

## 2 September Travel to Fallujah

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

On 3 September GEN Casey and MG Zahner briefed DPM Barham Salih on 1.4b, 1.4d in Iraq, using the recently sanitized and cleared briefing slides. The briefing was intended to ensure that Salih was well prepared for his upcoming meetings in 1.4b especially the private meeting he plans to have with Secretary of the 1.4b upreme Council for National Security (SCNS) 1.4b, 1.4a 1.4b, b 6 The briefing went smoothly, and Salih agreed with the key judgments, and 1.4b goals for the region. Salih is clearly very knowledgeable about 1.4b, 1.4d in Iraq, so only the details on the 1.4a rockets and C4, were really new to him. Salih continued to state his intention to deliver a tough message, however he was looking for political cover. He asked for GEN Casey's assistance in securing it. While Salih was more than willing to deliver the message from his position as Deputy Prime Minister, he really wanted to ensure his message was supported by the GOI. GEN Casey said he would make a point to surface this with the Prime Minister during his 6 September meeting.

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.

- 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...
- Salih said that [1.4b] in playing a very dangerous game. He believes part of the [1.4a] is to facilitate the movement of AQ into Iraq.
- Salih repeated the message from Hakim's son, who was told by Larijani during his recent visit to [1.4b] succeeded in obtaining a package deal on their [1.4b] things would get sour in Iraq. The [1.4b] are willing to use Iraq to achieve their [1.4b]
- Salih planned to tell th [1.4b] that he believes [1.4b] and the US are on a collision course, and there is a limit on how far the [1.4b] can run this out before Iraq and the international coalition will turn on them.
- Salih said he planned to tell the [1.4b] that they could not expand economic ties unless and until the political and security situation was stabilized. Iraq wants good relations with [1.4b] but on a basis of non-interference and respect for Iraq's sovereign government.
- After more than 25 years of heavy investment in Iraq, [1.4b] is as important to Iraq as is the US.
- Cutting ties to [1.4b] needs to be accomplished, but it has to be approached seriously. The first step is to create alliances in Iraq to counter the UIA block. Sunni and Shia moderates can create and run a functional Iraq.
- Salih expected his [1.4b] interlocutors to be less than forthright with him. Their central focus now is their nuclear program and Salih believes they will succeed.
- Salih said that there is a great need for Iraq to address both [1.4b, 1.4d] He said he would look for a public forum to state his concerns about Syrian interference.
- The problem is that there is no national interest in Iraq. The [1.4b] on the other hand, have a very defined national interest, which they aggressively pursue. They have done it in Chechnya, Afghanistan, Levant, and now Iraq.
- The link between Hizballah and Sadr is clear. There is recent information that Hizballah representatives are present in Sadr City.
- During a discussion on Soleimani, Salih described him as "...v. ery senior, very deliberate, very lethal". GEN Casey asked why Talabani, the President of Iraq, was meeting with him. Salih smiled and stated flatly that "He has been helping opposition parties forever". He provides weapons and support. Not only is it necessary to maintain relations, but "...s. taying on his good side is important." Even so, the [1.4b] are not afraid to leverage their position. For example, per Salih, if Talabani goes too far in one direction, Soleimani will pump up the PKK. If Hakim works against [1.4b], Soleimani will put the squeeze on Badr.
- Salih said it would be a major setback to the [1.4b] f Soleimani were detained in Iraq. It would be a powerful signal, and ultimately would serve to help cut ties between the two countries.
- 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

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 Kaldiyah, 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 Kaldiyah 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

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

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 Qasem Daud 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 Daud 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 Daud 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 Daud 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. Daud 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 Qasim 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. Qasem 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.

Qasem 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

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 Thamir.

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.

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 Muwafuq 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 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 Sherrif 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.

MG Sherriff has focused on his border with [1.4b] in a much more comprehensive way than his predecessors. Sherriff describes their effort as disrupting rather than fighting, but have succeeded in generating a lot of confusion on the [1.4b] side of the border. The [1.4b] tend to now think the UK is on the border in reater numbers than realit . [1.4b, 1.4d]

[1.4b] [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 Diwanyah. 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 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 eth 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 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 Diwayniyah 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 gth 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 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.

1.4b, 1.4d

1.4b, 1.4d

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 stated that they cannot change anything. [1.4b] 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 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 Ahmad [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)] he three most important individuals in Iraq for the Sunni resistance were:

- Former MUC Chairman Harith Sulayman al-Dari al-Zawba'i
- Mufti Jamal 'abd al-Karim al-Daban, president of the
- Fatwa's Secretariat-General.
- Salafi scholar Shaykh Abdallah al- Janabi

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 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 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 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 Muwafiq 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 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 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 Muwafiq 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 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 Khalaf Ulayan

GEN Casey and UK DCG LTG Lamb met with Shaykh Khalaf Ulayan on 21 September for a one-hour session. This meeting was intended to facilitate the first meeting between Lamb and Ulayan, 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 Ulayan 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 Ulayan presented.

Ulayan 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 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. Ulayan 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.

Ulayan 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. Ulayan said the time was right to capitalize on this mood, and quickly move forward with his plan. The plan Ulayan clarified is his own, but it was drawn up in discussions with tribal leaders in al-Anbar....

Before operations can start, Ulayan 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, Ulayan 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 warn and notify. Ulayan stated the Sunni had little trust in the current GOI so would continue to rely on MNF- I. Ulayan 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 Ulayan 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 Ulayan 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 Ulayan, 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

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 that 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 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, [1.4b] controls Iraq, or Civil War. The reinstatement 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 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 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. 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, I 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 (Rafa Abd al-((Salam)). [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 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-Hashirni 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.

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 1.4a 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 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 Hashirni 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. [redacted] 1.4b, (b)(6) member and the tribes do not support the [redacted] (4b) 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 Sarnarra 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 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.

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 [redacted] endangered 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 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 (abu al-Hadi al Darraji) 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 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.

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.

Muwafuq al-Ruba'i relayed to GEN Casey that when he was in [ 1.4b ], he told several of his [ 1.4b ] interlocutors to stop the EFP attacks on the coalition. If they don't, he warned, the Americans will just stay longer. Ruba'i told them the Americans have a schedule, and they will be gone in 12-18 months. What Ruba'i did not articulate, but CG speculates he also added, was that the [ 1.4b ] just need to sit tight, and they will be able to advance their Iraq agenda.

[ b 6 ] aid the feeling in the COR is that everyone is tired of sectarian violence and just wants it to be behind them. [ (b)(6) ] urther 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 positions in a year or two to deal with this.