. In connection with the discussion of militia, the Ambassador surfaced the issue of DDR. He noted that reintegration is a crucial component, and that now is the time to set up an infrastructure while the

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law is being developed. The US, he said, wanes to provide some financial assistance to get this started. Maliki indicated he had established a group with representatives from his office and from the MOD to draft the law. The Ambassador requested he identify a pc that they could link up with and provide the substantive background on DDR that will assist them in drafting the best possible law. He stressed the need to integrate the legal and substantive parts of the issue in order to produce the best outcome. Maliki agreed. To underscore the point, he noted that yesterday some 130 former militia were placed in the Sixth Iraqi Army division (Comment: This is unsubstantiated). Maliki said this is not where militia should be placed as they will ruin the army. They need to be retrained and placed into civil service jobs where they can be useful. Maliki agreed to identify a point of contact for this effort.

Late September 2006

Basrah. GEN Casey recently advised MG Sherriff that every time Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki discusses Basrah, he raises the sensitivity of the UK troop presence in the area. Maliki believes there is a large pool of bad feelings about the UK performance in Basrah, and the local Iraqis will continue to view them very critically. GEN Casey advised Sherriff that they need to do what they can to improve their image, and encouraged him to use his information operations resources to address this poor perception of their performance. The CG offered combat camera resources if he thinks that will help. He also reminded Sherriff that they owe Maliki a.n update on their Basrah security plan following the first 72 hours of operations. Maliki will then determine if he would like to make adjustments before it proceeds...

Iraqi Fusion Center? GEN Casey is starting to ask if the military is organized right to prepare the Iraqi army to do framework Operations for the counterinsurgency fight. He has always expected that as the coalition pulled to the rear, that the insurgency would get stronger. Given the transitions, are we adapting? Are we putting the Iraqis in the best position to beat the insurgency? GEN Casey believes they need to get Iraqis into time-sensitive targeting. They need to build an Iraqi capability to take intelligence, fuse it, and pass it on for direct action. He is thinking that they need to build a joint strike force with joint fusion center, as the genesis of an Iraqi high-end CT capability. This joint Iraqi-CF strike force would do nothing but go after bad guys, and the coalition could then leave that capability behind. GEN Casey and LTG Chiarelli are now discussing how to get the Iraqis into this, so they can take it over.

Regional Reconnaissance Team (RRT)? While visiting Mosul, the CG was briefed by the brigade commander on the presence of a Regimental Reconnaissance Team from the MOD. This was the first the CG had heard of it. He said that Maliki had asked about this entity several times, but the CG never had any background. The Mosul based RRT currently consists of a group of seven soldiers, who will eventually build to a 30-man low visibility force, with a [counterterrorism] type capability as the end state. CJSOTF is the executive agent and the AOB in Mosul is currently training them. GEN Casey planned to speak with the CJSOTF commander for further clarification.

Maliki's performance. GEN Casey assessed Maliki's performance...He said that up until last week, he showed himself as a decisive leader who spoke his mind. He is a very pragmatic man, and not prone to idealism, with the exception of his position on deba'athification. Last week, however, Maliki was all over the map, and GEN Casey began to wonder if he could handle the pressure of the job, and for the first time he considered the issue of his stability. GEN Casey is uncertain if Maliki will get past his anti-ba'athists bias, and other UIA baggage. In GEN Casey's opinion, the UIA is 'burning' him. These comments, the CG caveated, need to be put in the context of a man that has only been on the job for 120 days.

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GEN Casey would very much like to replace Babakir Zibari, commander of the Iraqi ground forces command (IGFC). He remains largely ineffective, and does not command the respect of the soldiers. The CG will work this slowly, but he believes there must be strong and respected leadership at the helm of the IGFC for it to be successful. There have been increasing concern about the ability of the Iraqi army divisions (especially those divisions recruited locally) to deploy out of area. There have been several instances when the units refused to move. For the most part, MNSTC-I believes it is a leadership issue that can be addressed under the terms of employment along with an established financial incentive to all units that deploy out of area. To address this issue, there is a new joint Deployability committee lead by LTG Dempsey and LTG Nasir Al-Abadi, the deputy IGFC commander, that is meeting to institutionalize these changes and make the IA more responsive to central government direction.

In a meeting on 22 September GEN Casey received his weekly update...on the status of...efforts against the AQIZ network. There was consensus that AQIZ is still present in large numbers in Yusifiyah, despite the work [Coalition forces] already has done in the area, and that they continue to threaten Baghdad. LTG Chiarelli proposed...that they should conduct new combined operations in Yusifiyah to finish it off. That planning is underway.

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(b)(6) said the feeling in the COR is that everyone is tired of sectarian violence and just wants it to be behind them. (b)(6) further noted that as evidence of this current mindset, the COR made the decision to delay implementation of federalism for 12-18 months after it passed in the COR. The reasoning was that they did not want this to further inflame security conditions. The country will be better positioned in a year or two to deal with this.

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