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DAVID MANNING

cc David Omand  
John Scarlett  
Desmond Bowen  
Claire Smith

② From Manchester.

Already in trucks by  
by Cps this morning.

✓  
Kempster 27/6

25/6

IRAQ: 24 JUNE ATTACK ON BRITISH TROOPS

1. Yesterday's attacks against British troops in southern Iraq appear to represent coincidental incidents, though the sequence of events has still to be confirmed. For the moment, they appear to be separate in nature from the attacks against US forces around Baghdad.

2.

On 22 June house searches by British forces had lead to demonstrations and shots being fired. Subsequent discussion with the British military and local leaders resulted in an agreement to postpone the searches for one month, however this agreement was not widely know. As a result, an RMP patrol of 24 June was assumed to indicate plans for further British house searches. A spontaneous demonstration against the RMP presence followed.

It seems unlikely that SCIRI would have intended to inflict casualties on British troops given its undertaking to cooperate with the coalition at least until 27 June.

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3. We currently lack intelligence concerning the specific cause of the attacks on the British Paratroop patrol south of al-Amarah.

4. We have no indication from existing intelligence, which is patchy, that these attacks represent an orchestrated anti-coalition resistance movement in Iraq. However, anti-coalition groups are operating in southern Iraq.

Activities included attacks on collaborators, shooting at UK military vehicles, thefts and looting.

5. Separate incidents in southern Iraq have been directed at aid workers. On 17 June a UNICEF vehicle was attacked by a crowd of 'Islamic Party' supporters in Basra. The crowd was upset that retirees had not been paid allowances by the local authorities. Also, World Food Program (WFP) personnel in Safwan reported that Iraqi civilians attacked and robbed a WFP convoy en route to Basra from Kuwait.

6. The separate attacks against US forces are occurring predominantly along the Tikrit-Fallujah corridor.

However, some foreign 'volunteers' and Sunni extremists are also taking part. Their aim appears to be to disrupt coalition efforts; some are also motivated by a desire to restore Saddam to power.



JULIAN MILLER

25 June 2003

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