






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Presenter: Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld Thursday, July 24, 2003

DoD News Briefing - Secretary Rumsfeld and Ambassador Bremer

(Also participating was Ambassador Paul Bremer, Presidential Envoy to Iraq. Photos of this briefing are available at <http://www.defenselink.mil/photos/Jul2003/030724-D-9880W-084.html>, <http://www.defenselink.mil/photos/Jul2003/030724-D-9880W-061.html>, and <http://www.defenselink.mil/photos/Jul2003/030724-D-9880W-029.html>.)

Rumsfeld: (Laughs.) Good afternoon. I welcome the presidential envoy and the coalition provisional authority Ambassador Bremer, and certainly thank him for his efforts and his solid progress that's taking place in Iraq.

Tuesday was a good day for the Iraqi people. The brutal careers of Uday and Qusay Hussein came to an end, sending a very clear signal to the Iraqis that the Hussein family is finished and will not be returning to terrorize them again.

Coalition forces will continue to root out, capture and kill the remnants of the former regime until they no longer pose a threat to the Iraqi people. As we do so, it's important not to lose sight of the fundamental truth that our country is still very much engaged in the global war on terrorism. Two terrorist regimes have been removed, but we still have terrorist enemies in Afghanistan, Iraq and across the globe who are seeking to harm our people. We can deal with them in one of



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two ways: we can find, capture or kill them in Afghanistan, Iraq or in other countries; or we can wait and end up having to deal with them here in the United States.

Regrettably, there is no easy, safe, comfortable middle ground. It does not exist. We are living in a dangerous security environment. Adversaries are pursuing weapons that can allow them to kill not 3,000, as were killed on September 11th, but 30,000 or more. And our job is to try to prevent that.

The global war on terrorism is real, it's difficult, and it's dangerous. There will be successes like Tuesday's raid, and there will be setbacks. And regrettably brave Americans and coalition forces are being killed in this war.

It's an unconventional war, to be sure. We're not facing big armies, big navies, or big air forces. But it is war nonetheless. And we need to face those facts squarely, accept them, and win it.

One cannot know how long it will take, but we do know it will be hard. And we know this as well: The price of dealing with the problem of terrorism now cannot compare to the cost of waiting until it reaches our shores again.

In Iraq, coalition forces removed a regime. Now, they're dealing forcefully with the remnants of that regime. As they do so, there will be continued attacks; some by the remnants, more by our forces going after those who are still attempting to re-impose their dictatorship. With each step the Iraqi people take forward, the terrorists' hopes of returning to power grow dimmer.

Ambassador Bremer will discuss the progress taking place. But consider a few examples: The formation of an Iraqi national army has begun. 30,000 Iraqi police have been hired. An Iraqi civil defense corps is being formed. Coalition forces have captured or killed 38 of Iraq's 55 most wanted. Thousands of lower-level Ba'ath Party loyalists have been rounded up or otherwise dealt with. The Iraqi Central Bank has been made independent. Iraq has returned to the world oil market. All of Iraq's universities have reopened. Power and water are, in most places, at prewar levels, and we're making progress in Baghdad. The food distribution system has been restarted. Nearly all of Iraq's 240 hospitals and 1,200 clinics are open. Over 100 newspapers have begun publishing. In all major cities and in 85 percent of the towns, municipal councils have been formed of Iraqis. Ambassador Bremer has helped establish a new national Governing Council. It's begun exercising executive authority, appointing ministers, preparing the way for a new national constitution.

Each of these accomplishments is a success for the Iraqi people and a defeat for the remnants of the former regime. The coalition effort is succeeding and the Ba'athists will not be returning to Baghdad, except to answer for their crimes.

Ambassador Bremer...

Bremer: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I would only add to the points the secretary made, the following points:

First of all, as he noted, this has been a very good couple of weeks for the Iraqi people. On the economic front, we have introduced a new currency that will be actually given to the Iraqi people in October. For the first time in 12 years, the whole country will be operating on a single currency. We have made the Central Bank independent as an example of the kind of responsible monetary policy, which we think an Iraqi government should follow. And I have approved an emergency budget for the rest of 2003, which will allow us to start putting money into essential services like health care, water and transportation.

As the secretary mentioned, on the political front we have had the establishment of the Baghdad city council on July 9th, the establishment of the national governing council on July 13th, and the continuation of democracy -- grassroots democracy in towns and cities all across the country.

Finally, of course, Tuesday showed that we are making progress in our third major area of emphasis, which is security. As the secretary mentioned, we are making progress there but we should be realistic that we will continue to face opposition from remnants of the old regime, and we are dealing with that.

Thank you.

Rumsfeld: Charlie?

Q: Mr. Secretary, you and others in this administration were infuriated earlier this year when the Iraqi government allowed television to take pictures and distribute them of U.S. dead and wounded troops. Given the reluctance of this building historically to release any pictures of either U.S. or enemy war dead, could I ask both of you gentlemen what led you to then publicize today what many are describing as gruesome pictures of Uday and Qusay?

Rumsfeld: Yes, certainly.

As I recall, we also were deeply concerned about the showing of prisoners of war and detainees, and have been attempting to adhere to the Geneva Prisoner of War Convention, which does prohibit subjecting POWs to photographs and things when they're in captivity, to what I think is called public curiosity.

This is an unusual situation. This regime has been in power for decades. These two individuals are particularly vicious individuals. They are now dead. We know that. They have been carefully identified. The Iraqi people have been waiting for confirmation of that, and they, in my view, deserved having confirmation of that.

Ambassador Bremer can comment on the fact that I believe, some of the officials of the Governing Council have been in to view the remains.

Bremer: That's right.

Rumsfeld: But it was a decision that was made, and in my view, it was absolutely the correct decision.

Q: Ambassador Bremer, I might ask you, was there any fear of a possible backlash in the Arab world about releasing these pictures under discussion?

Bremer: Well, as the secretary said, it's not a decision one lightly makes. It is fully consistent, incidentally, with the Geneva Conventions.

Our view was, as the secretary mentioned, that it was an important matter for the Iraqi people. It was interesting that the Governing Council -- the new Governing Council itself asked to send a delegation to see these bodies this afternoon, which shows you that the people responsible in Iraq now, the Governing Council, felt it was important for them to go personally view the bodies, to assure themselves and through them the Iraqi people that these were indeed the sons of Saddam Hussein.

So I think we were responding to a perfectly legitimate request on the part of the Governing Council, reflecting concerns on the part of the Iraqi people.

Q: Mr. Secretary --

Q: Mr. Secretary -- excuse me.

Q: Mr. Secretary, what is the effect that you hope to achieve with the killing? Given -- in light -- that three more American soldiers were killed today in Iraq,

what is the effect that you hope to achieve by taking out the two Saddam sons? Did you hope to bring some end to some of the violence there? And if so, do you consider any measure of success?

Rumsfeld: If there is no question but that the -- Saddam Hussein, his sons and the both individuals listed in the 55, as well as a number of people that are in the middle-level Ba'athist groups, are enemies of the coalition and have been over a great many years committing a series of violent crimes against the Iraqi people. And the location of two of those individuals was determined. The commander on the ground went to the scene, and the people inside the building, who they believed to be the two sons, plus others, put up a considerable fight and obviously made a decision that they wanted to fight to the death. And they took -- made that choice themselves.

Q: Ambassador Bremer, from what you know of the mood in Iraq, do you think that the release of the photographs will in fact have the intended effect of proving to the Iraqi people that these were Saddam's sons?

Bremer: Well, I think that it will certainly help convince people -- two things: that these two people are dead, but the more important point is that we're making the point that the Ba'athists are finished. Saddam and his henchmen are finished. They're not coming back. And the strategic importance of the killings, of their being dead, is to help us persuade the Iraqi people that we are there, having liberated the country, we're there, and we're going to be sure that these Ba'athists have no future. And I think it will in fact, in time, help reduce the security threat to our forces.

In the initial period, as I said on Tuesday when we first heard about this, I would not be surprised to see an up-tick in violence against our forces. But I think in the long run, it will also, hopefully, encourage more Iraqis to come and give us information about more Ba'athists, and that's really what we have to have happen next.

Rumsfeld: I should underline the fact that the ambassador pointed out. There is no prohibition in the Geneva Convention against showing these remains.

Q: Well, do you really expect most of the Iraqi people to believe --

Bremer: Yes, I think most will. I think we can anticipate there will be, as there always are, programs of disinformation put out by others. But I think most of them will believe that they're dead.

Q: Mr. Secretary?

Q: Mr. Secretary, you've said many times here at that podium, as has General Myers, and your comments were echoed by the president yesterday in the Rose Garden, that the American forces are on the offensive and we will win, and that the attacks on U.S. forces are being conducted by a relatively small number of people in a relatively small area. And yet, we do know that three more GIs were killed today. Seems almost an average of one a day.

What can you do to stop these small groups of unfriendlies launching these hit-and-run attacks? Could they not really go on for months and years?

Rumsfeld: I think he asked --

Bremer: Oh, did he ask me? I'm sorry.

Q: Both of you. Jump in if you feel --

Bremer: Well --

Rumsfeld: Well, there's a great deal going on that's stopping it. The -- if you think about it, I don't believe there's been a day recently that there haven't been a hundred to 200-plus arrests made in Iraq by coalition forces. They are out following up on information given to them by Iraqis, pursuing Iraqis who are part of the Fedayeen Saddam and the Ba'athist middle-level management type, and they're pursuing those people and initiating activities, and they're finding them and they're arresting them and they're interrogating them.

And as the political process moves forward, as the economic improvement continues, clearly, the result will be that the security environment will improve and more of those people will be behind bars or flee the country or be killed.

Q: Secretary, is there any evidence that either Uday or Qusay died of self-inflicted wounds? And if that's the case, would it underscore that there was no opportunity to take either one alive?

Rumsfeld: Given the amount of gunfire that came from that building, and the difficulty that the forces had in getting into the element of the building where they were located, it is, I think, obvious that there was no chance of taking them alive.

Q: Any evidence of a self-inflicted wound?

Rumsfeld: There are -- there are people speculating about that. But until people have a chance to examine the bodies and make that judgment, I wouldn't want to speculate.

Q: Ambassador Bremer, can I just -- can I just ask you, the person, the informant who provided some of the key information, is that person being given any protection, and will they, in fact, get the \$30 million?

Bremer: The question of rewards is by law a matter for the Department of State working with the Department of Justice to decide. And I suppose they will be looking urgently at the question as to whether or not the informant is eligible under the law. And I really don't think we should speculate on the answer to that.

Q: And they're in protective custody over there?

Bremer: He is safe.

Q: Mr. Bremer?

Q: Mr. Secretary -- actually, Ambassador, regarding the 55 most wanted list and the officials captured, the 38, you said, Mr. Secretary? How will they be tried -- you mentioned the establishment of the National Governing Council, and how long will they be held without trial? And also, you mentioned, Mr. Secretary, a hundred or 200 inmates -- or, people being imprisoned today. How many are we talking about here that are being -- that are -- how many people are in prison there?

Bremer: On the question of the trial of the top detainees, we have said all along that this is a matter, we think, of such political importance that the Iraqi people should decide on those people. The Governing Council in its first meeting a week ago Monday set up a subcommittee made up of five or six of the members of the council to make recommendations to the council on the possible establishment of a tribunal to try people for crimes against humanity and so forth. We welcomed that establishment of that committee, and I have offered to the Governing Council any technical assistance they might wish in that matter. But this is really a matter for them to decide. And once they've made their decision, I'm sure they'll make an announcement.

Q: How many overall arrests have been made, though?

Rumsfeld: There -- there have -- it -- you'd have to break them into categories.

There have probably been 12,000 people since the beginning of the conflict that have been taken into custody in one way or another.

As the number started growing, we immediately started a process of looking them over, and we found the overwhelming majority were soldiers. They were people who, instead of just throwing down their weapons as we requested, and they -- and drifting into the countryside, they threw down their weapons and were there. And so they were scooped up. They have been released. There have been -- I'm going to guess. I could be wrong, and if you want to get the precise numbers, which is probably a good -- better idea, get the precise numbers. But it's -- it's -- there must be six, eight thousand that have been let go. There are probably, at any given time today -- the number's constantly fluctuating -- probably somewhere between, what, four (thousand)? --

Bremer: Well, 2,000 to 3,000, it depends.

Rumsfeld: -- two to four (thousand) -- two to three (thousand), 4,000?

Bremer: As the secretary said, we have these ongoing military operations, which every 24 hours, picks up a number of detainees. Many of these turn out to be curfew violators. Some people are picked up because they're -- like in any metropolitan city, they're drunk. And these people, basically, are pretty much released right away.

Rumsfeld: And some are Ba'athists, and they're being held and interrogated, as they should be.

Q: Secretary Rumsfeld? Can I ask you how you'll get the message out beyond -- I mean, American television has been inundated with the images of Uday and Qusay today. But how do you get the message out in Iraq and let people know these pictures are out there, the X-rays are out there? Do you have any sort of a campaign to do that?

Bremer: We have had a -- our own television station running since May 13th, Iraqi Media Network. It reaches 60 percent of the population with its footprint. It actually now has a satellite capability, so it reaches more than that. So it -- these photographs will be running, if they haven't already run, on Iraqi Media Network. We, of course, are assuming they'll be picked up by other regional television stations, as well. We have our own newspaper, which has a circulation of 60,000, printed five times a week. And we have 24-hour radio. So, we have plenty of ways to get our message out, and we'll be doing that.

Q: Mr. Secretary, could I just ask also on force protection, a lot of the attacks seem to be aimed at convoys. Is there anything you can do to improve force protection? It seems to happen again and again.

Rumsfeld: The commanders on the ground are doing everything that can be done to see that the force protection is appropriate. They're in a conflict. They're in a battle. And it is going to take time. It's not fighting a big army or a big navy or an air force, but in fact, even though the major combat activities are behind us, this type of thing, as we've said, is going to continue for a period, until the people that are involved have been dealt with. And there are several categories. They are the Ba'athists; they are the remainder of the Fedayeen Saddam crowd that the -- Saddam Hussein's sons were involved with; they are jihadists who have come in from other countries -- for the most part, through Syria; and they are criminals that were let out of jail. So there is going to be this problem for a period.

The military commanders -- I've talked to Abizaid within the last hour. He believes that they are doing everything that can be done, and they feel very confident that they're going to prevail in this effort.

(Cross talk.)

Q: Mr. Secretary, yesterday Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz said, about postwar Iraq, that some of our assumptions turned out to be wrong. Some important assumptions turned out to underestimate the problems in Iraq. As you know, there's some very vocal criticism, especially from Capitol Hill -- people saying there was never an effective postwar plan, criticism of you, criticism of your staff, the policy team under Undersecretary Doug Feith.

Was there a plan? And what's your reaction to that criticism?

Rumsfeld: Well, I guess -- what's your reaction to criticism? One doesn't go into these jobs and not expect that.

But I think that -- I have not had a chance to read the transcript [of the briefing] that Dr. Wolfowitz conducted down here. I will say this:

If you think about it, we planned for a lot of things. We planned for the risk of the dams being broken and floods. We planned for a humanitarian disaster. It didn't happen. We planned for "Fortress Baghdad." It didn't happen. We planned for scuds being launched into neighboring countries. We planned for the oil fields to be burned and what we would do about all those things.

We also had a team of people working, from all the departments and agencies. The NSC started the process, and the Defense Department worked with all the departments and agencies. And Jay Garner came in, and they did in fact have plans for how they would deal with these problems.

Now once you get on the ground and you find out what the problems actually are, we found that there was not a humanitarian disaster. We also found that the infrastructure over the years that the Saddam Hussein regime was there had been so denied investment that it was considerably worse than people anticipated. And it's taken longer to -- as I believe Paul Wolfowitz mentioned, it's taken longer, for example, to get it up to speed than anyone would have hoped.

We've got wonderful people working on it. Ambassador Bremer does have plan -- a plan. In fact, he's got an overview plan plus specific plans for how we get the oil infrastructure back, so that the liftings can increase and the revenues can go to the Iraqi people, the -- how the electrical system can be repaired more rapidly.

You may want to comment on this, but --

Bremer: Well, I think that's right. I think it is important to have a strategy now. And I say to the secretary, my motto is strategic clarity and tactical flexibility. We need to be very clear on where we're headed in our strategy on security, on economy, and on the political developments. And we are very clear on that. And we need to have a plan, but we need to be tactically flexible as the situation evolves on the ground. And that's where we are. But we have very clear benchmarks going out in all of those areas over the next 60, 90, 120 and 360 days, and we mean to execute as closely as we possibly can to that plan.

Rumsfeld: I would also add, it's only been a matter of how long? How long has it been? It's been a matter of weeks.

And I would -- you mentioned Doug Feith. Doug Feith is doing a very fine job for this department, and we're fortunate to have public servants --

Q: If I can just follow up. If assumptions were wrong, assumptions based on intelligence, can you concede today that there was some bad intelligence?

Rumsfeld: You know, everyone always wants to knock the intelligence community, and I don't. I think it is a big world. It is a tough job. The task of being able to recognize that there are large ungoverned areas in the world, there are large countries that are almost totally closed to us, and the intelligence community is asked to know about what's happening there, to look into those

societies and see where the fault lines are, and anticipate what units might defect and come over, how good is the police department, those kinds of questions, those are very difficult things to do.

And if you'll think back, the human intelligence in the intelligence community was drawn down during the period of the '90s, and it takes years to build it back up.

So, you know, are there things that someone could say, "Oh, we didn't know that," or "We didn't know this" -- sure, that's always going to be the case. It's a complicated world. But I think that with the benefit of 20-20 hindsight, trying to look back and point fingers is not terribly productive.

Q: Mr. Secretary? Mr. Secretary?

Q: Mr. Secretary?

Rumsfeld: Yes?

Q: Ambassador Bremer, you had a conversation there with the delegation from the Indian government in Baghdad, two or three weeks ago, to talk with you and your people about the possibility of joining the coalition, and they went back to Delhi and said that they would not. In hindsight, is there anything that could have been said on the U.S. side that might have alleviated whatever issues they had?

And then, more generally, is there anything else that the United States can do, in your judgment, to bring in some of these countries that are sort of wavering on whether they'll join --

Bremer: Well, let me first say that it's important to recognize this is already an international coalition. We have the troops from 19 different countries already on the ground. We're in talks with another dozen about providing troops.

On the reconstruction side, we have some two-dozen countries, which have already made or in fact spent money on reconstruction.

This is already a broad international coalition and a broad effort. And, of course, we would welcome more, there's no question.

On the question of the Indians, it seems to me that's a question you really should ask the Indian government. They are capable of speaking for themselves. And I don't want to speculate as to what it would take to get the Indians in. They have

to answer that question themselves.

Q: Mr. Secretary?

Rumsfeld: But they have not said flat no.

Bremer: Right.

Rumsfeld: And we're in discussions with other countries as well. As I recall, one of the things that came up in the discussions was -- oh, I shouldn't say, because it may have been another country. We've been talking to the Indians, the Pakistanis, the Turks, the Bangladesh, and any number of other countries, and I anticipate we'll continue to get more international -- (inaudible word).

Q: Mr. Secretary?

Q: Mr. Secretary, accepting fully your description of the Geneva Convention, let me just ask you a slightly different question.

Rumsfeld: It's actually Jim Haynes' words, the general counsel of the Defense Department.

Q: (Off mike.)

Rumsfeld: You know I don't practice law. You know that.

Q: Here's what I still would like to ask you, though, separately from the Geneva Convention. America has long objected to its dead soldiers in various instances being shown on television. From this building there have been very strong objections going all the way back to Somalia. Do you worry, sir, that perhaps there is a risk for the moral high ground for the U.S. military on this issue now that you have broken the precedent? In other words, the next time there were to be in the future dead American soldiers or dead Americans shown by America's enemies on television, how do you make the case now that it's the wrong thing to do?

Rumsfeld: Well, it's a fair question. And as the one who made the decision to do it, I can say that it was not a snap decision. It is something that one has to think through quite carefully. And if anyone goes back to Ceausescu's demise, another vicious dictator, it was not until the people of that country saw him, saw his body, that they actually believed that the fear and the threat that his regime posed to them was gone.

The Ba'athists and the people of that country are frightened of Saddam Hussein and his regime. And to see the-- to get closure that two particularly vicious members of that regime are in fact dead is, I believe, something that will contribute to more Iraqi people being willing to come forward with information, less enthusiasm and heart on the part of some of the lower-level Ba'athists to continue the fight, and a greater conviction of what is in fact the truth, that that regime is done, it's gone, it's not coming back. And if it can save American lives, I'm happy to make the decision I made.

Q: As you thought through this decision yourself, then -- and I take it you are telling us you are the person who made this decision?

Rumsfeld: True.

Q: As you thought through this decision, did you also contemplate the notion that as part of this, now you have set the precedent, if you get Saddam Hussein and if you get Osama bin Laden dead, you will show now the pictures of them dead?

Rumsfeld: I am -- I will think those things through and make the same kind of judgment and calculation I made in this case. In this case, it is not a close call for me.

Q: Mr. Secretary --

Q: Why is that?

Rumsfeld: Because the more I thought about it, and the more I thought about the importance of having the Iraqi people gain conviction that that crowd is through, and the fact that it could reduce the number of Americans and coalition people who might be killed and it could increase the number of people who will come forward with information and give us intelligence as to where the remainder of these people are, and where conceivably it'll reduce the number of recruits and jihadists coming into the country because they'll find it's a less hospitable environment than they might have thought, that seems to me to outweigh the sensitivities, proper sensitivities that you have raised. And that's --

I think I'll go to someone else.

Q: Mr. Secretary?

Q: Mr. Secretary, you had in your last appearance here way back on June 30th --

(laughter) -- you had said -- (laughter) --

Q: We looked it up.

Q: Yeah.

Rumsfeld: My goodness, I have missed you! (Laughter.) I've been up on the Hill, as you may have noticed. I've done a lot of press briefings up there. (Laughs.)

Q: You had said at that time -- you specifically avoided the term "guerrilla war", and of course since then --

Rumsfeld: O-o-o-oh, here we go.

(Pause, laughter.)

Q: Yes. General Abizaid says that he does think it's a guerrilla war, and today you were saying that although they are not facing a big army, it is a war nonetheless.

Rumsfeld: Yes.

Q: I wonder if you think that you may have misjudged it back since June 30th, or have things changed, or what -- why the -- what are your thoughts now?

Rumsfeld: Well, you know, I forget -- one of you suggested I go to the dictionary -- (laughter) --

Q: I didn't -- no, I didn't ask this question today. But he would have.

Rumsfeld: I have since gone to the dictionary. And I have looked up several things, one of which I can't immediately recapture, but one was "guerrilla war", another was "insurgency", another was "unconventional war" --

Q: "Quagmire"?

Rumsfeld: Pardon me?

Q: "Quagmire"? (Laughter.)

Rumsfeld: No. That's someone else's business. Quagmire is -- I don't do

quagmires. (Laughter.)

So I looked up all of these things, and I am not uncomfortable with the response I gave that day. And I think that there are so many pieces of what is happening in that country -- there are Ba'athists, there are Fedayeen Saddam people, there are criminals, there are jihadists coming in from other countries, there are people stirring up mischief from neighboring countries. And I think, as I said that day, I hope -- I believe I said -- it is sufficiently complex that it may be that no one of those terms is perfectly appropriate.

As I looked at the dictionary, I'm not uncomfortable with "unconventional", because it is not an army, and it is not a navy, and it is not an air force. But even there the dictionary -- the Pentagon dictionary. I haven't looked in a regular dictionary -- (light laughter) -- the Pentagon dictionary does not even land that one perfectly on what's taking place. So, it may be that there's not a single bumper sticker phrase that is perfectly appropriate to what's taking place.

I've had this discussion with my friend John Abizaid. And next time he's here, you can ask him. (Laughter.)

Q: Mr. Secretary, you used the term "war" today.

Rumsfeld: It is! It's a global war on terror. There's no question. We know that. And it's tough business. And people are being killed. And every time it happens, you can't help but just feel so deeply for the families and the loved ones of those people. And God bless the men and women in uniform that they'll step forward voluntarily and put their lives at risk. And they know what's at stake. And what's at stake is a great deal.

Yes?

Q: Mr. Secretary? General Keane from the Army yesterday presented a really head-spinning rotational plan that will allow them to keep up force levels --

Rumsfeld: I thought it was an excellent plan.

Q: Hard to understand.

Rumsfeld: Oh, really?

Q: -- keep force levels up in Iraq. But it relies, as you know, on taking the rather unusual step of relying on two National Guard brigades. It relies on two Stryker

brigades who have yet to be fully certified. It relies on one division, or elements of one division, that just recently returned from Iraq. And it relies on the multinational force that isn't completely constituted. Given that --

Rumsfeld: Your head must have been spinning -- (laughter) -- because that's not the way I would characterize what he presented.

Q: Given that, and given that you just this month ordered up a study of the AC/RC mix --

Rumsfeld: Right.

Q: -- and said that it was a matter of the utmost urgency, I wonder if you could just tell us whether you think that -- whether you're concerned with how long the Army can -- and the military in general -- can sustain these levels, force levels, in Iraq, without not only affecting security issues, but affecting training and education issues in the armed forces?

Rumsfeld: Well, I have heard General Keane and others present this probably on, now, on four occasions. And there are a whole series of unknowables that are buried in there. And I find that the plan is thoughtful. It's respectful of the people in the Guard and Reserve. It's respectful of the active forces' periods away from their home stations. It is -- they have moved smartly to reduce and even do more than reduce -- significantly reduce, stop losses.

And I think that what will determine what actually happens will be several things. One is the number of international forces that we're able to bring in. A second will be the -- how the security environment evolves over a period of time. And a third will be the speed at which the Coalition Provisional Authority and General Sanchez and his group are able to bring up the Iraqi army, bring up the Iraqi police forces, bring up the civil defense --

Bremer: Civil defense corps.

Rumsfeld: -- civil defense corps. And it is those things that will determine the actual numbers of U.S. forces that will be needed. And I think they're doing a very good job.

We'll make this the last question.

Q: Same subject, actually. Another thing that General Keane said was that the Army needs -- the Army overall needs more infantry and more MPs, and he said

that's a simple fact. I'm wondering what your assessment is of whether the Army in fact is overstretched, given Iraq and the rest that's going on in the world.

Rumsfeld: What they're doing is, in the Army and at the present time, is they're shifting the mix of the force. So rather than having heavy Army air or heavy Army artillery or heavy Army armor, they are shifting to more individual infantry troops and more military police. Now that's because of the nature of the tasks that they have in front of them on the ground.

Q: (Off mike.)

Rumsfeld: No, I'm talking about the mix in Iraq.

Q: Okay.

Rumsfeld: In other words, they're migrating the force they have over towards the kinds of tasks that are currently needed. We have -- I am always concerned about the question of the extent to which our forces are -- the OPTEMPO or the stress on the force. We have to be respectful of them. We have to see that that total force concept continues to work. To do that, we've got to be able to attract and retain the people we need in the force. And so far, we are ahead of schedule or even or ahead in every category in terms of recruiting and retention, in each service. I believe -- I don't believe there's one that's sub-par. So it's working.

And what we've got to do is to continue to do what we're doing, and that is to see that we manage the number of engagements we're involved in, we continue to draw down in parts of the world where they no longer be -- need to be at the levels they currently are. We're doing that. And I feel that there's a lot of very good work being done in the department to see that we -- the other thing we're trying to do is to get the Congress to pass our personnel changes, so that we can get some possibly 300,000 people, military people, who are doing non-military jobs out of those non-military jobs and into military positions. That's a lot of people.

Q: But these unknowables don't --

Rumsfeld: I think we've finished. I -- that's the last question. Thank you.

Q: Can you answer Barbara's question? Can you just finish answering Barbara's --

Rumsfeld: I thought we did brilliantly.

Q: (Laughs.)

Q: What about the moral high ground and the future, with the release of these pictures?

Rumsfeld: Ah, fair enough. I can't answer it any better than I've asked it -- answered it. I think -- I think one has to, in life when you're making a judgment, recognize that things are not black and white, they're not this way or that way, there are shades of gray. And the more I looked at this, the more I made a judgment that this is not the first time people who are dead have been shown. It is not a practice that the United States engages in on a normal basis. I honestly believe that these two are particularly bad characters and that it's important for the Iraqi people to see them, to know they're gone, to know they're dead, and to know they're not coming back. And I think that will save American lives and save coalition lives and be a great benefit to the Iraqi people to be free of that. And --

Q: Is the U.S. --

Rumsfeld: -- and -- and I feel it was the right decision, and I'm glad I made it.

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