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J2015/7

20 Oct 04

CDS**CJO****SBMR-I HAULDOWN REPORT – LT GEN McCOLL****INTRODUCTION**

1. This report covers the period Apr-Oct 04. The six months have included the Najaf uprisings in April and August, and the emergence of Fallujah as an insurgent stronghold. The multi-faceted insurgency has developed in coherence, strength and sustainability. The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) handed over sovereign responsibility to the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG), on 28 Jun, and the UK thereby ceased to be a joint occupying power. The Iraqi National Congress was created, in reasonably representative form. As sovereignty passed to Iraq we also saw the transfer of US primacy from DOD to the State Department. The Combined Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF7) became the Multi National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) concurrently separating the tactical Corps from the strategic Force functions. Campaign direction has shifted from war fighting to that of a counter-insurgency campaign, which seeks to coordinate all lines of operation. The formation of the Multinational Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I) has given the development of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) a renewed emphasis. As the period closes operational activity is increasingly set within the context of the elections scheduled for Jan 05.

POL MIL ENVIRONMENT

2. **Background.** The CPA, CJTF (7) pol/mil relationship was hampered from the outset by inadequate post war planning. It was also directly affected by a prevailing short-term agenda with close supervision and intervention from the Pentagon. The full implications of this influence are difficult to judge with certainty but it undoubtedly affected the two key decisions at the start of the insurgency; disbandment of the Army and de-Ba'athification. It also directly influenced the arrest and treatment of Mustapha Yacoubi, the closure of the Al Hawsa newspaper, and the assault into Fallujah following the Blackwater killings, which triggered the uprising in April. Since the transfer of power, the emergence of a sovereign government, the passage of responsibility from Defense to State, and the increased focus of MNF-I on strategic issues, the climate of decision-making has changed. The process is now more consultative and sensitive to the broader pol/mil implications, within Iraq, regionally and internationally. The dialogue between the political elements, IIG/Embassy, and MNF-I has improved significantly.

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3. US Embassy Relationship. The US Embassy is a key actor. It is now represented at the Strategic Planning Group and Commander's Assessment and Synchronization Board, and has been included in all the Operational Planning Teams run by Strategy Plans and Assessment (SPA). It is important to get US Embassy "buy-in" on all major or contentious pieces of strategic work, in order to ensure support from the economic line of operation, which they largely fund, and that broader political coordination is included in the debate.

4. Relationships. Close and productive relationships have clearly been formed between Gen Casey, Amb Negroponte and PM Allawi. HMA, Edward Chaplin enjoys both access and influence. There is a need to spread this form of partnership to lower levels: and specifically to get the MOD and MOI co-operating more closely together, with MNF-I, and particularly with MNSTC-I. The work in hand to develop a coherent force generation plan which builds upon MNSTC-I programmes, but assimilates MOD, MOI and PM Allawi's aspirations will be a key step in this process.

5. US Political Control. Notwithstanding the positive comments above HQ MNF-I remains institutionally disinclined to present bad news. It is subject to political control and direction from Washington in a way that a comparable UK headquarters is not.

This has two principal implications:

- Being outside the US system, UK officers have a freedom to express opinions and report unpalatable information in a way that their US colleagues often feel they cannot. The objectivity and input of UK officers is therefore recognized, and is valuable to the Force as a whole.

INSURGENCY

6. Nationalist in character. The US labels the insurgents as "Anti-Iraqi Forces". This is misleading. The insurgents are an extreme manifestation of the national pride felt by the overwhelming majority of the public, who feel a deep-seated desire to "liberate" Iraq from foreign "occupation". Two recent polls, for example, indicate 40% and 43% support by the Iraqi public, for attacks on Coalition forces. MNF-I will never be popular in Iraq. But these nationalist impulses are not inherently unhelpful. Whilst "consent" to the presence of MNF-I

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will not be achievable there is strong support for the democratic process. UK's regional interests would be well served by a strong and stable Iraq. And even amongst the insurgents, these nationalist impulses can be redirected and turned to the Coalition's benefit: provided MNF-I does not outstay its welcome when the UN mandate ends with the elections scheduled for Dec 05. A decision on, and announcement of, when we intend to leave would do much to mitigate the risk of the Coalition remaining the rationale for insurgency.

7. United by the MNF-I. The diverse groups that make up the insurgency (Baathists, Salafists, Shi'a, Foreign Fighters etc) have little in the way of shared ideology. They co-operate at the tactical level purely to be rid of MNF-I. Exploiting the inherent tensions between the groups can fragment this insurgency. This has already been seen, to some extent, in Fallujah. What MNF-I categorically must not do, whether by long-term presence or ill-judged and overly kinetic tactical operations, is to provide the common focus that unites disparate groups behind one broadly-based nationalist insurgency, with which MNF-I has neither the force levels or the sustainability to cope.

8. Fuelled by High Unemployment. Particularly in the Shia slums of Baghdad and Basra, the Coalition's inability to wield the economic weapon effectively is a major reason for continued levels of insurgency. As of 4 Oct, only \$2.2Bn of the \$12.9Bn IRRF funds had been spent, and the security situation is only partly to blame.

The high proportion of project funds routinely spent on security, the costs of which have tripled in recent months, further reduces their economic impact. An attempt was made to adjust the predominance of the reconstruction projects, away from large-scale infrastructure that will only achieve an impact in the long term, to projects that will have a perceived effect in the critical period of the next 14 months. This was unsuccessful and consequently the impact of the \$12.9Bn, on the campaign will be limited.

9. Underpinned to Varying Degrees by Islam. Islam is the second unifying factor that separates the insurgencies from the infidel. There are strong tensions between its various strands but there are also signs of groups coalescing to have an effect despite their religious differences.

10. Outlook. All objective metrics, (number of attacks, Coalition, ISF and civilian casualties etc) indicate that the insurgency is increasing in intensity and lethality, and is sustainable in the medium term.

It has all the classic elements an insurgency requires to be sustainable: popular support, secure base areas, porous borders, ample supplies of cash, weapons and ammunition, and the easily understood aim of "liberation". For all these reasons, a degree of insurgency will remain a feature of Iraqi politics, even after MNF-I has long since

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withdrawn. We will need to be clear about what level of violence is acceptable given these conditions; it will however be more than one would have hoped for a year ago.

CAMPAIGN DIRECTION

11. Campaign Plan. CJTF-7 and MNF-I operations prior to the Transfer of Sovereignty (TOS) were hampered by the lack of an overarching Campaign Plan, setting the conceptual framework for the conduct of the counter-insurgency campaign. The approach in the HQ was overwhelmingly 'kinetic' until well after TOS at the end of Jun. A small team of three British officers, led by /

was formed in Apr to draft this plan, which was signed off by the Commanding General (CG) on 5 Aug 04. Whatever its original authorship, it is now most emphatically his plan. It covers the period of Partnership, from the TOS on 28 Jun to constitutional elections in Dec 05. In this period, MNF-I will develop four Lines Of Operation (LOO); Security, Governance, Economic Development and Communicating, to neutralize the insurgency, generate capable ISF, and create a security environment that permits the completion of the UNSCR 1546 process on schedule. Detailed structures for the partnership between MNF-I, Iraqi Ministries and ISF have also been produced (again by UK officers), along with an assessment metric to evaluate progress against the Campaign Plan (with UK operational analysts deploying to help conduct this 'niche' work). The first assessment made under this process was briefed to the CG in early Sep. The Campaign Plan's assessment process is now providing a "feedback loop" under which progress can be evaluated and priorities adjusted accordingly.

12. Partnership. The period until Jan 06 is intended to be a phase of partnership, in which Iraqi institutions and security forces, guided initially by MNF-I, increasingly take the lead in security issues. But the nature of this partnership is already changing. Much of this is positive. Iraqi Ministers and Ministries are becoming increasingly assertive, which implies that they are taking responsibility. It also means however, that they are constraining the application of Coalition military power. Iraqis have now twice "reined in" planned Coalition operations in North Babil and Samarra. This new and unfamiliar constraint is a source of frustration to many US officers, who resent the Iraqi veto on their proposals, but it will be an increasingly important feature of the Iraqi / MNF-I partnership as the IIG grows in confidence. We need to ensure that this growth in growing confidence is matched by a commensurate increase in their capacity and capability to take responsibility.

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14. The Current State of the Campaign. My analysis of the current state of the campaign, is as follows:

- There is no sign that the insurgency is diminishing in intensity¹. On the contrary; it now appears sustainable in the medium term. We assess that a degree of insurgency will remain a feature of Iraqi politics, even after MNF-I has long since withdrawn.
- MNF-I is currently "holding the line" (with force levels that are barely adequate and at considerable cost) to allow IIG and ISF capabilities to develop and for the other LOO to gain traction.
- Economic benefits are slow to come through and are not matching the high expectations of the Iraqis. It is now too late for the Economic LOO to deliver decisive effect in time to influence the Jan 05 Elections.
- STRATCOM is not having sufficient impact, either within Iraq or domestically in US/UK. The "information weapon" is therefore not being exploited to its potential. For all the talk of "Drumbeat", MNF-I and more importantly the IIG has still to create the Drum.

For all these reasons, the emergence of a moderate, pro-Coalition transitional government from the Jan 05 Elections cannot be predicted with confidence.

15. Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Despite their limited numbers and state of training, ISF are even now capable of strategically significant impact. Their

¹ Weekly Attack Trends by Category 03 Jan – 16 Oct at Annex A

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deployment has an effect that Coalition troops cannot achieve. ISF have changed the dynamic in both Najaf and Samarra. They are therefore in great demand, and there is a risk, referred to in the Campaign Plan as a "rush to failure", that their premature committal to operations, which are still beyond their capacity, could irreparably dent their confidence. The risk is exacerbated by the understandable impatience of the IIG, supported to some extent in both Washington and London. The true test for ISF will be whether they can achieve real and effective Regional (Provincial) Control by 31 Jul 05.² In the interim we not only need to build the battalions, brigades and divisions but also the C2, logistics and intelligence structures to support them.

16. Progress: Apr – Oct 04. As at 7 Oct 04 about 106,000 Iraqi Security Forces had been trained and equipped, against an eventual target of over 250,000 by mid 06. Progress over the 6 months since Apr 04 has however been uneven, continually illustrating that ISF capability building is anything but straightforward and nothing can be guaranteed. The formula for building the baseline capability of police and Army units was adjusted in April, following analysis of the setbacks at Fallujah and Najaf. Subsequent success at Najaf in Aug 04, by IPS and Army² alike, demonstrated that the revised selection and training regime, combined with precisely targeted equipping of the police forces, works under the right circumstances. The IIF is sound, as are the SOF and those ING units where the MSCs have been diligent and inclusive in their recruiting and training programmes, particularly in MND(SE), although the latter remain ill-equipped. The nascent Iraqi planned and supervised Mech Bde is making very encouraging progress. Conversely, the deployment of 7th Bn Regular Army to Samarra in Sep 04, which was rushed, led to another predictable and predicted mass exodus of Iraqi troops, showing that there is still much to be done in terms of generating truly resilient forces, as well as coaching the Coalition in how best to manage the Iraqis and set them up for success. Command and control of the ISF by the two security sector Ministries is still decidedly immature and uneven, both conceptually and technically, although the MOD and JHQ are starting to show tangible signs of meaningful engagement in the campaign, following a concerted programme of education, training and mentoring. Staff planning capability in the MOI remains the most serious concern, and has prompted a course of tuition by the same team from UK JFHQ that engaged with the Iraqi JHQ in May 04. Equipment that had been delayed following the cancellation of the battalion sets contract in Feb 04, and its subsequent re-letting, is now flowing into the country at a rate that, ironically, threatens to overwhelm the fragile contractorised distribution system. This, combined with changes in the underlying assumptions for the IAF, namely a more expeditionary posture and the requirement to use the entire Army in IS operations, has thrown the ISF's lack of organic sustainment capability into sharp relief. The gap has been recognized and will be filled by a programme to create

² By this stage the Army included the Iraqi National Guard (ING).

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CSS units and infrastructure that will not, however, be complete until mid 05 at the earliest.

17. Prognosis. Success with the ISF contribution to the COIN campaign remains to be proven. In purely mechanical terms, turning out trained and equipped civil and military security force units has become relatively routine, and barring further setbacks, or injudicious use of the ISF through hasty or premature committal of new units to operations, the MNSTC-I leadership judges that the targets for the Jan 05 election period can still be met. The critical path for the IPS will be meeting the sheer scale of the equipping and training requirement, as well as the continued identification of tough, committed police chiefs. There are grounds for optimism, but no police force could operate in the current levels of violence without relying on the support of the Army, including the ING, to provide a secure framework and surge capability. In that respect, the Army's capacity to defeat the more violent elements of the insurgency needs to be more assured³. The basic Regular Army (non-IIF) selection and training formula requires further refinement in the light of the disappointing AWOL figures arising from the recent Samarra deployment. Arguably, to achieve the same resilience shown by the IIF units in Thawra and Najaf during Aug and Sep 04, the entire Regular Army would need to be converted to IIF. This uplift could not however, be achieved without some lengthening of the programme, to absorb the additional training included in the IIF syllabus, and any such delay in the graduation of units might jeopardize the achievement of a critical mass of IAF prior to the election period. Looking longer term, to the requirement for Regional Control by mid 05, the critical path is likely to be the establishment of a viable national C2 system. There will certainly need to be a continuing emphasis on accelerating progress in the development of C2 procedures and systems at every level from national to divisional/regional, as well as further refinement of the procedures for cooperative planning between the Iraqi Ministries and the Coalition Forces. A more acute understanding of respective political and military pressures, strengths and weaknesses on either side of the CF/ISF partnership is also required. Following on from his recent visit to Washington and London PM Allawi has declared that he is unhappy, not only with the speed of force development, and the absence of "strike" forces, but also with the concept of the locally recruited ING. His view, shared by many Iraqis, is that the country needs a national army, an institution of which they can be proud. Exactly how these aspirations can be translated into practical reality remains to be seen, it may however offer the opportunity to post members of the ING nationally rather than locally, which would provide significant support in breaking the cycle of intimidation, which inevitably focuses on home and family.

³ The newly established IPS Civil Intervention Force is intended to take some of this load off the Army, but its dependability in the face of extreme violence can no more be guaranteed than the Army's and will not be known until the Force starts graduating at the end of 04.

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INFLUENCE

18. There are 30 nations deployed as part of the Coalition in Iraq. Other than the US the UK is the only contributor that seeks to exert influence in Theatre, to any significant extent, on the conduct of the military campaign. Other nations enjoy senior positions in the MNF-I but their contributions are largely limited to input to the process rather than influencing strategy and operational policy. The CDS Directive⁴ of June 04 identifies this influence as SBMR-I's main effort. The close working relationship between UK military, FCO in country, combined with the speed with which we can coordinate and deliver a message to US counterparts across government, is key to achieving effect. Over the last six months there have been a number of examples, covered elsewhere in this report, of the influence being brought to bear to adjust the conduct of the campaign in accordance with UK strategic objectives. The leverage we exert in Theatre is based upon a number of factors; the political capital invested, troop contribution (4.9% of the force), financial contribution, the quality of staff officers, and COIN expertise. We need however to protect our position, in the following three areas:

- Over the last six months there have been a number of unsuccessful requests to deploy UK resources beyond MND(SE). The most prominent of these was in May, when the Spanish withdrew from the Coalition, UK deployed a JFHQ Recce to scope an extension of MND(SE) to occupy An Najaf and Al Qadisiyah Provinces. The options ranged from HQ ARRC + Brigade to Brigade⁵. This generated an expectation with US allies of UK commitment and reinforcement. When it was clear that UK would not assume wider responsibility but only reinforce MND(SE), 1 AD had to redeploy into theatre to assume the AO. 1AD extracted after a 3-month extension, and again the MNC-I hoped that UK would consider assuming wider responsibility in the south. However this was discounted⁶ and MNC-I rebalanced forces within theatre, accepting that risk would be carried in MND(CS). This risk was realised in Aug/Sep with the Muqtada Militia insurgency into An Najaf and Kufa and consequent destabilisation of the security situation. None of the requests rejected have been decisive in their own right but each has chipped away at the UK/US relationship.

⁴ CDS Directive to SBMR-I Edition 2 dated 25 Jun 04. "Your main effort is to shape the policy, planning and conduct of MNF-I military operations, in partnership with the IIG and UN, in accordance with UK strategic objectives".

⁵ PJHQ/5/8135/12/1 An Najaf And Al Qadisiyah – A UK Response To The Us Request For Additional Forces In Iraq dated 4 May 04.

⁶ D/JtCts/J3/Iraq Sustaining Op Telic Post- Transition dated 2 Jul 04. "Our engagement in Baghdad will remain important but, whenever possible, we should focus our efforts on MND(SE)". "That the UK should be prepared to support the IIG/MNF in MND(CS) for small scale operations of immediate need, with clear aims and of short duration. We should, however, avoid framework/ground holding roles outside MND(SE)".

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- The frustration that the UK has felt at the slow and chequered progress of ISF generation has been understandable. Our contribution outside MND(SE) has, however been limited (aside from helpful training team activity) to advice to US colleagues who are themselves frustrated and doing all that they can to translate the \$5bn they are investing into security capability, whilst reconciling the somewhat turbulent aspirations of the IIG. Within MND(SE) the flow of equipment to ING and IPS from US suppliers has been painfully slow, a problem compounded by the prioritization of issue based on the prevailing security situation across the country. There has recently been an initiative, which has yet to deliver effect that would allow UK resources to support the equipping of the ISF within the UK area; this is to be welcomed and is perhaps overdue. Clearly resources that could be made available for rapid deployment forces across Theatre would address the areas of particular concern to the PM Allawi and highlighted by the UK.
 - Our contribution to the regeneration of infrastructure and the economy are welcome but could be delivered more visibly and effectively. GOC MND(SE) has authority to approve Quick Impact Projects up to £50k. Taking the most recent expansion of the QIPs budget by £10m (again welcome) as an illustration he would have to consider, approve and then monitor 200 separate projects to disperse these funds. Given the staff effort required this risks being neither quick nor of real impact. Any attempt to apply the funds in more substantial and potentially more effective projects, requires the involvement of successive levels of scrutiny within the MoD or the Treasury, with the inevitable requirement for staff effort and delay in achieving effect. This is latterly being reviewed but change is necessary and overdue. It is interesting to compare this situation with the delegation to GOC MND(SE) by the US for dispersing CERPS. Here he has a budget of £25m and can approve individual projects himself to a value of \$500k. His US contracts officer can usually let a contract within a week, with the work commencing within four weeks. More broadly DFID's Charter requires them to attempt to alleviate poverty worldwide, and therefore promotes efforts in the direction of long-term support and capacity building, at the expense of short/medium term assistance. Thus support to the intent of the UK Government policy is diminished by an inability to focus on today's challenges. An example of this is the DFID backed contribution to the UN Trust Fund, which has ceded the ability to direct UK resources without generating to date, any appreciable effect.
19. The degree of influence that the UK is able to exert upon US policy in Theatre, and more widely, is not completely dependant on the extent of our military and financial commitment, but it is substantially affected by it. Our wish to contribute to campaign direction beyond the boundaries of MND(SE) needs to

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be visibly supported by a reasonable level of commitment and participation if we are to retain credibility. There may not always be pressure from Washington to London to reinforce this perspective, but increasingly strategic and operational decisions are being made in Theatre. This in-Theatre impact is of increased importance now that MNF-I is a 4* command and the direction of the campaign is increasingly emanating from the dialogue between the IIG and the MNF-I in Baghdad.

THE FUTURE

20. The current Campaign Plan covers the period up to and including the first constitutional elections in Dec 05. This is the natural "culminating point" of all MNF-I's LOO as the political process matures, the ISF capacity-building programme is completed, elections take place, and the economic impact of \$18.4Bn supplemental is finally felt. Although the insurgency will not be defeated, it may by then be written down to the point at which it can be handled adequately by ISF. On completion of the electoral process, when all the strands have come together, MNF-I's mandate under UNSCR 1546 also expires. On this basis the natural end of MNF-I's deployment is withdrawal in 06.

21. There are many potential benefits from announcing this intention early. Doing so would undercut the perception, held by many Iraqis, that MNF-I is an occupation force with no intention of leaving. It would boost the electoral prospects of West-leaning political parties in the Jan 05 elections; and hence reduce the chances of premature ejection in 2005. It would also provide an additional incentive (if any is required) for the UN to make a success of elections. Furthermore it would give impetus to capacity building and efforts to establish Iraqi control. It would play well with UK domestic opinion and could help relationships in Europe on the issue of Iraq. Most importantly, it would demonstrate to all audiences clearly that MNF-I is adhering to the international mandate of UNSCR 1546; enhancing the Coalition's legitimacy.

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23. Any end-state that envisages a continued Coalition presence after the spring of 06 (allowing time to withdraw) would require either a new UN mandate, or the consent of the Iraqi Government under bilaterally negotiated arrangements. It is at this point that the national goals of Coalition members may diverge. No firm decisions on the long-term US presence have been made, but some US planning at least envisages a long-term basing strategy. Current UK planning does not. As such there is, therefore, a pressing need to define UK's long-term end state in the region, and to accept that this may differ from that of the US. If a decision is made that UK's national interest lies alongside that of the US, that decision must be taken in the expectation that any US/UK forces in Iraq will continue to be a target and spur for insurgency for as long as they remain.

24. Whatever the long-term goal, UK should be prepared to exert maximum effort for the remaining period of the UNSCR 1546 mandate. This may include; extending the boundaries of the UK divisional area, the maintenance of current troop levels throughout 05 (smaller does not equal safer), the temporary reinforcement of MND(SE) to cover the election periods, the front-loading of capability-building programmes, and the construction of a regional security policy. We should pay particular attention to the generation of a robust C2 capacity and the intelligence architecture, with which the Iraqis can conduct a long-term counter insurgency campaign.

CONCLUSION

25. Iraq's many natural advantages lead one to be optimistic. It has natural resources; oil, water, and agricultural land in abundance. The population is essentially secular, potentially pro-Western in outlook, and they appear keen for democracy⁷. Coupled to all this is the fact that the IIG and ISF are increasing in capability by the day, if only in small incremental steps⁸.

26. Many uncertainties exist however, with Iraq remaining in the grip of an increasingly violent insurgency. In the eyes of many Iraqis, the IIG lacks legitimacy. The economy is struggling under the burden of substantial historic under investment and heavy national debt. The economic benefits, which most Iraqis expected to follow the liberation, are proving elusive. The impact of western influence on the elections, in terms of them not being accepted as delivering an Iraqi owned outcome, is unclear. For all these reasons, the outcome of the elections scheduled for 31 Jan 05 cannot be predicted with confidence.

27. There remains a risk that the campaign may yet end in strategic failure. The Jan 05 elections, even if successfully conducted on time, could produce a

⁷ In two recent polls of over 4000 Baghdad residents, 93% and 89% respectively intended to vote

⁸ Expansion of Iraqi Security Forces – Jun 04 to Jun 06 at Annex B

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government that is unrepresentative, too fragmented to exercise effective control, or which demands an MNF-I withdrawal before the capacity-building programmes are complete. Any of these outcomes is a recipe for continued instability.

29. Ejection of the coalition in 05 would risk mission failure but the timing of planned withdrawal thereafter is critical. The danger of 'outstaying our welcome' and thus forfeiting the residual goodwill many Iraqis still feel towards the deponents of Saddam, is real and could well result in failure. In that respect there is much to commend a withdrawal in early 06 in accordance with the UN mandate. This is the natural political, legal and (if we do our job well) security culminating point.

30. If we are indeed to be committed to withdraw at that point, then we should seriously consider announcing that intention early. Any such announcement would undercut the insurgency, address public suspicion over MNF-I's long-term intentions, and reinforce the moderates of all hues. An announcement prior to the Jan 05 elections, which will set the political and security complexion of Iraq for 2005 and beyond, would be particularly beneficial and press the emergent political groups to compete on issues other than the removal of the Coalition.

31. Regrettably there is little appetite for this in either MNF-I or State. In theatre, the divergence in US and UK assumptions over long-term regional end-states is becoming increasingly apparent. Ever more overtly, US planning assumes some form of long-term US presence in Iraq. UK planning (at least to my knowledge) does not. There is now a pressing political need to define and articulate to Washington the UK's long-term regional intention, and its implications for our ongoing Coalition membership.

32. An intention to withdraw when the mandate expires need not undercut our commitment to MNF-I or GWOT; particularly if that commitment is underlined by a willingness to extend the boundaries of MND (SE), to deploy UK forces more widely across Theatre, and/or increase the UK commitment to Afghanistan in 2006. But if Ministers judge that UK's national interest lies in remaining alongside the US longer term, then we should be prepared for an extended counter-insurgency campaign.

33. Any failure to build adequate capacity in the interim would exacerbate the risk and would leave the first constitutionally elected Iraqi government with a severe threat from an entrenched insurgency, without the structures and security forces to combat it effectively. In the 14 remaining months of its mandate MNF-I has an opportunity to put in place the structures, forces and economic benefits that can ensure a successful outcome. This needs to be a whole-Government effort, with particular emphasis put on the MOI.

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34. This 14-month window also gives the opportunity to consider and establish appropriate security structures for the post MNF-I period. Iraq will continue to require some form of security guarantee, but this is increasingly likely to be provided under regional arrangements. Specifically, there is a chance for NATO to act geo-strategically for the first time since the end of the Cold War. Already engaged in a training capacity, it has the opportunity to expand this engagement into training and security linkages along the model of Partnership for Peace. The opportunity also exists for a stable Iraq to influence the stability and attitudes of other key regional actors; Syria and Jordan, in particular.

35. The US leadership of the campaign has benefited from the redefined strategic focus of the HQ MNF-I and the close working relationships between the key actors. The Campaign Plan is sound. The US military's interpretation of it will however, instinctively lead to decisive offensive action and kinetic solutions. The UK is in a unique position to offer an alternative perspective and to shape policy. The level of influence that we are able to exert is itself influenced by the level of troop and financial commitment that we make across the Theatre, not just in MND(SE).

36. There have already been two strategic errors in the post war campaign, the dissolution of the Army and de-Ba'athification. Lack of clarity on the timing of our intent beyond the Dec 05 elections would be a third. A clearly defined and articulated intent to withdraw once the mission had been completed in the spring of 06 provides the most effective way to separate the insurgents from the mass of the people.

Original signed

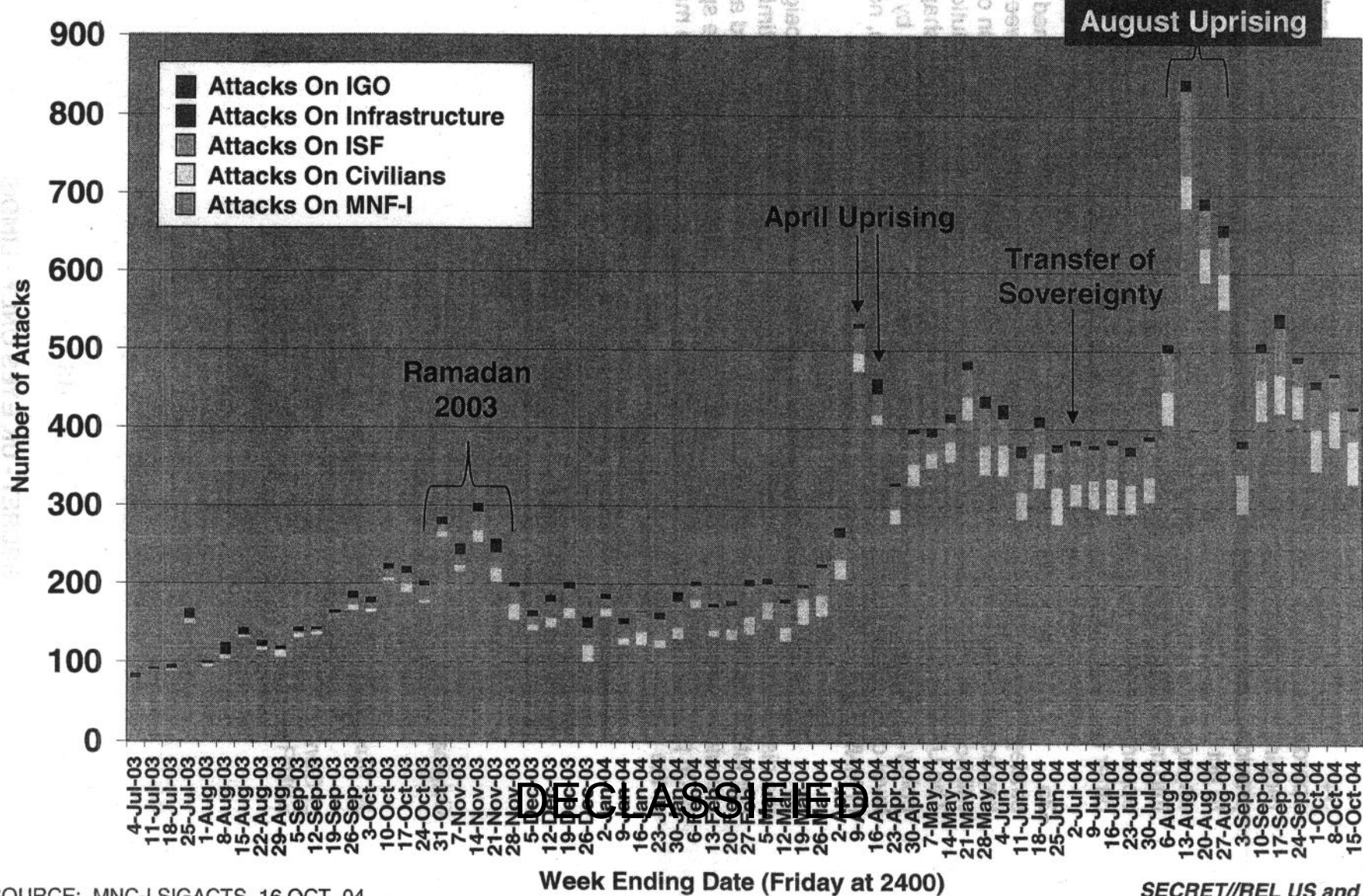
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WEEKLY ATTACK TRENDS BY CATEGORY, 16-MONTH TRENDS - 8 JUN 03 to 15 OCT 04



SOURCE: MNC-I SIGACTS 16 OCT 04

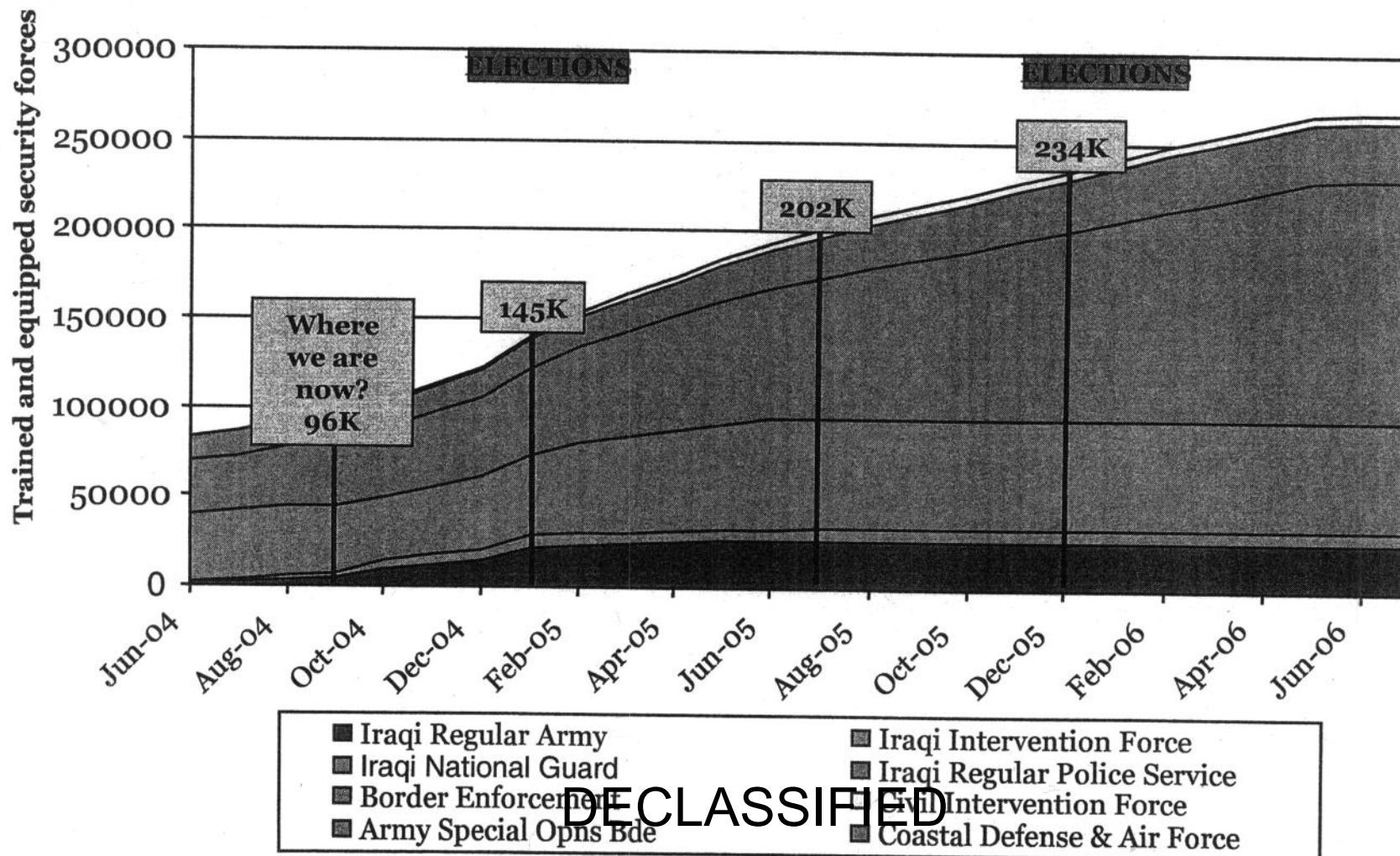
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Report

Annex B to SBMR- I Hauldown

EXPANSION OF IRAQI SECURITY FORCES



Does not include 74,000 in Facilities Protection Service