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20 January 2003

MA/DCJO(Ops)

Copy to:
ACOS J5
CIVSEC
DACOS J5(B)
Chief UK Embedded Planner with CJTF 4 (Des)

OP TELIC: TAKING FORWARD AFTERMATH PLANNING

I agreed to provide DCJO(Ops) with a proposed way forward on Phase IV work. This is set out below.

2. To date Phase IV planning has been focus almost entirely in Town. SPG has produced an Estimate on the military side and we understand that D Pol Planning and Sec(O) have been working with FCO on some of the higher level foreign policy work. So far little of the FCO work has been seen in PJHQ. In terms of engagement with the US, SMBA and SBLA have been contributing to the CENTCOM and CFLCC work respectively and during Ex INTERNAL LOOK the NCC helped CENTCOM to produce a framework (since endorsed by Abazaid) to frame their Phase IV thinking. DG Op Pol and the Policy Director have had several meetings at DoD (but apparently mainly focused at the high conceptual level)

The Common Document

3. The first issue that we have faced in doing this work is that many (senior) people have been generating ideas to contribute to the Phase IV planning, but to date without a conceptual framework in which to feed those ideas into. The result has been a sense of increasing concern that the issue is not being adequately gripped (which in turn has prompted further high level input). To address this and using a slightly modified version of CENTCOM's framework, we have formulated just such a framework and called it 'the Common Document' (attached at Annex A). The aspiration is that by the end of the staffing process, we will be able to produce a cross-Government agreed UK 'manifesto', from which we would be able to guide subsequent engagement with the US. It also provides a mechanism for systematically identifying issues that need to be resolved.

4. Even as a framework document at Annex A is not yet complete. I still need to copy it to SBMA and SBLA to pick up their comments. We also need to integrate any SPG work that has been done on this subject and cross-check it against UK peace-keeping doctrine. Nevertheless it does give an idea of what is proposed. As the first page set out it is in the first instance intended as a planning tool, a mechanism for pooling UK thinking on Aftermath. We should not be in the business of doing the thinking, just collecting it and making it coherent.

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5. In theory, the SRG have accepted the Common Document as the vehicle for Phase IV planning. However, it is not yet clear that they have fully appreciate how it might be used. The Common Document has yet to be briefed outside the Department, but will need FCO and DfID input to be any use. If it is to be used successfully getting buy-in will be essential.

Future work

6. Our work to date has been aimed at designing the document. Now it will be necessary to populate it and more importantly make sure it is a genuinely Common Document. Populating the document will begin with Col Everard and I visiting CENTCOM. In due course, we will be seeking to feed in existing SPG work and relevant FCO and DfID thinking. The currently proposed way forward is through a series of circulations, both to OGDs and the staff in the components, until all the data available has been collated.

7. Once that is populated to our satisfaction (and noting that it will need to remain a living document) we envisage starting to use it as a guide to our staffs in CENTCOM and CJFT 4; and the policy staffs in MOD in their engagement with the US at their various levels.

8. Once this work is complete we will hopefully have a single UK manifesto as a basis for engaging the US could be very helpful in assuaging Ministerial concerns about Aftermath. It is impossible to predict how event will unfold, or even how much success our staffs with CENTCOM and CJT4 and the FCO would have in selling our ideas. However, it seems clear that a single coherent message would be a significant help in steering US thinking our way.

9. Selling it into Town and then the FCO will be more of a challenge and, I suspect, will take the engagement of CJO, DCJO(Ops) and CIVSEC.

Phase IV planning conference

10. Unfortunately time is not on our side, however, and we have an increasing concern about our ability to populate the framework in the time available. Quite simply, James and I lack the authority and the resources to populate the framework properly in the time available. To pretend otherwise is to delude ourselves. We recommend, therefore, that we should hold a week long cross-Government planning seminar to help complete the document. Effectively, this would be a single 'big-push' to pull together all Government thinking on Aftermath. The details of the proposal are attached at Annex B. I do not under-estimate the amount of effort that it would take to make this work. The logistics would be a considerable challenge, but given the significance of the issue, I think it would be worth it.

11. Overcoming the institutional resistance to such a proposal would also be a challenge and we would need to get. To make it work, we would need active support (not just acquiescence) from the top of MOD, the FCO and DfID (and probably the Cabinet Office). This might take some effort. I suspect that MOD in Town will resist because they would see it as a challenge to their

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position to spearhead such initiatives. Equally might be difficult for FCO to understand why this is necessary or the business of MOD. Without senior FCO endorsement (not least to get the right personnel released for a week to participate) such an exercise would be pointless. Simon Webb and PUS might well have a role to play on making this happen.

12. Nevertheless, I think the argument for pursuing the idea are persuasive. First and foremost is the fact that Iraq seems to be the Prime Minister's Main Effort, and Aftermath his chief concern. So far we have seem to have very little to reassure him. Second, time is not on our side. I do not see any other way of coming up with a plan in the time available. Even if we do this in the week beginning 2 February, that would only give a week to staff the product to provide the Prime Minister with something in advance of P-Day. Third, because of the way this war is being planned in the US, we risk missing a major trick if we do not give the UK components the policy guidance they need to inform the US planning. That is not to say that we should be seeking to set foreign, or even defence policy, ourselves but just that we are probably best placed to understand how it can be packaged to have most impact on US thinking. In other words, this is not to dismiss all the work that has already be done in this area, but simply to marshal it to best effect.

13. I do not want to be defeatist, and if what I propose is not possible, I am confident that James and I will be able to help deliver something which is useful to the Phase IV planning. I do, however, doubt that we would be able to deliver anything that would be inform US thinking in the way that we ought to be able to do.

14. We would be grateful, therefore, for DCJO(Ops) thought on this issue and how we might take it forward.

PJHQ/Hd of J9 Pol/Ops

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