

DECLASSIFIED

Iraq: Phase IV: Sectorisation

1. Following the 'rock drill' in Washington on 21-22 February, this is my understanding of where matters stand on sectors.
2. Sectors mean different things at different times in phase IV. And the military and ORHA have different sized sectors in mind.
3. In the initial stabilisation period, the first weeks and months after conflict (sometimes called phase IV alpha), the various units (large and small) of the army will end up, after the war of manoeuvre, in de facto occupation of certain parts of Iraq. They will have areas of operational responsibility, under the chain of military command leading to the CFLCC (presumably in Baghdad). The expectation is that the UK division, under General Robin Brimms, will be in the southeast of Iraq, based in or near Basrah.
4. At this stage, we cannot know how large the UK division's phase IV alpha area of responsibility will be. It will depend, amongst other things, on the permissiveness of the environment.
5. After some undefined period, perhaps three to six months, when stability has been achieved and it is possible for reconstruction to begin and for the interim civil administration to establish itself, the stabilisation phase will change into the recovery phase (aka phase IV beta). By the start of the recovery phase, the CENTCOM planners envisage Iraq being divided into seven sectors, each headed by a two star general (a divisional commander). Whether each two star general will actually have a division under his command will depend on the availability of forces and the degree of difficulty involved in maintaining stability.
6. If there is organised resistance to the coalition's presence, the number of boots needed on the ground could considerably outstrip the coalition's ability to provide them. In Belfast, a city of 750,000, during the troubles, some 250 terrorists kept 16 battalions busy. Basrah province (the most likely UK AOR) has a population of about two million.
7. The planning for phase IV in CENTCOM is being led by a seconded British two star, Major-General Albert Whitley. He needs guidance from London on how big a commitment the UK will make to phase IV. At the Chiefs of Staff meeting on 19 February, CDS thought we should aim to reduce to medium size (ie one brigade) within six months and then stay at that level for as long as necessary. Provided we can attract suitable partners to join us (and that would almost certainly depend on having UNSCR authorisation for phase IV), having a UK two star in charge of one of the seven sectors would be a realisable outcome.
8. ORHA envisage carving Iraq into three sectors – north, central and south. They will align their borders to those of the military sectors. These sectors will contain very large numbers of people and those in the north and south will be geographically big too. ORHA has the medium term task of transforming Iraq into a politically pluralist, tolerant country with a free market economy. The US do not have the resources to match this level of ambition. We do not think that ORHA will have the legal basis for

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

the widespread reforms it wishes to carry out, absent an authorising UNSCR. Nor are the US or the UK the right countries to lead – given Arab suspicions of our motives (compounded on our case by our colonial history). So ORHA's work will be politically controversial – at least so long as there is no a UN mandate, which is the planning assumption - and frankly likely to be very messy.

9. The head of ORHA, retired three star General Jay Garner, is thinking of offering the senior UK secondee to ORHA, Major General Tim Cross, the lead of one of its three geographical sectors. Because of all the difficulties associated with its work, it would seem unwise to accept. Garner is also thinking of asking Maj Gen Cross to be his chief of staff with responsibility for building up and liaising with coalition allies. That looks more suitable.

Iraq Planning Unit  
24 Febraury 2003

DECLASSIFIED