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# Assessing the Threat from

1.4b

9 February 2006

This briefing is classified

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Derived from: Multiple sources

DECL ON: 8 Feb 2016

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## Purpose

- Identify the potential implications for MNF-I if tensions over the Iranian nuclear issue escalate.

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## Facts



- Over 90% of Iraqi oil exports pass through the Straits of Hormuz.
- Over 90% of MNF-I logistic support flows through Kuwait (LOC through SE Iraq).

Pages 4 through 6 redacted for the following reasons:

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1 4b, 1 4d

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## *Friendly Strengths and Weaknesses*

### ■ Strengths:

- Relationship with the IG (political); IG currently dependent on Coalition.
- Coalition commitment to the IG and Iraqi people; Coalition unity.
- Strong conventional force capability – in Iraq (now) and the region.
- Relationship with the Iraqi Army (MoD); knowledge of ISF capabilities.
- International consensus against Iran's nuclear ambitions.
- Regional alliances.
- Ahmadinejad and his radical position as leader of Iran.

### ■ Weaknesses:

- 1.4b, 1.4d
- Limited MNF-I troop presence in SE Iraq (especially in Iranian border areas).
- Little leverage over Shi'a groups (SCIRI/Badr, Dawa, OMS).
- Vulnerability to EFPs.
- MNF-I presence throughout SE Iraq presents an array of soft targets (including MNF ground LOCs).
- Collection gaps on Iranian intentions and activity 1.4b, 1.4d
- Control of the 1.4b border.
- Capability of ISF to defend Iraq (trained/postured for internal COIN operations).
- MNF-I / ISF not postured to defend Iraq from external threats.

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1.4b

- Generally local response, proportional to scope of UN sanctions.

1.4b, 1.4d

- Work to frustrate achievement of MNF-I campaign objectives:
  - Impair formation of IG – foster mistrust, sectarian strife (assassinate Sunni leaders), militia tension.
  - Seek IG limitations to MNF-I freedom of movement, use of bases.
- Increase training of Shi'a militants:
  - Provide additional lethal assistance: EFPs and possibly Stingers/SA-16s.
  - Begins effort to open a "Shi'a flank" in SE Iraq – changes key campaign assumption ("insurgency will not expand").
- Add friction to maintaining the Coalition – heighten attacks / threats v. smaller members; Info Ops focus on use of Iraq as US staging base.
- Maintain plausible deniability strategy by using third parties to attack MNF-I.

1.4b, 1.4d

- Hasten Coalition departure / limit influence with IG and MoD/MoI leadership.
- Dampen US/Western interest in additional Middle East military efforts.

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## Likely 1.4b Response to Offensive Strike

### ■ Most Likely: Response would include:

- Actions taken in response to UN sanctions.
- Further escalates violence against MNF-I.
- Effort to expand conflict into a wider regional effort.

### ■ Actions would possibly include:

1.4b, 1.4d

- 1.4b low-risk, direct action against MNF-I high payoff targets.
- Expands or exploits “Shi’a flank” - disrupt MNF-I operations in SE Iraq (threaten LOCs and rear areas).
- “War” of attrition to sap MNF-I / Coalition will.
- Info Ops effort to frame US/Western strikes as war against Islam; seek to disrupt wider US/Western goals in the region (involve Syria and others?).
- Seek to influence IG to eject MNF-I from Iraq.

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## Likely 1.4b Response to Offensive Strike

1.4b, 1.4d

- Increase of assassination attempts on senior IG officials (Sunni/Kurd to disrupt Unity Government).
- Threaten Iraqi oil terminals, infrastructure (to increase burden on US); threaten 1.4b

1.4b, 1.4d

1.4b, 1.4d

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## ***Least Likely: Overt***

1.4b

## ***Incursion into Iraq***

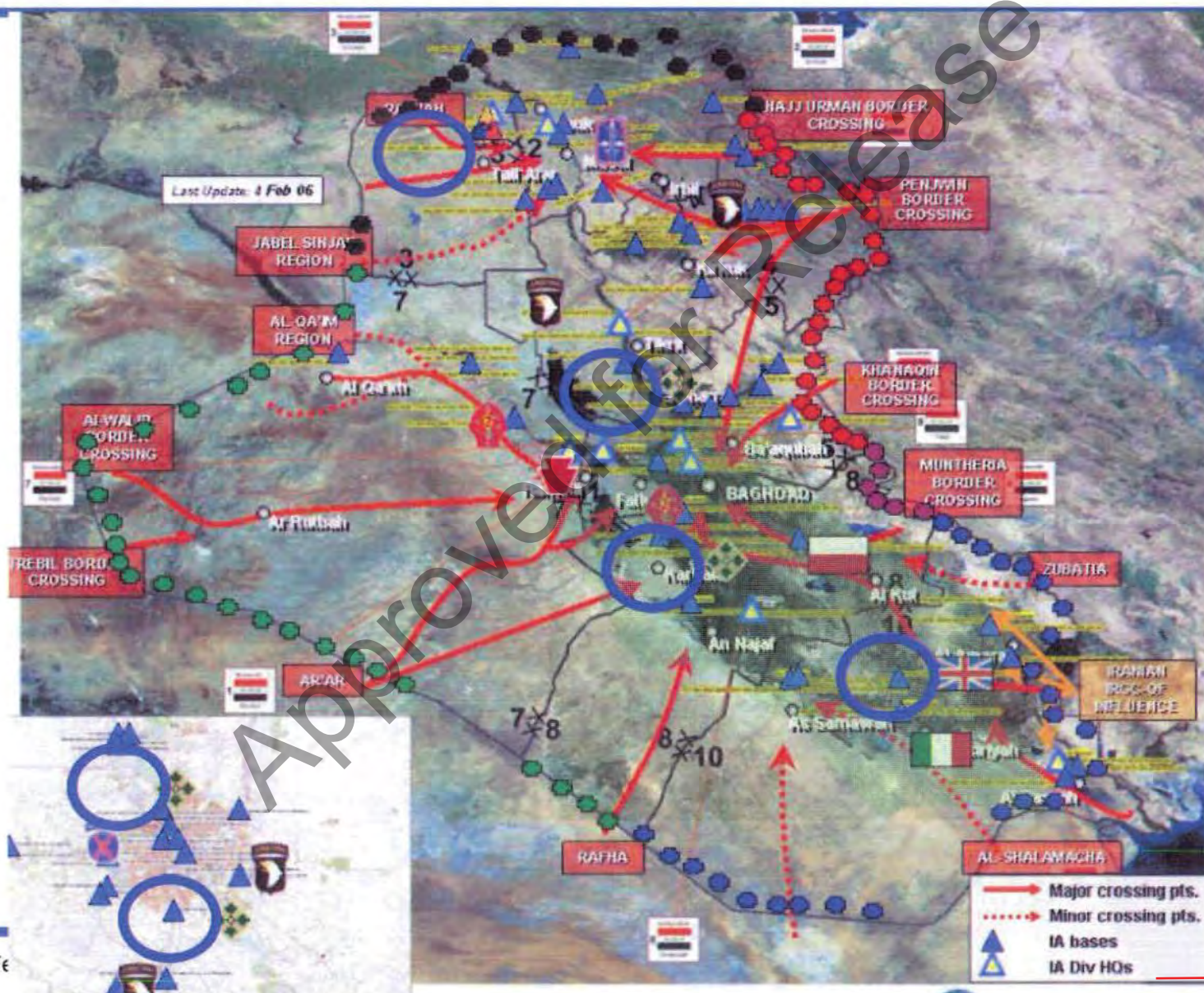
1.4b, 1.4d

- Lack of offensive conventional capability.
- Risks fracturing Islamic unity in the face of Western “aggression.”
  - Invites international isolation.
- Risks provoking Iraqi nationalist response.

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## Infiltration Routes into Iraq



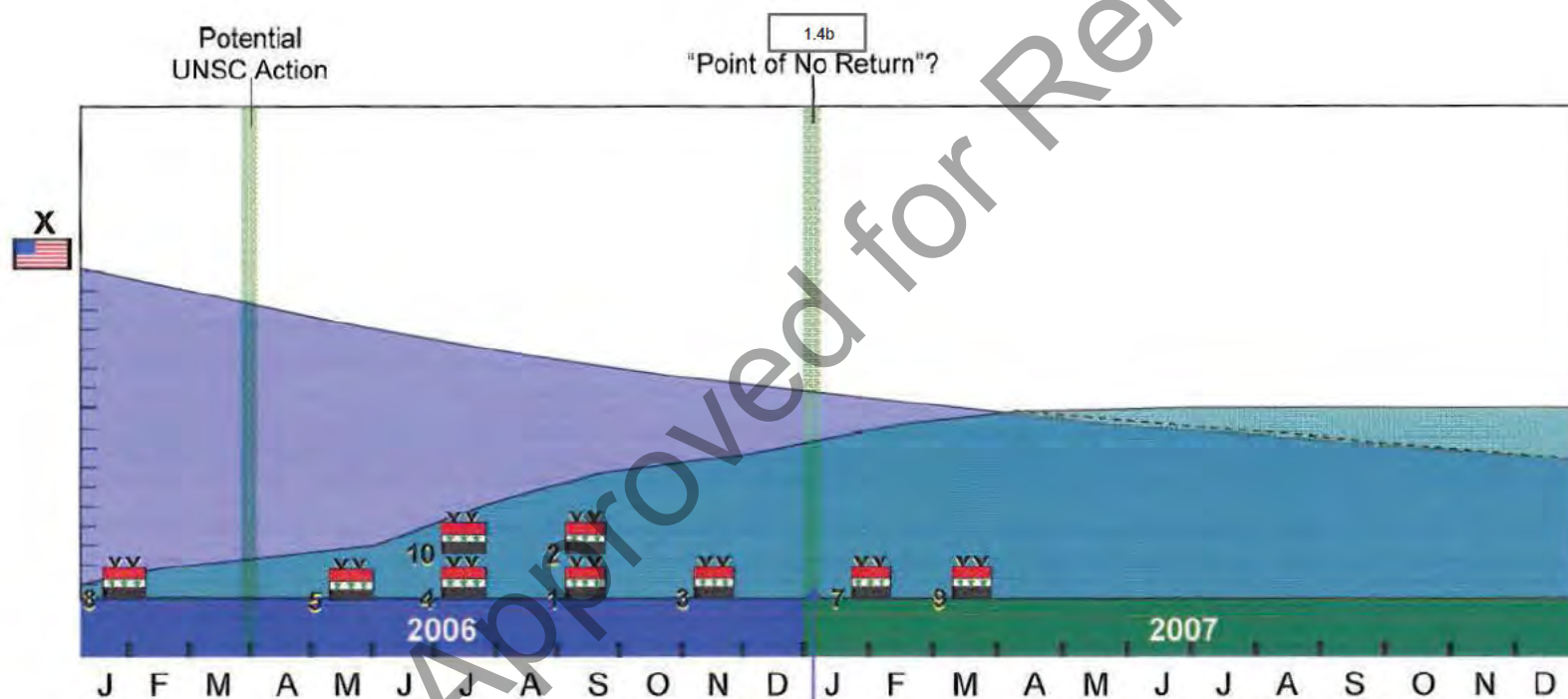
SPA Plans - 8 Feb 06

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## Initial Timeline



If transition COA 1 executed:

- 5 x Hvy Bdes in Iraq
- 1 + 1 Hvy Bdes as Theater Reserve/PTDO

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## Conclusion

- Situation is likely to escalate and UN sanctions are strong possibility; offensive action against [1.4b] cannot be ruled out.
- In response, [1.4b] likely to target MNF-I as means to exert pressure/retaliate against US/West and seek to disrupt Coalition unity.
  - Deniable proxy attacks; ISF generally not affected – [1.4b]  
[1.4b]
  - Increase use of proxies to influence IG and increase Shi'a power in IG; frustrate US goal of National Unity Gov't.
  - Increase Info Ops to frame issue as [1.4b] v. West.
- A conventional [1.4b] military move into Iraq is unlikely.
  - [1.4b] lacks capability.
  - Might provoke Iraqi nationalist reaction (possible exception: if Iraqi bases were used to strike/support strike against [1.4b] after IG disapproval).

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## Recommended MNF-I Actions

- Increase overwatch of Iranian border (especially SE); refocus ISR collection.
- Reinforce collection efforts on 1.4b Shi'a groups.
- Develop CONPLAN to shift main LOC out of Kuwait.
- Develop CONPLAN to reconfigure MNF-I posture/operations to deal with increased threat from Shi'a groups ("Shi'a flank").
- Remain engaged with IG.
  - Dialog key to sustaining IG support / misunderstanding.
- Remain engaged with USCENTCOM.
  - Track development of USCENTCOM planning to ensure coherence with MNF-I objectives.
  - Action in 1.4b must be balanced against the potential impact on OIF.

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**Backup**

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## MND-SE

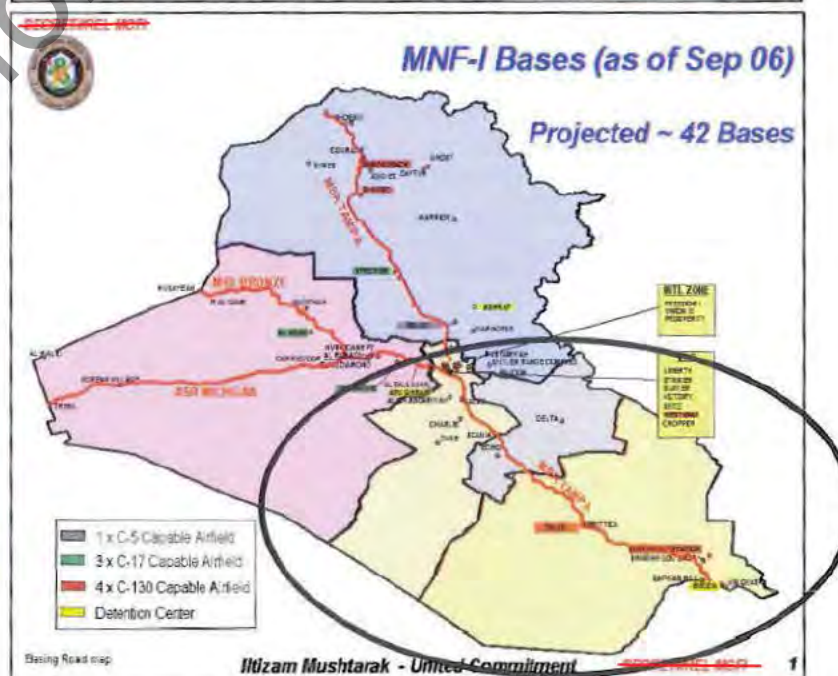
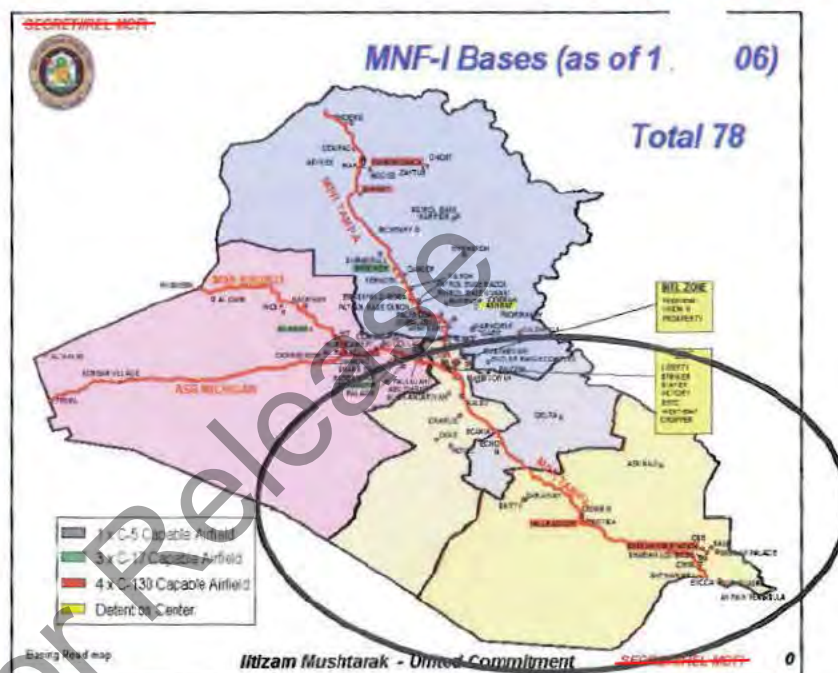
MND-SE BASE CAMPS (12)  
COSCOM BASES (2)  
TF 1.4a (1)

BASE NAME	VIC
SAMAWAH	<b>SAMAWAH</b>
BASRAH AIR STATION	<b>BASRAH</b>
ABU NAJI	<b>AL AMARAH</b>
SHAIBAH LOG BASE	<b>ZUBAYR</b>
SHAT AL ARAB HOTEL	<b>BASRAH</b>
SMITTY	<b>SAMAWAH</b>
UMM QASR PORT	<b>UMMQASR</b>
SAFWAN HILL	<b>TALLIL</b>
<b>CEDAR II</b>	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
<b>TALLIL</b>	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
OLD STATE BUILDING(OSB)	<b>BASRAH</b>
CAMP MITTICA	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
AL FAW PENINSULA	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
<b>BUCCA</b>	<b>UM QUASR</b>
BASHRA PALACE	<b>BASRAH</b>

*Six (6) locations anticipated for drawdown during this time frame*

MND-SE BASE CAMPS (7)  
COSCOM BASES (1)  
TF 1.4a (1)

BASE NAME	VIC
SAMAWAH	<b>SAMAWAH</b>
BASRAH AIR STATION	<b>BASRAH</b>
SHAIBAH LOG BASE	<b>ZUBAYR</b>
SMITTY	<b>SAMAWAH</b>
UMM QASR PORT	<b>UMMQASR</b>
SAFWAN HILL	<b>TALLIL</b>
<b>TALLIL</b>	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
CAMP MITTICA	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
<b>BUCCA</b>	<b>UM QUASR</b>



## MND-SE

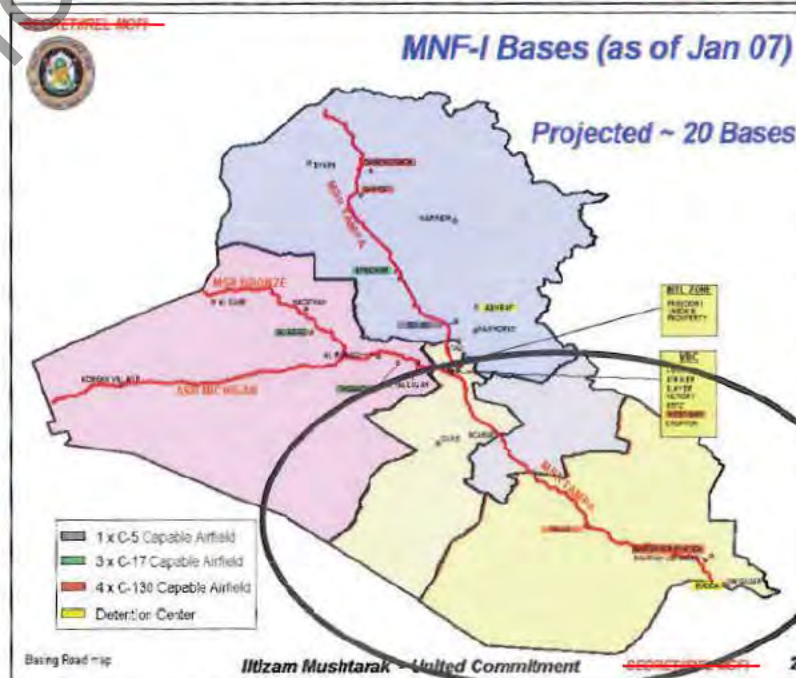
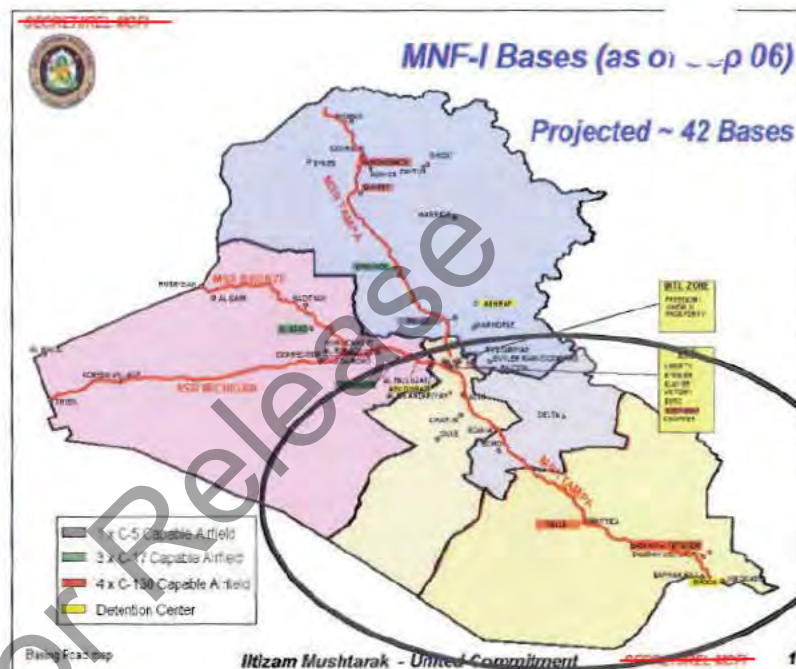
MND-SE BASE CAMPS (7)  
COSCOM BASES (1)  
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SAMAWAH	<b>SAMAWAH</b>
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SMITTY	<b>SAMAWAH</b>
UMM QASR PORT	<b>UMMQASR</b>
SAFWAN HILL	<b>TALLIL</b>
TALLIL	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
CAMP MITTICA	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
BUCCA	<b>UM QASR</b>

Four (4) locations anticipated for drawdown during this time frame

MND-SE BASE CAMPS (3)  
COSCOM BASES (1)  
TF 1.4a (1)

BASE NAME	VIC
BASRAH AIR STATION	<b>BASRAH</b>
SHAIBAH LOG BASE	<b>BASRAH</b>
UMM QASR PORT	<b>UMMQASR</b>
TALLIL	<b>NASIRIYAH</b>
BUCCA	<b>UM QASR</b>



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1 4a

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