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## MEK: Situation and Options

- **Background:**
  - USG has declared the MEK a “foreign terrorist organization.”
  - 15 Apr 2003: Coalition Forces conclude cease fire agreement with MEK.
  - 8 May 2003: SecDef directs CENTCOM to terminate April cease fire agreement and to force MEK to surrender. Directs that MEK be given EPW status:
    - Disarm all weapons.
    - Restrict freedom of movement.
    - Restrict communications privileges, etc.
  - 9 May 2003: CENTCOM signs “capitulation” agreement with MEK.
    - LTG Sanchez’s POLAD has confirmed that these negotiations were conducted prior to 8 May SecDef guidance.
  - Current MEK status does **not** comply with 8 May SecDef guidance, but is consistent with 9 May agreement.
    - USDP first informed of 9 May agreement on 13 Aug, during his visit to Iraq.
- **Current Status of MEK:**
  - Is confined to two camps - **but** can travel to Baghdad under U.S escort.
  - Has been disarmed of heavy weapons – **but** retains personal weapons, including pistols and AK47 assault rifles.
  - Broadcasts (short wave) from within the camps into 1.4b, 1.4d
  - Has access to phones, and receives visitors.
- **Two Perspectives on the MEK Issue: Operational vs. Strategic**
- **Operational Perspective:**
  - Establishing security throughout Iraq is CENTCOM’s highest priority.
  - MEK is cooperating with Coalition forces, and feeds, and cares for, itself.
    - MEK broadcasting anti-1.4b, 1.4dpropaganda - but not derogatory or aggressive toward the Coalition effort.
  - Bottom Line: MEK does not pose an immediate threat to the Coalition.
    - Currently, 450 MPs are guarding the 3,400 MEK members.

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- LTG Sanchez: More restrictive confinement of MEK would require a brigade (+) with additional logistics support, diverting assets from existing priorities.
- **Strategic Approach:**
  - As a "foreign terrorist organization," MEK should not be treated differently than other terrorist groups (e.g. PKK/Kadek, al-Qaida).
    - Lax treatment of MEK undermines U. S. credibility with respect to the war on terrorism – it opens the U.S. to criticism that it tolerates terrorist groups that target countries hostile to the U.S.
    - |            |
|------------|
| 1.4b, 1.4d |
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  - Bottom Line: We cannot afford to damage our posture of "zero tolerance" for terrorism by appearing to wink at MEK.
- **Options:**
  - **1. Maintain the status quo.**
  - **2. Direct implementation of the 8 May SecDef guidance:**
    - *Either*, provide specific guidance on timing
    - *Or*, allow CENTCOM to determine the appropriate timing based on priorities and available resources.
  - **3. Refine 8 May SecDef guidance:**
    - Maintain current level of security posture on the perimeter of the camps – do not enter the camps or fully disarm.
    - Prohibit all broadcasts.
    - [Restrict use of telephones and other communications.]
    - [Close Baghdad and Fallujah offices.]
    - Prohibit movement outside the camps except as authorized by Coalition and under direct control – greatly reduce amount of permitted travel outside the camps.

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