

(b)(3), (b)(6)

From: (b)(3), (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2003 3:09 PM
To: (b)(6)
Subject: FW: (U)



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Meetings with Iraqi
Leaders in...

Classification: ~~SECRET~~

I thought that the minutes of a meeting with Gen A and SCIRI in May might be relevant to SCIRI's latest call to reform Badr. Gen A addressed that subject with them earlier. Attached are the minutes from that meeting. Hope that they are useful to you and Gen Sanchez. You might find it an interesting read. Much of what Iraqis warned about has come to pass.

HRM

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(3), (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2003 6:54 PM
To: (b)(3), (b)(6)
Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6)
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(b)(3), (b)(6) Found the Hakim cable.

(b)(3), (b)(6)

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From: (b)(3), (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, September 11, 2003 8:17 AM
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Cc: (b)(3), (b)(6)
Subject: FW:

(b)(3), (b)(6)

C2 Operations, CJTF-4a

(b)(6)

(b)(3), (b)(6)

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From: (b)(3), (b)(6)
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Sent: 10:42:53 09/09/2003
To: SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC; 'SECDEF WASHINGTON DC'; 'NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON DC'
To Precedence: Routine
Cc: 'IRAQ COLLECTIVE'
Cc Precedence: Routine
Subject: IRAQ SECURITY DISCUSSIONS WITH ABDUL AZIZ AL-HAKIM
Message Type: Other-Organizational
Extended Auth: 06:38:00 09/09/2003 (UTC)
10:38:00 09/09/2003 (Client/Local)
Security: This message has been digitally signed and encrypted

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E.O.: 12958: DECLAS: 09/08/13

AGS: PREL, PGOV, PTER, IZ

SUBJECT: IRAQ SECURITY DISCUSSIONS WITH ABDUL AZIZ AL-HAKIM

CLASSIFIED BY AMB KENNEDY FOR REASONS 1.5 (B AND D)

1. (C) SUMMARY: CPA Administrator L. Paul Bremer met with Governing Council member Abdul Aziz al-Hakim on 7 September at the latter's residence in Baghdad to deliver condolences for the assassination of al-Hakim's brother and discuss security in Iraq. Al-Hakim pressed for an official role for the Badr Corps. Ambassador Bremer replied that it is important for Iraq to build up the Army and police as the nation's professional security institutions. Al-Hakim said the country is in a state of emergency because internal and external groups are targeting Shi'a who cooperate with the Coalition and because former members of Ba'athist police and security agencies remain in power and provide cover for individuals opposing Iraq's reconstruction. End Summary.

Condolences

2. (U)The purpose of Ambassador Bremer's 7 September visit to Governing Council (GC) member Abdul Aziz al-Hakim's residence was to deliver condolences for the 29 August assassination of al-Hakim's brother, Ayatollah Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim, by a car bomb in Najaf. Bremer also delivered the original letter of condolence from President Bush and conveyed sympathies from Secretary Rumsfeld. Al-Hakim expressed his appreciation for the gesture as well as for the support Ambassador Bremer and the entire Coalition has given him and the people of Iraq.

The Badr Corps

3. (C)Al-Hakim and Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) deputy Adel Mehdi pushed Ambassador Bremer to permit SCIRI's Badr Corps to assume an official role in providing security in Najaf and elsewhere in the country. Al-Hakim said he is opposed to creating militias, but that Iraq is in a state of emergency and requires urgent action to restore order. He said that the only way to enhance security is through organizations composed of Iraqis who know and trust each other and who have proven their loyalty through opposition to the Saddam regime. Mehdi pointed out that the Coalition is working with the

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Peshmerga in the North, and that the Badr Corps could follow this model. He said that under this kind of arrangement, the Badr Corps would not remain independent of central authority, but that it would fall under the Coalition's control. (Mehdi added that the Badr Corps' name has changed to the Badr Organization.)

4. (C) Ambassador Bremer replied that he strongly supports giving Iraqis as much responsibility for security as possible and that the Coalition has made a lot of progress in this area and is accelerating its plans to build up the police and Army. Bremer acknowledged that security remains a serious concern in Iraq, but stated that armed militias are not acceptable because they undermine these efforts to create legitimate nation-wide security institutions. He agreed to have CPA staff continue this discussion with SCIRI representatives.

Al-Hakim's Analysis of Threats to Iraq

5. (C) Al-Hakim declared himself to be pessimistic about the overall security situation in Iraq. He said the situation is becoming more dangerous for two reasons. First, the Shi'a who decided to cooperate with the Coalition clearly are targets of both internal and external groups. He said he has information indicating that all Shi'a in Iraq are now targets, whether they are Islamist religious leaders or secular politicians. Al-Hakim and Bremer agreed it is critical that Iraq's Shi'a remain united and avoid being drawn into conflict with Sunnis.

6. (C) Al-Hakim said he believes radical Sunnis are working in cooperation with Ba'athists and that this connection is in part the result of relationships Saddam Hussein built up over the past decade. He said that many Iraqis have closed their eyes to Saddam's crimes and still view him as a symbol of Islam. Al-Hakim informed Bremer that on the day of the Najaf bombing, an extremist from Jordan wrote a letter to Said Nasrallah in Lebanon urging him to intercede with Mohammed Baqr al-Hakim to reverse al-Hakim's position on cooperating with the Coalition. Abdul Aziz Al-Hakim, however, said he did not think Nasrallah played any role in the bombing, or that Nasrallah had much influence in Iraq. On the other hand, al-Hakim did express concern about Moqtada al-Sadr and took credit for recent efforts to quash a potential fatwa urging Iraqis to attack American forces in Iraq. Bremer thanked al-Hakim for taking this action.

7. (C) Al-Hakim's second reason for lack of security in Iraq is that the police and other security forces remain full of Ba'athists and members of the former regime's security apparatus who are providing cover for criminal elements that don't want stability for Iraq. He said the Iraqi people are very frustrated that the Ba'athists are still in power and unsure of how to come forward to have them removed. Bremer said he is encouraged that the GC is now beginning to take leadership on de-Ba'athification and that if al-Hakim were to provide CPA with information about problem individuals in the police force, CPA would remove those Iraqis from their positions.

Najaf

8. (C) Bremer reviewed the Coalition's role in providing security for Najaf, explaining that the Coalition had remained out of Najaf at the request of local religious and secular officials. When, five weeks ago, Najaf's governor did request additional assistance to double the size of the police force in the city, CPA took action the follow day. In addition, when the governor again requested help to create a special police unit to guard the Shrine of Ali following the assassination attempt on Mohammed Said al-Hakim August 24, CPA provided 400 AK-47s, ammunition, and funds for uniforms and vehicles. CPA delivered this assistance in less than 36 hours. Bremer also mentioned that the Coalition is providing additional funds to the city, including \$2 million in medical help, which CPA delivered to the governor on Thursday.

9. (C) Bremer said the Coalition is conducting a thorough investigation of the bombing in cooperation with local authorities and welcomes any additional information. Bremer pointed to the Joint Security Committee and the Ministry of Interior as bodies for intelligence-sharing and coordination on security issues. Bremer and Mehdi agreed that Mehdi would meet with Coalition officials to discuss the investigation in greater detail.

Personal Security

10. (C) Al-Hakim said that Mohammad Baqr al-Hakim was his ninth brother to be murdered and that he, as the last of ten brothers, was waiting to be martyred himself. He said that a Coalition security team had conducted an assessment of his home the day before and found it to be insufficiently secure. Al-Hakim asked if it would be possible for CPA to find him another house and Bremer said that he would look into it.

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Conclusion

11. (C) Mehdi said that every step from occupation to sovereignty tightens the noose around the resistance. Bremer agreed and said he remains optimistic about the direction in which Iraq is moving, despite the real security concerns.

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CC-CAG

4 August 2003

Highlights of the Meetings with Iraqi Leadership In May 2003

- Principal concern was security.
 - Predicted resurgent Baathist violence (mainly Talibani, Musawi, and Beyati)
 - Beyati was Adamant that more Baathists had to be removed (in addition to the top-level leadership)
 - Called for closer liaison between US and opposition factions
 - Called for integration of Iraqis into security (joint patrols, checkpoints)
 - Concern over criminal activity, especially kidnapping
- Called for an effective IO campaign and establishment of TV/radio stations
- SCIRI (Beyati):
 - Emphatically claimed no Iranian influence and principal identity as Iraqis.
 - No other option but to turn to Iran after 1991.
 - Claimed inequity in treatment relative to Kurds.
 - Expressed religious tolerance and commitment to representative government.

CAG Notes:

- In retrospect, the group's observations were prescient. Mid-level Baathist violence increased shortly after this meeting. Key to our success is intelligence provided by Iraqis (may mention this to Beyati - I MEF and 2ACR have very good relations with Shias at local level). Will be key to transfer those relationships to the 1.4b
- Talibani had suggested a partnership with the coalition to establish TV/Radio stations. Consider CPA/IGC-funded national radio and TV outlet similar to BBC. Would provide employment, a corrective to disinformation, get out the IGC/CPA message and help forge a country-wide identity/perspective on issues (instead of a sectarian view).

Final Record of LTG Abizaid's Trip to Baghdad, 20-21 May 2003

Minutes of meeting with the Iraqi Security Committee on 20 May 2003

Meeting began with opening statements from LTG A, LTG McKiernan, and LTG Wallace.

LTG A stressed that there could be no political solution without security. He appreciated leaders' need for personal security. Liaison between coalition and entities should be strengthened. Military operations have not ended. US considers fighters not part of the coalition to be hostile. Pledged to have a weapons policy in English and Arabic in the next 48 hours.

First two questions were as follows:

Q: Could they get weapons and security policies in advance to study them?

A: Yes

Q: Is the 12 personnel limit for only one individual or for each member of the leadership?

A: The coalition understands the need for security at several locations (national and local). Leaders should state their needs and the coalition will consider them.

Beyati (SCIRI): Lamented the loss of national treasures and expressed concerns about

1.4a

Musawi (INC): Stated that there were known criminals at large who were violating human rights.

LTG A: Tell us who they are and we will arrest them.

Talibani (PUK): Still armed Baathists with money, drugs, and arms. Predicted they would reorganize and "make trouble" for the coalition and the opposition. He suggested an amnesty period for weapons and a weapons buyback program. He stressed the danger of the Baath as a reason for not disarming his and other opposition groups. He cited terrorist groups in the north and stated that his forces could secure a portion of the border with Iran (in Kurdistan). He said that there was a lack of cooperation between Iraqi opposition and American forces in Baghdad. He stated that retired senior officers or those who were imprisoned by Saddam might be useful to the New Iraqi Corps.

Beyati (SCIRI): Need security first before we ask for arms. Security requirements should be based on actual needs. Some factions need more than others based on nature of the threat. Stated that the opposition has much information of value to the coalition. He alleged that some of the interpreters working for the coalition were Baathists. Stated that not just the top of the Baath must be removed, but many others as well. He suggested that he had knowledge of a plot to assassinate an opposition leader that had the approval of Saddam.

Musawi: Was emphatic about kidnapping of women in Baghdad for ransom.

Zebari: Security is a shared responsibility. Many people do not want to see the US win a complete victory. Traces of the regime are still alive and will launch a resistance campaign against the coalition. There should be confidence between you and your allies. Opposition feels hurt when you close down the offices of those who fought Saddam and members of the Baath regime are treated differently. He was very supportive of the idea of establishing LNOs with the leadership groups. "We were safer in the mountains back home [than in Baghdad]." He noted uneven standards: "some have passes and others do not." He mentioned the mass graves and said that the digging should be discouraged and the site run by forensic scientists. He noted that public information about the mass graves was lacking. He stressed the need for TV and radio.

Talibani: Suggested a cooperative effort to establish a TV station.

Mr. Chardirchi (NDP): Thanked coalition for the meeting (as had all others). Protested turning weapons over when he was vulnerable (told anecdotes relating to his own vulnerability). Seconded previous concern about kidnapping. He asked for patrols in schools.

Jaileel Mushim: Said kidnapping targets specific people for ransom.

Dawa Party Rep: Said he could see the situation getting better. Lack of law enforcement is his greatest source of worry. Should not be optimistic and suggested that his and other forces could help much more. There is more violence at night when there are "no coalition forces." Iraqis are better able to identify the criminal threat than Americans. We should discuss "mechanisms" for joint solutions. Asked for a postponement of the next meeting beyond four days to prepare better.

Talibani: Suggested a "High Joint Committee" to "deBaath, exchange ideas, and fight crime."

LTG Abizaid agreed with the need for joint solutions and cooperation. He summarized that issues that would be addressed at the next meeting as a result of the discussion:

- Numbers of bodyguard
- Headquarters – where they were and how they would be protected
- Establishing liaison between CJTF-4 and each group (for exchanging information and intelligence)
- Work to better publicize actions for security (TV and radio)
- Initiatives for local Iraqis to serve with our soldiers during joint checkpoint and joint patrol operations

Post meeting with Talibani (PUK)

Said he has knowledge of arms caches including "100 helicopters."

He knows former officers who can help.
His forces can patrol the border and prevent smuggling.
He can give names of police officers who will help.
Media – can do television station with the Coalition
There is a “vacuum in the country” need to encourage democracy.
He has important news daily and cannot get it to us in time (including info on top Iraqi leadership). Said Saddam changes locations, is ill and needs to be treated.

Post meeting with Zebari (PUK). Mr. Zebari asked for the status of General Barzani's brother who was injured in a friendly fire incident. He wanted to know when he might be released and also wanted to know if there would be compensation. We provided the following to CFLCC to answer those questions:

Current situation: General Barzani is currently on the Internal Medicine ward at Walter Reed Medical center and continues to be seen by Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. He has a tracheostomy and is fed through a tube into the stomach. His present level of function includes near-complete right-sided weakness, partial left-sided weakness, and inability to follow commands. He does not communicate. Long-term, he is a candidate for discharge for intensive rehabilitation. This patient is making slow, but real gains in his level of awareness. On initial evaluation, he was at a level 2 on a scale of 1 to 8. He currently is at a level 3. He is a candidate for intensive inpatient Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and awareness (cognitive) rehabilitation and could be offered three hours a day of intensive physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy. He spontaneously moves his left arm and leg and his right arm.

Prognosis. He will be left with permanent damage from this injury. This patient's functional outcome will be dictated by his cognitive recovery. In TBI patients, there can be gains for the first and often second year. But at one year he will approach his final functional level.

Summary: General Barzani has suffered a severe traumatic brain injury. He continues to make marginal improvements in his functional status and may well benefit from a trial of intensive rehabilitation. However, it is likely that he will require lifelong custodial care at a skilled nursing facility.

Compensation: Short answer: No. Longer answer: The Air Force is the Single Service Claims Authority for Iraq. Any injured/damaged person can file a claim and seek payment. The US, however, does not pay claims for combat related injuries/damage - that includes Friendly Fire cases. The Air Force is likely to deny any such claim. There are, however, other ways to seek compensation. SECDEF could use his EEE money to compensate; also Congress could specifically authorize payments - but these are not processes within our direct control. Additionally, some of the supplemental legislation provides some broad language that might permit compensation but these authorities are not under DOD control (and would require additional research to see if they could be applicable).

Post meeting with Mr. Adel Abdel Mahdi of SCIRI. He asked to have a meeting with LTG Abizaid the following day at O900.

Minutes of Meeting with Mr. Abdel Mahdi, Hamil al Beyati, and Abdul Jabbar Aboodi (SCIRI) at 210945 May.

The meeting began with LTG Abizaid and Mr. Beyati agreeing that the US and SCIRI had common ground in connection with the fight against the Baathists.

Mr. Beyati was emphatic that the Badr Brigades were not under the control of Iran and were a completely Iraqi organization. He stressed that they have been all Iraqi since their creation in 1982. He said that they were "like the Peshmerga" – an indigenous resistance group against the Baath. He stated that all leadership was Iraqi, "no Iranians or foreign agents." He stated that their only purpose for existing was to fight Saddam. He said that the goal would be to dissolve the militia and integrate it into the New Iraqi Army. He continued to stress common points of view between SCIRI and the US.

LTG A responded that the US was fostering a broad coalition and had not moved to exclude any group. Common ground was the US desire to leave Iraq a stable nation where all could participate. Indeed, no faction had more to gain than the Shias. After a short discussion on security detachments for SCIRI leadership, LTG A said that the Badr Corps should dissolve itself and noted that the Coalition had no objection to veterans joining the New Iraqi Corps. Stated that we would move soon to build a brigade. He said that the Badr Corps, unlike the Peshmerga, were in a different category because the Badr Corps did not fight alongside us.

Mr. Beyati stated that there was a Fetwa issued to fight against the Americans and the SCIRI leadership resisted it. He stated that the decision to resist anti-Americanism was "courageous" and implied that SCIRI should be rewarded for it.

LTG A stated that the US knows how much [1.4b] has supported the Badr Corps and how the [1.4b] etc. were moving freely about Southern Iraq.

Mr. Beyati responded that they had no choice (in earlier years) but to turn to [1.4b] because the US was supporting Iraq in the [1.4b] War. He stated that they are first Iraqi, second Arabs, and third Shias. He said that the Kurds were America's favorite – they had no "safe haven" in the South. "To this moment we feel that we are being discriminated against."

LTG A: You never had military forces in the South who treated the Shia like the Coalition is treating them. Peshmerga have the right to keep their arms only north of the Green Line. The political dynamic that is beyond the scope of the military is that the Badr Corps is not considered a friendly organization by the United States. Difficult for SCIRI to achieve its political goals if Badr Corps continues to exist. "Is the Badr Corps controlled by SCIRI or the [1.4b]

[1.4b]

Mr. Beyati and Mr. Abdul Mahdi: Cited the 1999 Iraq Liberation Act and the recognition of the Badr Corps as an opposition force. They stated that no [1.4b] [1.4b] people trained them. They said that they were "completely under Iraqi control." They admitted using [1.4b] for "transportation. Cooperation with the [1.4b] and action against Americans would be against our interests.

LTG A: "Yes it would." It would be the worst thing that could happen. Look at all the good things that are going well in Sadr City – best situation there in hundreds of years. To what degree do you think that SCIRI represents the Shia community?

Mr. Beyati: Agreed that things are very good in Sadr City. Hakim is the "most effective person." Cited Hakim's sacrifices to get rid of Saddam. Stressed inclusion citing the effort to bring in the Dawa faction. Stated that they are the only people who have "momentum" among the Shias because they have political, military, and religious "weight." Stated that hostility against Americans is a "red line for us." Problem is the image that SCIRI and Shias in general are being treated differently (vis a vis Kurds and Sunnis). Said that they feel abandoned.

Mr. Abdul Mahdi: Asked for permission to bring radio equipment to Baghdad to start a station.

LTG A: Need to talk on New Iraqi Army. On security concerns, need to tell us how many places and people you need for protection by "security employees." Expressed the need for liaison at the national level and pledged to "personally choose" a liaison officer. "You tell me where you want him to go and I will send him there."

Beyati and Abdul Mahdi expressed concern about the MEK situation and reports that the Americans were supporting them against [1.4b]

LTG A: Reports false. Told story of the initial cease fire and subsequent revision. MEK is being dissolved. US regards it as a terrorist group.

Beyati and Abdul Mahdi: Said that SCIRI agreed with all groups that we would have a democratic regime that respects beliefs. Emphasized religious tolerance for Sunnis, Kurds, Christians. Said that "we need you" (LTG A) in Baghdad.

LTG A: Explained regional responsibilities. Talked about Gen Sanchez and said that "we will come see you."

HRM
CCDC XO