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DCDS(C)
SBMR(I)/DCG CJTF7
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SBMR(I) : END OF TOUR REPORT

Disposal:

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1. This report records my views of the trends and key challenges which are likely to face the Coalition in the coming months.

IRAQ TODAY

2. Iraqis want to take responsibility for their future. All but the hardliners are grateful that the Ba'athist regime has been removed and support the Coalition, but people are impatient, suspicious of the Coalition's motives and highly sceptical about its ability to deliver change. They want to see improvements to all aspects of their circumstances, immediately; attempts to explain the scale of the challenges facing the Coalition and themselves cut little ice. Facts and progress are obscured by rumour and misinformation.
3. Saddam Hussein continues to have a malevolent influence. Until he is removed, former regime loyalists (FRL) will maintain their attacks and grow in confidence, and the international community (IC) will be undermined. His removal will disrupt the FRL, and Iraqis will be more confident about stepping forward to take responsibility. Other political, religious and ethnic groupings are also at work, often resorting to violence and intimidation to further their agendas, with varying degrees of international support. The involvement of foreign terrorists is growing, conducting and enabling attacks on the Coalition, the IC and prominent Iraqis.
4. Spectacular attacks on the IC have shaken the confidence of some major contributors, particularly the UN and ICRC. Individuals have left and the future for these organizations and other NGOs in Iraq is uncertain. Their reduced presence will reduce the pace and extent of the reconstruction effort significantly and leave the Coalition looking more isolated. This in turn will stimulate the attackers into a more confident approach and increase their activity.
5. While significant progress has been made in a number of areas, the country's infrastructure is fragile, following years of neglect and the effects of sanctions, for which western nations are held accountable. Demands for power and fuel are outstripping capacity. Large scale sabotage and looting are commonplace and are a significant threat to the economy and sustainability. Disrupting the infrastructure is an easy way to delay progress and unsettle communities.

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6. The machinery of Government is growing. A constitution is to be written with elections to follow. The Interim Governing Council is becoming effective and Interim Ministers are appointed. Local authorities are established, to varying degrees of effectiveness, but do not yet have the necessary authority or resources. A budget for the coming year is being set and Supplementals are awaited from the US Congress; there is to be a Donors' Conference in October. Oil production will not reach the levels needed to generate income from exports and for internal consumption for some time. The financial burden on the Coalition is not going to reduce in the near future.

7. CPA Baghdad struggles through undermanning and excessive turnover. Amb Bremer, rightly, sets a demanding pace; his staff struggles to match it. CPA is beginning to engage with the regional level (which is still represented largely by CJTF-7 commanders). A CPA Strategy has been produced, and performance criteria are being developed against which progress can be measured. CENTCOM's campaign plan is being adjusted to ensure full coherence with the CPA Strategy.

8. The media ignores the progress that has been made. Tactical incidents, perceived and actual failings of the Coalition, numbers of soldiers killed and attacks on the pipelines provide the headlines. Political agendas in Washington and London also play a significant part. The Coalition's failure to conduct an effective media/info campaign is only now being rectified. We are on the back foot and the opposition groups are beating us to the punch, consistently. The effect on perceptions is clear.

THE OBJECTIVE

9. The Iraqis and the Coalition share the same objective: responsibility in the hands of Iraqis and the withdrawal of the Coalition as soon as possible. Timeframes are hard to judge. Amb Bremer has laid out a 7 step plan to achieve political goals, with national elections in late 04, or earlier if possible, and sees the CPA as having outlived its role in about 2 years. Militarily, the US is feeling the strain of its commitment and cannot keep it up in the longer term. Gen Abizaid is looking for ways and means to reduce force levels from some 130K to about 90K by Spring 04, removing the first Division by the end of the year. Achieving early withdrawal will require:

- a. **A willingness to pass practical responsibility for political, economic and internal security to Iraqis, incrementally, as soon as possible. The Coalition will have to be prepared to take some risks in encouraging a real Iraqi capability.**
- b. **Recognition that the best is the enemy of the good enough, and that what the Iraqis want might not fit well with our ideal outcome.**
- c. **Establishing Iraqis in the front rank, everywhere, providing them with the necessary training, resources and support.**

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d. A broad timetable, agreed by the Governing Council, against which to measure progress.

e. Identification of the type of international presence (civil and military) that might be needed in the longer term.

10. Confidence and Perception. Maintaining the confidence and support of the Iraqi people and of the international community is fundamentally important; both will erode over time and if progress is slow. Perception is often more important than fact. At this stage, for example, low tech policemen on the streets are better than none. In the coming months, momentum will be maintained by:

a. The seizure of Saddam.

b. Achieving Sunni buy in to the political process and preventing further isolation of political and ethnic groups.

c. Continuing offensive operations, based on actionable intelligence, against terrorism and other hostile activity.

d. Significant reduction in organized crime, particularly smuggling and sabotage, through an accelerated build up of the Iraqi security apparatus, including the courts and prisons at the same pace.

e. Dependable essential services.

f. Creating more employment at all levels.

g. Resourcing Governorate authorities and deploying the Governorate Support Teams.

h. A much more aggressive and responsive media/info campaign, with more Iraqis doing the talking.

SECURITY

11. Hostile activity is at a fairly constant level of some 20-25 significant incidents a day; attacks are becoming more sophisticated. Baghdad and the Sunni areas remain the most active; apart from occasional spikes of activity, the rest of the country remains broadly stable. Iraq's extensive borders are largely open and uncontrolled, providing easy access and escape. There is no shortage of weapons, ammunition and explosives. The IED and mortar are the preferred means of attack, and the SAM threat is preventing the opening of Baghdad International Airport. Amnesties have not worked and, with the exception of the MND(SE) area, the SAM buy back programme has failed to produce the goods. CPA's decisions and initiatives can have unforeseen consequences and serve to

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destabilize the situation; this has been recognized but the necessary structures to address the potential linkages are not yet in place.

12. Intelligence. There is a wealth of low level Humint and other tactical information, but we have yet to integrate all sources and understand how the various hostile elements are organized, resourced and directed. We suffer from circular reporting of single source information on the one hand and information protection on the other, and we are not making best use of our expertise. Actionable intelligence to enable targeted operations must be improved. Work on this is underway within CENTCOM, the CJTF and agencies in country, but it requires the full engagement of all civilian and military expertise, starting at the highest levels. The following improvements are needed:

- a. **Improved planning and coordination between national intelligence organizations, working to agreed PIRs.**
- b. **A shift of resources and expertise onto counter terrorism. The energy being devoted to WMD is not doing much to deal with today's threats.**
- c. **A better understanding of the political, ethnic and religious seams in Iraq, how they are affected by influences from outside the country, particularly Iran, and how positive influences can be exploited.**
- d. **Greater involvement of Iraqis in the intelligence field, at every level.**

13. CJTF-7 Operations. The threats being dealt with by CJTF-7 are at the tactical level and there is no sense that the campaign is faltering. Offensive operations, followed up by quick improvement projects in the local community continue to be successful, with large weapon finds and detentions. Baghdad and the Sunni areas continue to be the most difficult. US tactics and procedures remain immature and too heavy handed for this type of environment; there is not much innovative thinking going on to pre-empt attacks and reduce predictability, despite the CG's direction and encouragement. The force now comprises some 30 flags and more might follow should a further UNSCR be agreed. Multinationality is already affecting the CJTF, with national constraints, different ROE and language being the prime examples. Forces with the training, capability and ROE to conduct offensive operations throughout the country have not been expanded much as a result of new nations appearing; essentially, it's still the US and the UK. Specific issues facing the CJTF in the coming months will include:

- a. **Supporting the delivery of the new currency.**
- b. **Dealing with the MEK and KADEK; planning for the latter is now underway, with no declared timeframe.**
- c. **The arrest of Muqtadr al Sadr; this has yet to be resolved and is now more complicated, given that his home town of An Najaf lies in the Spanish sector of MND(CS).**

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- d. Adopting the appropriate profile for Ramadan.
- e. Improving the flexibility to prosecute offensive operations throughout the country, by surging and receiving forces into Divisional areas.
- f. Combined actions with Iraqi security organizations.

14. Iraqi Security Organizations. These are increasing in quantity but require leadership, further training, and equipment before they will be effective in dealing with all hostile and criminal activity. Coalition forces remain heavily committed to policing and static duties, making them predictable and reducing their flexibility. An accelerated plan is underway to double the strength of all Iraqi security organizations: Fixed Site, Civil Defence Corps, Border Guards and Police. The Iraqi Defence Force plan has also been expanded and brought forward. The following issues need to be put in place:

- a. The accelerated police training plan in Jordan and Iraq.
- b. Command, control and coordination between the CJTF and Iraqi organizations, particularly the police; this has begun in Baghdad with the creation of a joint operations cell in HQ 1 (US) AD; the concept needs to be expanded across the country.
- c. Relieving the CJTF of as much static tasking as possible.
- d. Providing additional support through STTT and PRT to train and mentor these new organizations, using private companies to deliver the training as far as possible, in order to reduce reliance on the CJTF.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

15. Dependable services are critical to maintaining confidence. The infrastructure cannot be protected everywhere, all the time. Sources of power and fuel in the MND(SE) area are critically important and not just locally. Breakdowns in supply and distribution there affect the whole of southern Iraq, including Baghdad. A major programme of modernization is about to start. This will require considerable investment and some years to achieve. Meanwhile, the plans to improve services in the south east in the immediate term must be delivered, particularly as Ramadan approaches. The Coalition will have to adopt a twin track approach in the months ahead, by:

- a. Maintaining supplies, with reserves, at all centres of population and at key points, with security to prevent smuggling and sabotage that should increasingly be done by Iraqis; while
- b. Delivering the major infrastructure rebuild.

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THE UK APPROACH

16. Recent events have had a marked effect on the UK's approach. For the first time since my arrival, I now feel that the issues here are being treated with the necessary urgency and at the right level, across Whitehall. The engagement of Sir Jeremy Greenstock and Sir Hilary Synnott in Iraq and a much enhanced, pan-Government team in London to provide unity of effort, drive the agenda and ensure that stated intentions are delivered are very welcome. We must maintain that level of commitment until the job is done. The following will also help:

a. We have failed to meet a series of promised deadlines in deploying the people needed in the CPA and the Governorate Support Teams – and they are not all here yet. Requests for support need to be actioned more quickly. This needs high level push, constantly. I would like to see a consolidated Action Plan, with leads and timelines, to be reviewed by us and the Whitehall Task Force on a weekly basis.

b. DFID's engagement in this operation so far is a sorry tale of missed opportunity, uncertainty and delay. I believe that there needs to be a fundamental review of how that Department fits in with the rest of us. To me, it has a supporting function, enabling others to achieve the UK's strategic intent; it should not be independent or be able to adopt separate policies.

c. We need to have more visits by Ministers, senior officials and staff. The perceptions of those who do come here always change and, in comparison with the US, we do not engage. Security advisers in London are far too risk averse; a few hours inside the CPA compound with minimal contact with Iraqis does not constitute a visit to Baghdad.

d. The UK staffs in HQCJTF-7, the CPA and elsewhere in Iraq are performing magnificently, all adding value and using their experience to excellent effect. We have to sustain this.

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