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10 November 2003

Memorandum for Record

Subject: Notes from General Abizaid's Trip to Iraq (4-8 NOV)

General: The purpose of this memorandum is to inform the staff of key issues and discussions during the Commander's visit to Iraq. It is for CENTCOM internal distribution only.

Summary of Top Issues:

- Need to reinstate and expand CERP funding. Counter-insurgency requires more carrots than sticks. Need to transfer salary payments to ministries to unburden CERP.
- Urgent need for reconciliation and a political alternative to the Baath to emerge from the Sunni community. Also need for additional Sunni representation on the GC, especially from Al Anbar province. Lack of reconciliation is causing great disaffection and fueling the insurgency.
- Unemployment as the primary source of strength for the insurgency. It is clear that security is interdependent with economic development.
- A failure to announce a plan for governance transition also fuels the insurgency and reinforces the perception that US wants to occupy/subjugate Iraq.
- Police are still woefully under-resourced. They need cars and communications.
- Continued failure of strategic communications, IO. Establishment of a satellite TV station should be a matter of urgent priority.
- Will need some funding immediately to fill the gap until supplemental dollars can be obligated. This is especially critical for the ICDC. Funding for activities for which CJTF-4 is the executive agent should come through CENTCOM.
- CPA has resources and insufficient capacity to allocate them properly; CJTF-4 has capacity and insufficient resources to apply.
 - There is a need to decentralize, but a reluctance to do so.
 - CPA under-manning and 90-day rotations do not permit an accurate appreciation of the situation and undermine ability to make progress.
- There is an urgent need to improve intelligence fusion and dissemination – especially in connection with interrogation reports.
- Severe shortage of kerosene is likely to have broad negative impact.
- Positive Developments:
 - Joint operations with police/ICDC and ICDC effectiveness.
 - Innovative tactics and offensive actions.

4 November: Counter-Insurgency Plan Briefing by CJTF-4

- Excellent briefing on COIN plan by C-5. Key will be execution and there are significant policy impediments to effective implementation: DeBaathification/Reconciliation policy, bringing to justice members of the former regime, public rollout on governance timeline (although now mandated by 15 December).
- General Abizaid noted that the challenge would be to accomplish critical tasks in a short period of time due to an "unprecedented desire for quick success."
- General Abizaid stressed the following: formation of ICDC brigades under CJTF-4 control, the need to shift WMD intel assets to COIN, development of an Iraqi intelligence architecture,

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and the formation and training of an Iraqi counter-insurgency force (Commander stated that this has progressed too slowly).

4 November: Meeting with 82nd Airborne Division

- CERP/Reconstruction: Woefully under-resourced. Lack of carrots to apply in counter-insurgency: 82nd has identified critical reconstruction projects that total 89 million dollars. Providing that money would be cost effective relative to protracted combat which is the likely alternative. Al Anbar province has received relatively little reconstruction money and Fallujah has received only two percent of those funds. BECTEL and others are not coming to Al Anbar due to the security situation.
- Nature of Insurgency: Believe that foreign fighter element is not large scale. Main element is former regime loyalists who pay criminals to carry out attacks. Unemployment is the most significant underlying cause of the violence or passive/active support for the enemy.
- Lack of Reconciliation with Sunnis: Consensus that this must happen now and could be tied to justice for those Baathists guilty of crimes. General A mentioned that there should be greater Sunni representation on the GC. (he later told Sheiks that he would press Ambassador Bremer to permit GC observers from Al Anbar).
- Detainee Exploitation and Dissemination of that Intelligence: Still broken.
- Need for greater ISR capability (1.4a, 1.4c, 1.4g Predator) and X-Ray devices along the border with 3ACR.
- Clerics who preach violence or take action against the coalition must be captured.
- Key is to get Iraqis to join us in the solution to the problem (1.4c ICDC). (separately someone told me that the population is alienated, in large measure due to what they perceive as arbitrary detentions).
- Vitally important for a political alternative to the Baath to emerge in the Sunni community (this is tied to reconciliation).
- Tactical operations: Clear from this discussion that our units are far from passive although we do a poor job of communicating our offensive and active defensive actions that are preempting many attacks.

5 Nov: Meeting of the Commander, Central Command with Commander, CJTF-4 and Divisional Commanders:

- **CERP:** This is the most successful initiative in Iraq and it is woefully under-funded. Some divisions will not meet salary obligations if they do not receive money very soon. Reconstruction projects (key carrot to apply in counter-insurgency) no longer a tool that commander can apply. All are adamant that this program must be restored to former levels of funding. Many of commanders' most successful programs are wholly dependent on CERP. Transferring routing salary payments to the ministries (supposed to have occurred already) would alleviate much of the burden on CERP and commanders. CERP will be particularly critical during the transition period associated with force rotation.
- **Reconciliation/DeBaathification:** Lack of a means of a reconciliation is fueling the insurgency and undermining civil society (e.g. teachers are excluded under the current policy).
- **Police:** The failure to provide logistical support (radios, cars) is a severe problem that is undermining Iraqization. Police training at the national level is far too slow (1st trainee comes out in March). This is a source of frustration for all commanders. MG Odierno stated that "we cannot turn over the police to CPA." CPA lacks the capacity to take on the mission. All

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new personnel in Ministry of Interior means that CPA officials are completely unaware of the situation outside of Baghdad.

➤ **Intelligence:**

- Too many stovepipes in intelligence.
- Need to shift ISG capacity to the insurgency problem.
- OGA (COS) Assessment: Insurgency is primarily Baathist. Baathists before were covert, pervasive, brutal, and in power. Now only difference is that they are no longer in power. They have reestablished their networks and are gaining confidence. Large portion of the populace is sitting on the fence and are intimidated by the Baathists. Feels that we will "not get through this" unless we break the Baathist networks and he believes that there is C2 that we are not seeing. Just got more analysts – promised better targeting analysis.
- Need to improve SSE on foreign fighters – get them back to OGA for interrogation.
- Detainee exploitation and dissemination of that intelligence is still broken.
- Need to integrate better non-intel sources such as civil affairs.
- THTs are heroes of the battlefield.

➤ **Information Operations/Strategic Communications:** Was described as a "total failure" and there was general agreement. Population of Samarra, for example, did not know that there was a reward for Saddam. No alternative to Al Jazeera.

➤ **CPA Issues:** Overall frustration that CPA is centralizing control, but lacks the capacity to gain an appreciation for local conditions or to manage projects effectively. Also, believe that some at CPA see the insurgency as a security problem that must be solved before economic and political development can advance; they do not recognize that these areas are interdependent and must be pursued simultaneously.

- Policy decisions threaten to undo the work that units have done to establish local and provincial governments. Division commanders say that they do not have the time to go through reappointment/re-election of new councils, mayors, and governors. Political development is well-advanced at the local and provincial levels. Division commanders are often surprised by CPA decisions that have significant military/security implications.
- Other policy decisions that influence security (and on which military is not consulted) include lifting of subsidies for key commodities.
- There is no continuity. Turnover means that CPA officials are always behind in their understanding of the situation. This is especially true in the Ministry of the Interior and explains some of the failures in connection with establishing the police.
- Division commanders perceive a desire to cut the military out at the local level. The problem is that the Governance Teams (GTs) have insufficient capacity to shoulder the responsibilities.
- CPA takes a long-term view and we have to demonstrate progress in the short term.
- CPA does not take into consideration tribal and religious factors (latest governance memo is an example).
- Governance Teams have the resources (dollars), but no capacity to disburse the funds. When the supplemental funding becomes available, CPA will not be prepared to execute.
- CPA has to get local leaders involved. Governing Council has no incentive to do this.
- Lack of an "economic campaign plan" is a major concern. Unemployment most pressing issue with security implications.

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- **SOF Missions and Command Relationships:** Desire to reassess SOF missions. As ICDC is built and during the transition to the next rotation, SOF priority may shift to coalition support team operations.
- **Funding:** Need to authorize money from the supplemental ASAP. Need to provide alternative funding as a stopgap where necessary (related to CERP/salary issues, above). CPA may be woefully unprepared to deal with the disbursement of funds in the supplemental. CPA is allowing Ministries to disburse the funds with guarantees unresponsiveness and may result in expenditures not in our interest (Iraqis spending US taxpayers' dollars). Commanders, who have the best appreciation of the situation, will be cut out of the process.
- **Kerosene:** A shortage of kerosene is likely to increase disaffection and undermine security.
- **General:** General A said that the key issue is "how we pursue a counter-insurgency strategy that allows us to simultaneously break Sunni resistance and bring the Sunni community back into the fold."
- **The Outlook/Plans:**
 - Kerosene shortage is a severe problem. CPA no sense of urgency in addressing.
 - January to March is seen as a period of high risk. Force rotation, decreasing CERP.
 - We have about three months to demonstrate progress and integrate the Sunnis.
 - MG Petraeus felt that it was essential that a division or corps artillery headquarters take on the 101st mission. A division tactical command post can not handle the scope of responsibility in his sector.
 - ICDC is a great success, needs to be expanded.
 - All commanders dead-set against allowing any factions to stand up militias. Iraqi security must be expanded under ICDC, NIA, police.
- **PAO:** MG Odierno frustrated that his press releases are filtered and sometimes do not make them out (CJTF-4 look for action).

6-7 Nov: Visit to 101st Airborne Division

- **General Petraeus' Key Points:**
 - In race for hearts and minds of the Iraqi people.
 - Need to keep commanders' access to CERP.
 - Must pursue process for reconciliation.
 - Must capture/kill enemy without creating more enemy.
 - Need to reduce unemployment and resolve property disputes.
 - Must decentralize authorities and resources from Baghdad, centralization will lead to stagnation.
 - Need a satellite TV station to compete with Al Jazeera.
 - Kerosene shortage serious problem.
- **Visit to FOB Q-West (Qayyarah Airfield):**
 - Not getting information back from interrogations.
 - ICDC positive, but some deserters. ICDC pay too low [note: should revisit all salaries – police, ICDC, NIA, FPS].
 - CERP: not doing any reconstruction because of lack of funds and failure of ministries to assume responsibility for salaries.
 - Employment top issue and basis for insurgency.
 - Going from 33,000 troops to 6,000 in 101st sector. High risk. Need to get Iraqi capacity built.

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- **General Abizaid Guidance:** Gave an update on the “five I’s” and stressed the need for a clean handoff to replacement forces. He stressed this during visits to each division/brigade.
- **CAG Conversation with 101st J2:**
 - FRL have loose C2, sees loose alliance between AI and FRL. AI may be providing pay and logistics for attacks.
 - 4 BDEs of FRL in Mosul (14-45 personnel per “bde”).
 - Maybe ten cells of 7-10 per cell of AI.
 - Having good effect on enemy due to Iraqi tips. Population sees progress (why CERP is critical).
 - Links between FRL and Muslim Brotherhood. Most dangerous COA is if disparate factions solidify ties and C2.
 - FRLs seem to be adapting Hamas/Islamic Jihad tactics and techniques.
 - TOA period will be time of maximum risk; enemy may take advantage [note: may be prudent to employ MEU or DRB during this time – cover TOA with a major operation as 101st moves out]
 - Top issues: CERP, CPA with resources but no capacity to employ them effectively, reconciliation.
 - Believes that the Shamar Tribe knows where Saddam is.

6 Nov: Visit to 4ID.

- **Key points from visit to 1/4ID (Tikrit):**
 - Enemy becoming weaker, may be experiencing shortage of effective weapons, ammo. Shift to IEDs. 76 attacks in July; 145 in October. Enemy employing dummy IEDs. IEDs employed to get IO effect. 70% of IEDs are interdicted (increasing info from people to police/ICDC).
 - ICDC great success, need uniforms for ICDC. Will build brigade C2 of ICDC with Iraqi officers. 4ID organization for ICDC: 3 infantry battalions; special weapons battalion; supply and transport bn; intelligence unit; C2 structure. [Gen A comment: have to inculcate civil control; cannot have a thug militia]. Need ICDC money immediately.
 - Police progress uneven. Problem in Bayji—4 police chiefs in 4 mos. Leadership is key to success in police [note: which is why military must have responsibility – only ones in position to assess leadership].
 - Need to get #1 for psychological effect. People still fear him and Baath return.
 - “Musical chairs” in Ministry of Interior.
 - Lack of reconciliation is a big problem – example of schoolteachers. Alienating the population.
 - CAG observation: After several visits, this brigade appears as the model for how to fight this counter-insurgency. They have excellent capability for intel fusion and mapping enemy organization. They are conducting continuous reconnaissance in their AO. Anti-IED techniques are innovative (have found about 70% of IEDs before they are exploded). They are adept at applying carrots and sticks. Integration/training of ICDC very effective. Folders developed on enemy captured is a model for all as is their detention facility. Need to capture/disseminate lessons from this highly effective and disciplined unit.
 - General A guidance/comments: Need to get #1/#6/FRL. Sees increasing FRL/extremist cooperation. Level of resistance in Sunni areas has increased – need moderate Sunni political influence/reconciliation. Again emphasized handover.

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➤ **Visit to 3/4ID (Balad Airfield)**

- Believe that enemy may be attacking in areas away from their homes (mobile teams) to avoid detection/reprisals.
- Decreases in enemy activity except in Samarra (think population being agitated by small anti-coalition group).
- See loose links between foreign and local belligerents. Young criminals conducting attacks for \$.
- Police equipment critically short.

7 Nov: Visit to 2/2 ACR, Sadr City:

- Need resources for police.
- Sadr: need IO campaign to portray him as criminal (occupying mosques for \$). Strategy of marginalizing/capturing his lieutenants is working. Sadr is putting his father forward to use his image/reputation.
- Two main battlegrounds in this fight: intelligence and perception.
- Political development and economic development not keeping pace with military efforts.
- Assyrian Democratic Movement valuable source on Fedayeen.
- Believe terrorists associated with AQ, have seen no AI.
- IO is enemy's focus.
- Finding IEDs, good trend. Iraqi police and informants.
- ICDC extraordinarily effective. Used for cordon around targets. People cheer/welcome them. Organization of choice for crowd control.

7 NOV: Meeting with Sunni Leaders, Ar Ramadi:

- One Sheik blurted out the following points at the outset: Coalition created the violence from getting rid of the Army, unemployment, deBaathification.
- General Abizaid's opening comments.
 - Believes in the future of Iraq; must find a way to bring prosperity and freedom to all. Iraq should be most prosperous Arab nation in the world.
 - In South and North, no problems and prosperity coming; even progress in Tikrit.
 - Summarized sacrifices and resources committed by US in building new Iraq.
 - Question is whether Al Anbar province will share in the new Iraq.
 - Said he is here to solve the problem; wants to make it better.
 - He is a soldier; not afraid of war. If war is necessary to bring control, war is what we will have. Will not be driven out by casualties. Gave orders to 82nd to cordon off Fallujah and conduct offensive, declaring it an "enemy city." Noted that American soldiers are killed and people in the city celebrated. Said that 82nd commander asked him not to conduct an attack on Fallujah. 82nd commander had told him that the problems were jobs and not understanding the political process and our intentions.
 - Gen A said he is worried that Arabs in the Sunni community are not participating in the future of the New Iraq. He asked: "Do you think that you can be successful by not participating when others are gaining prosperity and power?" He said that he talks to Arab businessmen and they are waiting to invest money, but they cannot because of the security situation.
 - Gen A reassured them that "we do not want to tell you your religion, what to believe, what not to believe."

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- He said that he would not stand soldiers being killed by members of the Baath that will never come back. He stated that there will be a new Iraqi government and asked them to be part of it. He said that he would be patient, but he needed their help – “tell us what we need to do so we can move forward.”
- He thanked them for coming and listening and noted that “in the old days, no general would have come here to talk. Killing would have already started.”
- The following were the comments by various Sheiks and mullahs:
 - Sheik #1 (Majd?): He said that employment and the disbanding of the old Army were the two biggest causes of the violence. Said that 90 percent of the problem was unemployment. He also said that the lack of security on the borders allowed foreign fighters to come in.
 - Council Member: Security is the basis for everything. Said that Iraqis were “victims of international problems” such as enemies in the region. He said that the open borders were allowing goods that are needed domestically to leave the country and that there was significant inflation due to the security situation. He said that the open borders have made a Iraq a gathering place for anyone who wants to fight Americans. “Since regime fell there has been no security, no law, no government. What can people do?” He was also concerned about Iraq dividing along ethnic/sectarian boundaries.
 - Mayor of Fallujah: Fallujah has more than 300,000 people. If one in one hundred makes trouble, that is 3,000 people. Claimed that those conducting attacks are “not from Fallujah or Al Anbar.”
 - Sheik #2 (did not appear to be respected by others): Said that they wanted to get rid of the regime after 35 years of dictatorship and wars. Said inflation and unemployment is causing dire conditions. Said that open borders resulted in critical commodities and goods leaving the country. He said “people are confused about when a new government is coming in.” He said that “90 percent of the problem is that there is no military organization.” He said that there is no responsiveness from the GC and suggested actions to stop smuggling, a recall of the Army and security institutions under the governor’s control.
 - Sheik #3 (Basera?): Said that this time wanted to work seriously with the coalition (probably referring to the previous meeting with the Sheiks on August 7). He said that there were three issues: unemployment, need for good police, and Wahhabists/AI/AQ terrorists. He said that they are the beneficiary of the coalition and have to protect the coalition. He alleged that people “from the South” were infiltrating and causing trouble. He said that religious people need to speak out from the mosques to discourage violence.
 - Man in western dress: Blamed deBaathification policy for the violence. “There were 3 million Baathists and we need their expertise.” He suggested that bringing on Baathists would allow us to attack them “from within.”
 - Sheik #4: Said Coalition forces should leave the cities. Said Iraqis would handle security. Need to stop smuggling. Suggested that a committee be formed to work with the disbanded Army. Said that we need to bring back the Iraqi Army and Baathists who did not commit crimes. He suggested using Iraqi forces for raids and releasing detainees who had not committed a crime. He suggested giving all detainees to Iraqi forces. He said that there should be a departure date for Coalition forces and suggested that the date be announced on “satellite TV.” Asked for the release of several detainees including the health minister of Al Anbar. Need people from Al Anbar in the GC. Said that there had to be some relationship between Al Anbar and Baghdad. He said that he worried that the

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Army would become Shia which would "give Iraq to the Shia." He asked for help for universities and schools.

- Sheik from Al Qaim: Cited open borders. He said that he hoped pressure would decrease on the people, but it had increased. He said that the people needed arms and weapons to defend against Syrians and others. He asked an Imam to tell a story.
- Imam from Al Qaim: He said that the people have long been educated that the US was against Islam. He said it is offensive to see tanks in their town. Asked to have 3ACR withdraw from the city. Alleged that US soldiers went into a mosque and "tore" a Koran.

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- General Abizaid: He said that he would do the following:
 - Meet with them in 2-3 weeks to see if there was an improvement in security.
 - Form a committee of former Iraq (no intel or 4b, 1.4d)
 - Build a brigade from the area (ICDC), initially under the command of 82nd ABN.
 - Endorse (with Amb Bremer) observers to the GC.
 - Improve relationship with the police.
 - Conduct operations with police unless attacked.
 - Move to improve the economy.
 - Make border police larger.
 - Said he is ready to move forces out of cities, but not until people demonstrate that they are ready to cooperate with us.
 - Wants to improve relationships with locals and would welcome those who could teach our soldiers about culture and religion.
 - If there are foreign fighters, tell us where they are and we will eliminate them.
 - Will review names of people detained and Sheiks can petition for release of some individuals.
 - Know that there are foreign fighters. Also know that there are Baathists attacking.
- General Abizaid said that he wanted them to do the following:
 - If there are foreign fighters, tell us where they are and we will eliminate them.
 - Work together with Coalition to solve this problem (Baathists and foreign fighters and bring prosperity.
- At closing one man shouted out against the deBaathification policy and stated that there were no teachers as a result.

8 NOV: Basra

- Approach to ICDC: Forming a police support unit.
- Indicated that the Shia fear that we will leave.

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