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CJO/D/LM (24/08)

26 Apr 08

**PSO/CDS**

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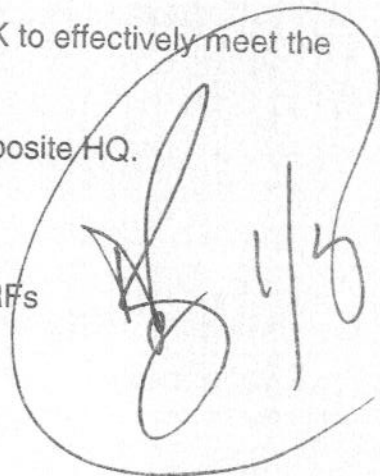
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**CJO – GEN PETRAEUS MEETING 25 APR 08**

1. As requested, I met with Gen Petraeus in Baghdad on 25 Apr 08 to talk through the options for the UK's operational commitment to Southern Iraq during the remainder of 2008. The meeting was attended by Comd MNC-I, SBMR-I and GOC MND(SE). The atmospherics were entirely cordial.
2. I outlined the UK position on C2, Span of Command, task lines and troop levels, setting these within the context of the PM's visit to Washington. In summary:
  - a. That the UK should retain two-star Command of the four Southern provinces for the immediate future.
  - b. That the UK could only commit to tasks within a force level ceiling of 4100 troops.
  - c. That this force level ceiling only allowed the UK to effectively meet the following tasks:
    - (1) Provision of an integrated Div/Bde composite HQ.
    - (2) MITting the BOC.
    - (3) MITting of 14 IA Div with supporting QRFs
    - (4) Security of Umm Qasr.
    - (5) NaTT.
    - (6) BIA Commercialisation.
    - (7) Force Protection.
    - (8) Force Support.
3. I further explained that, in our estimation, if we were going to be able to be able to exploit the opportunities now offered in Basrah, and not to allow the situation to be reversed, the US would have to take on certain additional tasks and resource commitments. In summary, these were:



- a. A commitment of circa 50 staff to the composite HQ.
  - b. MITting of 10 IA Div.
  - c. Border Security.
  - d. IPS reform/retraining.
  - e. A package of enablers amounting to 750 US personnel (AH-64, Armed PREDATOR, SH, CMOC, Biometrics, CIS).
4. Gen Petraeus readily understood the UK policy context and was content with the scale of the continued UK commitment and the potential division of tasks. Clearly there will need to be some further detailed work to crunch the numbers, but in principle we had an agreement. In discussion, the following emerged:
- a. Although the presentational need for continued UK command of all 4 southern provinces was accepted it was also agreed that a composite UK HQ could not effectively conduct C2 of, for example, US CJSOTF operations in Maysan. The current practice of establishing discrete 'Ops Boxes' for the conduct of US operations in Maysan and Dhi Qar should therefore continue. (Separately, I think we should revisit the issue of C2 boundaries later in the year both to tidy up the C2 arrangements and commence the process of divesting equity in the south).
  - b. CG MNC-I, to whom the challenge falls of resourcing the considerable US equity involved in meeting the tasks at Para 3, is most concerned about border security and IPS reform/training.
  - c. I trailed the fact that future UK commitment beyond the end of 2008 hinged on judgements to be made around November this year and would primarily be conditioned on the state of 14 IA Div and progress on the commercialisation of BIA. Gen Petraeus wishes to add his own focus to BIA commercialisation and will raise this when he visits next week. He was non-committal about longer-term UK engagement but made the point that he would wish us to 'thin-down' rather than 'break-clean'.
  - d. Gen Petraeus was absolutely clear that in contemplating any additional UK SF support to MND(SE) he did not wish to lose TF in Baghdad (although he observed that he may revisit that view in the context of Afghanistan when he was a few months into his next job).
5. Reflecting on the challenge of meeting the UK task-lines within the 4100 headroom and on, potentially, making savings against the 4100 figure as the year progresses I make the following points:
- a. We should be careful about what concurrency risks we are prepared to run, for example holding our QRF contingency against sub-units employed on periodic C-IED operations. The collective judgement is that JAM/SG will test us/ISF again before the year is out. But we need to run some risk to get down to 4100.

b. Early number-crunching indicates that a PMSC security solution (220 saving) may bring us below the 4100 figure. There may be additional savings to be found through the contractorisation of elements of BIA commercialisation.

c. The most likely source of incremental savings come from a modest reduction in the MiTTing task as 14 IA Div progresses.

6. Summary. This was a productive and amicable meeting. Petraeus is happy that the UK flag remains on board, and with a credible force contribution employed on a meaningful task. Lloyd Austin is less happy because of the resource challenge the agreement represents, but I judge a satisfactory solution can now be worked out between MNC-I and MND SE which is compliant with the UK policy context.

<Signed on DII>

CJO