

DECLASSIFIED

To: Iraq Policy Unit
From: Swift Incoming Telegrams (Machine 2)
Subject: LEAD: RR IRAQR/FCOLN 332: POST-CONFLICT IRAQ: 2003
REVIEW
Sent: 29 December 2003 09:57:53 GMT

ZCZC
MDDPAN 4107 ZILNAN 7881
RESTRICTED
RR FCOLN INTRA TRESY
FM IRAQR TO FCOLN
290707Z DEC
GRS 1101

RESTRICTED
FM IRAQREP
TO ROUTINE FCO
TELNO 332
OF 290707Z DECEMBER 03
INFO ROUTINE , ALL CLASSIFIED POSTS, CABINET OFFICE, DFID
INFO ROUTINE DTI, HM TREASURY
INFO ROUTINE MODUK/MODUK NAVY/MODUK AIR/MODUK ARMY/MODUK PE
INFO ROUTINE , ADMINISTRATOR ASCENSION

SIC

SUBJECT: POST-CONFLICT IRAQ: 2003 REVIEW

SUMMARY

1. The British contribution to the running of Iraq in the post-conflict period in 2003 is an extraordinary story. The post-conflict administration started badly, but Bremer has picked it up. Security remains the main determining factor, now that the policy and timelines are clear. The courage and determination of UK civil servants and soldiers on the ground have been exemplary. This has tested our relationship as much with the US as with Iraq and the region.

DETAIL

2. I write this brief synopsis of the UK's civilian presence in Iraq 2003 as Acting Administrator (for a week) of a country of 25 million people in a region we finally stopped trying to rule in 1958. We may or may not be right to be here. But here we are until Iraq's condition represents an honorable improvement.

3. The post-conflict era started on 9 April, and started badly. The Pentagon listened to the wrong pre-war advice, and then implemented it poorly. ORHA under Jay Garner was a pale shadow of what was required. Looting and disorder did more damage to Iraqi material and psychological well-being than the conflict itself. The image of an all-powerful America has still not recovered.

4. L. Paul(Jerry) Bremer has restored some credibility to the Coalition's authority. He started with too aggressive an approach. He had no real choice but to outlaw the senior residue of the Ba'ath Party, and the Iraqi Army had melted away before he

DECLASSIFIED

Q45

DECLASSIFIED

arrived. But the theme of reconciliation did not have to wait for the eventual capture of Saddam Hussein on 13 December. On the other hand, in stimulating the supply of essential services, in improving community law and order, in organising the remarkable currency exchange and in generating economic activity which is livelier than the statistics or the media show, Bremer has returned many of the components of a semi-normal life to most Iraqis. The majority can at least perceive that the opportunity to create a new life, and a new Iraq, might be worth investing in.

5. Political violence, however, pervades everything. Insurgency and terrorism, from different groups with different motivations, are soiling the other achievements, catching the public eye nationally and internationally and threatening the whole enterprise. The Americans realised too late that the disaffected remnants of the old regime were bound to supply recruits for targeted violence if given no alternative means of livelihood. And the failure to close borders and ammunition dumps widened the opportunity for foreign-born terrorists. The opposition is growing in sophistication and effectiveness. Only Iraqis can in the end deal with it. But it will take a long time before Iraqi security institutions can operate effectively and independently.

6. The insecurity is concentrated in the centre of the country. The Kurds in the North have learnt to look after themselves, and are determined to continue to do so. In the South-East, the homogeneous Shi'a community have gained from the fall of Saddam and will invest more in a free democratic Iraq. The cunning Brits selected this region to manage for the Coalition and have done so effectively and with understanding for the local culture. I pay tribute to Sir Hilary Synnott, Head of CPA (South), to Major-Generals Robin Brind and Graeme Lamb and to the whole UK staff in the South-East, including DfID's secondees, for their outstanding work over this recent period. That London think so readily that the South is ours and the rest is America's is a further compliment to their achievement.

7. If many things have gone well, the prize for CPA ineptness in this mixed picture has to go to the Iraq Media Network, now re-christened Al-Iraqiya. With billions to spend and the world's most powerful media industry to draw from, the CPA has over the past few months produced a mouse, then another mouse and finally, at end-year, a mouse. Subservience to Washington's spin requirements and sheer dysfunctionality seem to have been the causes. The few exceptions in terms of canny media handling have mainly been British.

8. The political framework for the next period has, after some deviations down side-tracks, developed reasonably well. The formation of the Governing Council in July, ably co-managed by the first IraqRep, John Sawers, was a bold and necessary step which, with the subsequent creation of twenty-five Ministries, has done much to satisfy the requirement that Iraqis recommence the handling of their own affairs. International acceptance of the new institutions has been especially encouraging.

9. Nevertheless, Iraqi systems are not yet capable of standing on their own feet. The need for a massive injection of US and other international resources alone demonstrates that. Neither is there yet sufficient strength behind the concept of a unified Iraq

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

to permit Iraqis to trust themselves without outside monitoring. A staged transition is essential; and the 15 November Agreement establishes the lines for that into 2006. There is a large amount for us still to do, even if the occupation and the Coalition Provisional Authority come to an end next July. Ayatollah Sistani is a lesser problem than the feelings and perceptions of the Iraqi people overall.

10. It has at times been a lonely haul for the US and the UK. The former are of course the leaders and great providers. This is their show. The integration of American and British systems has represented perhaps the most remarkable operational alliance since World War II. The United Nations should have been there with us: the loss on 19 August of Sergio Vieira de Mello and so many members of his staff was a bitter blow for the international community as a whole. But the UN will return at their own pace, by which time the main work will have been done, security allowing. Other allies, notably Australia, Poland, Italy and increasingly Japan and South Korea, are making their mark. But it is the co-occupiers who bear the brunt. The British part of this, from my highly effective Deputy, David Richmond, onwards, has been played by civil service volunteers from a wide range of departments and origins. Their adaptability, resourcefulness, hard work and sheer courage demonstrate that crown servants overseas retain the capacity, whatever the anachronisms, to run whatever the British taxpayer wants them to do.

GREENSTOCK

YYYY		
MAIN	13	
IRAQ/KUWAIT	13	
IRAQ POLICY UNIT	0	
CONSULAR D	0	
PROTOCOL D//PALACE	0	0
PS MR OBRIEN	0	
PS MR RAMMELL	0	
ADDITIONAL	1	
.IRAQ/KUWAIT	0	
.(IRA)	0	
ATT GEN//C ADAMS		1
BANKE	0	
CAOFF1	0	
CAOFF2	0	
DFID1	0	
DFID2	0	
ECGD	0	
FSA	0	
HMT	0	
MOD	0	
NO 10	0	
UKTI1	0	
UKTI2	0	

ZILNAN 7881

DECLASSIFIED