




United States Department of Defense.

News Transcript

On the web: <http://www.defenselink.mil/transcripts/2003/tr20031120-0893.html>

Media contact: +1 (703) 697-5131

Public contact: <http://www.dod.mil/faq/comment.html> or +1 (703) 428-0711

Menu

Updated: 20 Nov 2003

NEWS

[DoD News](#)
[Advisories](#)
[Contracts](#)
[Live Briefings](#)
[Photos](#)
[Releases](#)
[Slides](#)
[Speeches](#)
[Today in DoD](#)
[Transcripts](#)

[American Forces](#)
[News](#)
[Articles](#)
[Radio](#)
[Television](#)
[Special Reports](#)

[DoD Search](#)

[About News](#)
[News Archive](#)
[News by E-mail](#)

[Other News Sources](#)

Presenter: Brig Gen. (Promotable) Martin E. Dempsey,
 Commanding General, 1st Armored Division

Thursday, November 20, 2003 8:58 a.m.
 EST

Brig. Gen. Dempsey Briefs on 1st Armored Division Operations in Iraq

STAFF: Good afternoon. We welcome you this afternoon.

Today we have U.S. Brigadier General (promotable) Martin Dempsey. Most of you probably already know General Dempsey. He's the commander of the 1st Armored Division, which is in -- in which the area of operation and responsibility for the city of Baghdad falls. He has graciously agreed to be here today to provide some insight into recent offensive operations that have been conducted this week in and around Baghdad. So he'll be first providing some prepared comments. Then he'll be answering questions.

We'd also like to welcome this afternoon members of the Pentagon press corps, who will be joining this press conference via telecommunications and will also be provided with the opportunity to ask questions.

Let me explain how we work the question and answer period. For individuals seated in our Baghdad audience, General Dempsey will select them at his discretion among those who are raising their hands. At intervals, he will say, "Now we will take a question or questions from Washington." At that point, a monitor in the Defense briefing room will select a questioner. There will be a slight delay between this interval, so we ask your patience on that.

He'll also be trying to accommodate the local Arabic-speaking press. Translations of questions will be sent via telecommunication device to General Dempsey, at which time he will summarize the question and provide the answer.

For all questioners, we ask you identify yourself and your organization. For those desiring any of the imagery that you see in the presentation, please see the 1st AD Public Affairs officer, who will be remaining behind to get e-mail addresses to provide it to you.

And the briefing we expect to be about 30 minutes in duration in total. And as a last reminder, as a courtesy to both General Dempsey as well as your fellow correspondents, we ask you to turn off your cell phones and your pagers. In addition, I remind you that General Dempsey is the operational commander for military operations and not a political spokesperson. Therefore, whatever policy questions you might have should be reserved for a more appropriate opportunity and directed to the Coalition Provisional Authority.

With that, it is my distinct honor to introduce you to General Dempsey.

GEN. DEMPSEY: Thank you, and good evening to all of you.

I'd like to begin, actually, by expressing my condolences to our Turkish and British allies for the attack in Istanbul, and also to my Saudi friends. Many of you know I had served for the past two years in Saudi Arabia, and I'd like to express my condolences to them as well for the attack in Riyadh.

I want to talk to you a little bit about Operation Iron Hammer. There's been a certain amount of interest generated by it. I'll tell you that it's the culmination of a series of intelligence-based operations. Fundamentally, here in Baghdad we do two things. We're either fighting for intelligence or we're fighting based on that intelligence. And so we'll talk a little bit about that.

This particular operation is the result of several weeks of intelligence gains, largely human intelligence, and largely provided by the citizens of Baghdad, as well as extensive pattern analysis by our intelligence experts to determine who, where and how the enemy is attacking us. Iron Hammer is, therefore, I think, best described as an intelligence-based, precise combat operation.

Next slide.

This is the intent. And I'd like to highlight the fact that it's a -- and I said "is" because it's ongoing. It's a joint military operation. We've got the United States Air Force involved with us as well. It's also the case that we've got the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps and the Iraqi police integrated with us during these operations as well. Fundamentally, we want to communicate to the enemy the high cost of continuing to resist, as well as to assure the good citizens of Baghdad of our resolve.

Next slide.

The operation was planned and is being conducted in three phases. And as I pointed out just a moment ago, we attack based on intelligence, and then we fight for additional intelligence. In this case it will be phase two, it will be force-oriented reconnaissance. I make that distinction because reconnaissance can be aimed at terrain and other things as well. But in this case, we're looking for those individuals who are fighting us. And then we will attack, again, based on that intelligence, as well as exploiting the intelligence that we've gained in the earlier phases. Each phase is event-driven, not time-driven. And so we'll base our decision on when to move from phase to phase based on our determination that we've got what we want out of that phase.

Next slide.

Let me orient you a little on the city of Baghdad. The city of Baghdad has 88 neighborhoods and nine districts. The nine districts are labeled on the two plasma screens behind me. We think that of those 88 neighborhoods, six to eight of them are less than secure. And as you know, our charter is to provide a safe and secure environment for the Iraqi people. And so I say to you that six of the eight are probably what we would describe as less secure than we want them to be.

That should also indicate to you, I think, that this fight we have here in Baghdad is a neighborhood-centered fight. I'll tell you that there is no one template that I can take and move from neighborhood to neighborhood and decide that I've got it right and that that's the way that I should address that particular neighborhood. And what I mean by that is it should be no surprise to you that each neighborhood has its own ethnic composition, its own unique religious composition, its own potentially tribal composition, and for sure, its own economic composition. And so each neighborhood requires a degree of determination and a degree of patience and a degree of precision in order to make sure that the outcome is what we wanted it to be, which is a safe and secure environment.

You've heard me say this before in previous briefings; we continue to believe that our primary enemy in Baghdad is the former regime. Whether you call them former regime loyalists or Ba'athists or simply power brokers, I don't spend much time trying to make much of a determination about which of those words is correct. Fundamentally, it's people interested in power and the restoration of it in their interest and in their benefit. And we think that they are organized in several cells. And I'll talk to you a little bit about cells in a moment.

Next slide.

Iron Hammer focused on three neighborhoods. Now, of course, while focusing on these three neighborhoods -- and I'll loosely define them for you as Abu Ghraib in the west, Adhamiya in the northeast, and down in the Rashid area on the western edge of the Mansour district, if you know it, kind of in the center of town. Throughout, though, we've maintained citywide responsibilities. And I'll explain what I mean by that in a moment. And we also placed emphasis throughout this operation on countering the rocket and mortar attackers that had some success against us in the previous weeks in the Green Zone. And I think you'll see that we've made some progress in that regard.

Next slide.

The first of these operations took place 10 days or so ago, and we attacked a cell that we knew to be operating in what we call the 636 Mahallah, which is located on the western edge of the Mansour district. And as you see there -- well, first let me mention that when I talk about a cell, we look to find how a cell is organized by finding its leaders and its deputies, its financiers and its planners, its suppliers, recruiters and operators. And clearly, the better we do at defeating that cell from the top, that is to say by stripping away its leadership, stripping away its suppliers, the better off we'll do over time. And in fact, it's a little more challenging when you're going after those people. When you're going after an operator, you're likely to find the operator with a weapon or a piece of ordnance, some indication that you're looking for a trigger-puller, fundamentally. Those individuals tend to be not as difficult to track down and defeat as the leaders of the cell.

In this case -- (to staff) -- next slide -- in this case, we think we did get at that cell, by virtue of the fact that we captured its leadership; we captured many of its deputies; we captured people we know to be planners, suppliers; and we as well captured some of the operators.

You can see there that we captured bombs, roadside bombs. You'll hear us describe them sometimes as improvised explosive devices. We captured several of those in a state of readiness to be used against us.

You can see there that you know you're into a cell when you find things like fake passports and some of the literature that we tend to find.

And then, of course, in this case, we were looking for someone involved in the rocket attack in the Rashid Hotel, and we were able to capture the leadership of the cell with a translated, fundamentally, hand-written rocket manual that clearly, in my mind, ties it back to those perpetrators.

Next slide.

Now, as I mentioned, we focused on neighborhoods or are focusing on specific neighborhoods there in Iron Hammer, but there's other things going on in Baghdad and its surrounding areas as well. And what I want to show you here is that we had a logistics convoy that was operating between our logistics support area south of the city, and we had an attack helicopter accompanying it for its security. And that particular convoy hit an IED and then was -- a roadside bomb and then was engaged from a building nearby by small arms fire. And the helicopter turned and conducted the attack against those inside the house.

And now, if you would, please, run the tape. You'll see the convoy in the foreground and the aircraft flying overhead.

Q (Off mike.)

GEN. DEMPSEY: This was about 10 days ago, a week ago.

There's the convoy.

Q (Off mike.)

GEN. DEMPSEY: And there go the rockets.

And the SEG picture, by the way, the reticle, as we call it, is for the 30-millimeter gun. That rocket attack would hit the house it was aimed at -- (to staff) -- and turn to the next slide, please -- with these results.

Now, as I've told you, we are attempting to tie all attacks to us to some cell or another, because we don't think there's too many attacks out there that are just freelancers. But in this case, I don't know exactly which cell this attack came from. We suspect it may have been from a cell organized south of Baghdad, because we know there are some down there as well. But I don't know exactly that. And we worked with the 82nd Airborne, which owns the battle space to my south and west, and we share information and we try to get a clearer picture of that as well.

And we may get some help from this enemy that we have captured, once he's able to be interrogated.

Next slide.

In similar fashion, I've mentioned that we are trying to get at this mortar challenge, the -- that is to say, those that are attacking us with mortars and rockets. And they can be characterized, essentially, as hit-and-run attackers. They will shoot a round or two and then -- from the back of a truck sometimes, or very rapidly displace it and replace it in the bed of a truck and move out.

The rockets we encounter often times are on a timer, sometimes laid up against the side of a berm or placed on a rain gutter from a roof. And it's very primitive, unsophisticated stuff. And they actually have very little idea where it's going. So if anyone in the room believes that, you know, these are a bunch of professionals with some precise engagement criteria, they're not. They're -- they -- when they shoot those rockets, I can assure you, they have very little idea where they're going. They do pick some specific spots that allows them to line up their attack. But it is as big a mystery to them as it is to us where it's going to land when they shoot.

So we have to get at that, and it's a bit tricky, of course, because they don't stay around long enough, and so we have to be either overhead or we have to be in ambush, or we have to find some other way to deny them that space. And I'm sure some of you are interested about that.

In this particular case, we had a helicopter that acquired the attack. And again, to show you the difference between us and them, we followed that vehicle until it left town and moved into a part of the town where we could engage it without risking the safety of any of the other citizens of Baghdad. And we did so.

And at the point where we felt we had the shot -- and we had been tracking it from the moment of attack; we watched it stop several places, pick up things, drop things off, which we later went back and recovered -- we did then engage with the helicopter. And if you'll go to the next slide, you'll see the result: two killed, three wounded, eight captured, and so forth.

Now you might say: How did they all get in the back of that truck? Well, they didn't. They were attacked when they got to their safe house, and several of those captured personnel were actually in the safe house that this truck moved to, to rejoin his comrades. And so that particular mortar attack group -- again, I don't know where it belongs in this cell structure, but I know where it's not going back to at this point. That's all I know.

Next slide.

(Audio break from source) -- these neighborhoods. Adhamiya -- (audio break from source).

GEN. DEMPSEY: They performed admirably and well. And we went in there. And if you'll go to the next slide, you'll see the results of that.

Now I make a distinction about this cell and the previous cell. I said we defeated it. And as I mentioned, we assessed that we defeated the cell out to the west because we captured the leaders, we captured the financiers and so forth. In this case, we simply assessed that we disrupted it. Now, we are eager to continue the interrogations that may allow us to break this cell down further, but for now, we say we've disrupted this cell.

You can see there as well that there were bombs completed and ready to be emplaced on the side of the road. And you can see that we did -- we do believe that we captured some of their suppliers. So a significant disruption to the cell working in Adhamiya .

Just you might be interested to know that we always go back into these places after the fact. And the people of Adhamiya were actually, although they said, "You were awful noisy last night," they also told us that that particular raid was probably long overdue. And so we believe that the vast majority of the Iraqi people are not interested in continuing this resistance and, in fact, understand that it's -- in fact, many of them tell us it's on its last legs. I tell them, "I hope so."

Okay, next slide.

Abu Ghraib. We had conducted a raid out into Abu Ghraib about three weeks ago. Now, this predates Operation Iron Hammer, but I mention it because it's important to paint the picture that we do run through this cycle of attack, gain intelligence, attack, gain intelligence, and always on the offensive, but sometimes we're more aggressive than others, when we feel we have the intelligence to be aggressive. So in Abu Ghraib about three weeks ago, we had a fairly serious fight and ended up killing 14. And we assessed that those were generally the operators of that cell. We don't believe that we rolled up any of the leadership of that cell. So during Iron Hammer we went back, and once again we took the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps.

This particular operation was done during daylight hours. And we went back in there, and if you'll go to the next slide, you'll see the results of that one. A little bit less dramatic, I guess, than the others, but again, this is a work in progress, and every time we get inside of one of these cells, we generally find additional information that allows us to keep, again, chipping away at it.

I also want to mention that there is a 12-hour period that the Abu Ghraib mission -- well actually, go to the next slide -- you'll see that we had a similar operation -- next slide.

This was in the Rashid section of town, in the south. Now, we weren't looking for a cell here, but we were looking for people who had been laying IEDs out with some regularity on Highway 8, essentially where it turns north-south, south of Baghdad. And so we went into Abu Ghraib -- correction, into the Rashid section, with the 2nd of the 82nd, commanded by Curt Fuller, about the same time as Colonel Gove's 3rd Brigade was going into Abu Ghraib and about six hours after Colonel Pete Mansoor's 1st Brigade was in Adhamiya. The point is that these three brigade-size operations occurred nearly simultaneously, and we thought that was a positive outcome, both because we think that that adds its own sense of disruption to the mission, and I think our results bore that out.

Again, this was conducted with the Iraqi police and with the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps. And in fact, most of our missions -- our goal is always to do that, and I would say we achieve our goal, for the most part, all the time.

And there were the results of that mission.

Next slide.

Okay, this is a summary of Operation Iron Hammer to date. We're finished with phase one; we're in phase two. The starbursts on the slide on your left indicate those places where we conducted a military operation or got into a fight during the first essentially 12 days or so of Operation Iron Hammer. On the right side, you see a roll-up of the results. And I think that we've probably provided a handout that allows you to see that in a little more detail as well.

Q (Off mike.)

GEN. DEMPSEY: If -- no, not yet. If we -- you can ask plenty of questions after this about the results or about the missions themselves. I want to show you one -- a couple of other things. I'm nearly to the end of this PowerPoint presentation. I know you all love PowerPoint.

Next slide.

We're not a one-dimensional kind of outfit. And in fact, in this environment, you can't be a one-dimensional kind of outfit. And so during these past 12 days of phase one of Operation Iron Hammer, we were able to bring to closure some programs that we'd actually started about 90 days ago with Baghdad University. Now, Baghdad University is about 31 campuses here in the city; about 125,000 students. And like much of the infrastructure of the city after the conflict, it was badly looted, windows out, all of the local area networks were essentially ripped out. It just was a -- it was a very sad thing to see what someone had done to the higher education system of the city of Baghdad.

And so we began to work with the administration -- because that's their future -- the administration of the university. And during this particular time when Iron Hammer was ongoing, we brought to closure -- (to staff) -- next slide -- about \$1.4 million worth of programs on behalf Iraq's young men and women who are trying to get a better education and better themselves and, in many cases, their country. So, I think that's an important point to make as well.

Next slide.

I do have one more point to make by way of helping you see what we're about and helping you see what our enemy is about. I just showed you how we're investing in our future, trying to educate -- help educate the young people of Iraq in freedom and democracy and all those things that most of us hold so dear.

Pull that poncho liner off there, would you?

In the Adhamiya raid, in the leader's house, affixed to the wall was this mural. It's a mural that -- actually, it's a collage, almost, of several American cities. And affixed to the top of it on a string is a jet airliner, which I suppose was intended to be swung back and forth. And so my message to you is, that's the kind of education that our enemies are investing in, and we better continue to invest in the right kind of education or the future will not be as bright as I think we all want it to be.

Okay. With that, I will take your questions. Yes, sir?

Q Yes, sir. Christian Carl, Newsweek magazine. Sir, two questions. First of all, the cordon search. Is this basically a new tactic? Is this something that you've employed a lot in the past? It seems like in the past, searches tended to be discrete house-to-house searches or raids on, you know, clusters of houses. The idea of sealing off a whole area seemed to me a new tactic in this particular fight.

And second question. When you were tracking that truck that had the mortar in it, how were you watching it wend its way around through the outskirts of Baghdad until you felt you had a clear shot?

Thank you.

GEN. DEMPSEY: To the first, the cordon and search is one of about three different missions that we run very routinely and, in fact, have been doing it since we arrived in Baghdad. There's no

difference. The difference is, if there's a difference at all, is that we're integrating the ICDC into it. But we run the cordon and search, and a cordon and search would be run if the intelligence was adequate to do the mission but not precise enough to pick out the exact house. Cordon and attack would be if I had enough intelligence to actually designate key houses in the -- (audio break from source).

(Pause in briefing to correct audio problems.)

Q (In Arabic.)

GEN. DEMPSEY: Let me repeat the question for those of you that didn't have the little airport earphones on.

The first question was, isn't it somewhat counterproductive for me to degrade the capabilities of the enemy by calling him unsophisticated? And I'll answer that. And the second question was, is this a new tactic, using aircraft and fixed-wing aviation to shoot down into the city and into the outlying regions?

Okay. To the first, the enemy is neither 10-foot tall nor is he everywhere. And so what we're trying to do is figure out who he is, what he is and how he operates. And I'll tell you that in these cells, there is, as I said, operators up through those that command and control it.

The operators are unsophisticated, and if they take offense to that, I apologize for it. But -- no, I don't. But they are simply unsophisticated. I mean, they build contraptions. They wire things together that sometimes work, sometimes don't.

Now where I will give the enemy his due is that, as you climb up the hierarchical structure of the cell, they have been successful in commanding and controlling that cell without us figuring it out. And so they've got some kind of communications capability, they've got some kind of planning capability, they've got some kind of supply capability that probably warrants the use of the term "sophisticated," but not at the operator level.

Let me answer the second question. The second question had to do with -- is this a change in tactic, by using aircraft? And it absolutely is not a change in tactic. The one thing I am blessed with is a chain of command that runs up through the president of the United States, who has essentially told me, "You do whatever you need to do, in a way that'll make your country proud, to finish that fight." Now that's paraphrased, but that's fundamentally the kind of freedom I have to manage the fight in Baghdad, Iraq, as I see fit.

Now the fact that I haven't to this point used attack helicopters to shoot -- I have used them quite frequently in the reconnaissance role, because they have wonderful optics at night -- and the fact that I haven't used Air Force airframes to shoot until now is indicative not of any reluctance to do so, but wanting to make sure that I have the intelligence that I talked to you about, so that I could be precise and so that we could gain the benefit we want to gain out of it.

This is not a show of force. Let me assure you of that. I know what loud noises sound like. So too, sadly, do the people of Baghdad. So too, fortunately, do our enemies. So it's not a show of force. I mean, I don't have to show anybody anything I have to do.

I'll tell you what it is, though. If you have someone who's shooting rockets, and they know that they have five or six or maybe 10 places from which they can shoot; and they pick and choose those 10 places based on where my patrols are not; and if one night a aircraft that they couldn't see or hear lobs a couple of X-millimeter rounds into the ground and turns the ground into a pile of dirt, it's got to cause you pause the next time you decide to go out and shoot your rockets. And that's what I'm looking for. I want the enemy to know that although I'm on his home turf, he is not going to use that to his advantage.

And so that's -- if there's a change in tactic -- first of all, I push back on the idea that it's a change

in tactic. It's using another of the tools that have been given to me in a precise, deliberate, careful way to achieve a certain outcome, and that outcome is that these folks shooting rockets at us are not exactly sure what I'm doing anymore, and I like that.

Okay, let me take one from Washington, D.C., please.

Q General, this is Charlie. Can you hear me? General, this is Charlie Aldinger with Reuters at the Pentagon. Perhaps -- we didn't see your slides in detail, perhaps it showed it. But I wonder if you could, number one, give us a snapshot of Iron Hammer so far; perhaps in a round figure how many sorties flown, maybe what types of aircraft, maybe how many 500-pound bombs dropped -- just some picture of how big this has been.

And number two, you said early on that you were going to -- that you had some success against these mortar attacks. How have you measured that, in the fact that you hit that truck, or have the mortar attacks slowed down or perhaps even stopped?

Thank you.

GEN. DEMPSEY: Yeah, as to the first, Charlie, you know, somehow I think we probably electronically, here in the 21st century, could probably get these back to you, and I'll try to do that.

Fundamentally, though, you asked about the magnitude of the operation. It's about 12 days. It's five brigade combat teams. We had, I think, five nights where we had Air Force flying in close air support of us, and every night we used our Apache Helicopters and our Kiowa Warriors.

And the other question I think you had was how do we measure its effectiveness. And I mentioned one way we measure it, which is, you know, we do track where we think these cells are, and then, as we manage to disrupt and eventually defeat them, we make some kind of annotation on our chart. And so, as you saw, we have three cells that we think we've gotten inside their decision cycle.

The other way, though, is exactly as you suggested -- what kind of attacks have continued against us. And I won't use numbers because I don't want to necessarily encourage the enemy in any way here. I'm working as hard as I can to discourage them. But I'd say that from the period prior to Operation Iron Hammer to now, the attacks are down about 70 percent. And we're working as hard as we possibly can to keep it that way and drive it to zero.

Yes?

Q From Arabiyah. Are you sharing intelligence information with Iraqis? There is some information that says that X general in the Iraqi intelligence is taking the -- is shouldering the interrogation of some suspects. How do you evaluate the bombing? There's some human casualties. Are you taking into your consideration that there will be some casualties among civilians? Thank you.

GEN. DEMPSEY: Well, to the last point, do we take into account if there are innocent civilians caught up in these? Of course. I mean, that's, in fact, a big part of the calculation long before the attack is joined. And to that point, in Baghdad we have had no civilian casualties resulting from Iron Hammer. Now, we have had some civilian casualties, and we are very aggressive in making sure we do as well as we can to overcome that.

But the other point, about intelligence. I don't have any visibility on what's being done at the CJTF-7 level regarding shared intelligence with a future Iraqi intelligence force. I just simply don't have it. I can tell you what I have as my own internal intelligence apparatus. That includes many Iraqis and includes the ICDC. You probably heard the anecdotal evidence that we didn't include them in our rehearsal before the missions. That's --

Q What I mean, that X Iraqi general, he is -- (inaudible)?

GEN. DEMPSEY: I have no idea. I'm sorry, I can't help you with that.

Yes, ma'am?

Q I'm Susan Sachs from The New York Times. Do you have any indication that any of these cells that you've captured or that you know of had anything to do with the other major attacks in Baghdad, the suicide bombings, the attack on the U.N.? And do you know if there's any -- if they've played any role in those, or have they been able to give you any intelligence to help you solve those other bombings?

GEN. DEMPSEY: I mean, we are receiving intelligence -- as I mentioned at the very beginning of my briefing, the amount of human intelligence that, particularly in the aftermath of the suicide bombers at the police stations, that has begun to come in to us is rather significant and, I think you would say, impressive.

Now, the connections between suicide bombers and former regime loyalists is a very difficult one to make definitively, although we suspect -- I think that's probably the best way to describe this -- that when they decide they're going to commit a sensational attack, one in which they're going to try to grab the headlines and one in which they're going to try to discredit our progress -- because we're making enormous progress, and when they want to discredit it, I think they go outside to get a volunteer -- a jihadist, call him what you want -- a foreigner to come in and drive the car. And we have seen that, as you know, with the VBID attack. But to the extent that that is an actual alliance, versus a simple matter of convenience, frankly, I don't know. But we are trying to figure that out.

Yes?

Q Luke Baker from Reuters. Do you have any evidence that the cells that you're in touch with in Baghdad are in touch with cells elsewhere in the country, in Ramadi or Fallujah and Tikrit? And do you fear that when a mobile telecommunications network is set up in Iraq that there will be more coordination between these groups?

GEN. DEMPSEY: You know, they'll find a way to communicate whether there's a telecommunications net or not. I mean, that's -- fundamentally, if they're going to exist, they have to communicate. So, I don't think it will be -- I don't know. I mean, that's something that I'm sure some intelligence expert is right now scratching his or her head about.

But to the earlier point about evidence of connections between cells, we do have evidence that there is, particularly in the financing and supplying side of things. I haven't seen any evidence of any direction on the kinds of attacks. I think that the character of the attacks is simply, you know, we're going to provide you the money, we're going to provide you the supplies, and what we want you to do is discredit the coalition. So, I haven't seen that, but we have evidence of supply and we have evidence of financing that does move around the country a bit.

Yes, ma'am?

Q (In Arabic.)

GEN. DEMPSEY: Yeah. The question was how do we make sure we've got the people we really think we have. That's the question. How do we verify their identification?

You saw up there that we've got about 104 -- I don't have the number memorized. I fully expect that after we go through the interrogation process and the verification of identifications, that a percentage of those will be released. I mean, that's just reality. It's going to be that way. How many? If we've done our job well, if we have accumulated our intelligence well, then we should expect that about 75 percent of those we capture remain captured. And so, we are very careful about that. We don't simply sweep a bunch of people up and throw them into Abu Ghraib prison and hope for the best, we are

very careful.

Let me go back to Washington.

Q Hi, General. It's Lisa Burgess with Stars and Stripes. How you doing? In late July, we were talking about some things that you were doing to make changes in your intelligence procedures. I was wondering if you could talk about how that's been going -- apparently you've been doing some pretty innovative things -- and how that led to the action that you have under way now.

GEN. DEMPSEY: Yeah, Lisa, it's good to see you again. I'm sorry you chickened out and went back to Washington, D.C., just as it got hot around here.

But I'll tell you, the answer to that question is that this is a fight for intelligence. I mean, fundamentally, you know, to the question of do I have enough soldiers, the answer is absolutely yes.

As you know, the larger issue is, how do I use them and on what basis? And the answer to that is intelligence.

It's a work in progress. I'd tell you that we analyze -- we call it the after-action review procedure; "assess," I suppose, would be another term -- on about a biweekly basis, every other week, we take a look at how our intelligence system is supporting operations. And then we make some adjustments, not every two weeks, but often.

And what has caused the biggest adjustment is, we've gone from a system that was largely based in technical intelligence to one that is now largely based in human intelligence. And so some of those that would be working behind a computer, doing a certain kind of work, six months ago, are now working with us to try to figure out how to take all this human intelligence as it come in to us, turn it into something that's actionable, thereby making us a lot more precise. And that's our goal -- to be precise about our operations.

Yes, ma'am?

Okay. You have the last question. Make it a good one.

Q Jennifer Glass from "The World" program, public radio. Two questions. Obviously, a large part of intelligence is having the hearts and minds of the people on the ground, to get them on your side. And yet if you go to some of the sites of these attacks in the last couple of days, people are bewildered. They say that the people who are carrying out these attacks aren't from their area. They have no control over things from the area. Their homes are being damaged. In some cases, livestock has been damaged. And they're looking for compensation.

The question: One, how does this affect your campaign for hearts and minds? Two, compensation? And three, there was an attack on a factory in Al Doura, which was empty, had been told -- people had been told to evacuate it. How does attacking an empty building further your cause?

GEN. DEMPSEY: Yeah, that's about 25 questions, but I get your point. Let me try to answer it in part.

First of all, hearts and minds. You know, what does that really mean? I'll tell you, what I'm looking for is trust and confidence, you know. I mean, if I can get the trust and confidence of the people of Baghdad that I am here for the reason I say I'm here -- to provide a safe and secure environment, so they can establish governance and move into the future -- then God bless us all. And that's what I'm looking for.

Now how do you get that? You get that any number of ways. You get that in the -- in many of the programs I talked about at Baghdad University. Four days ago we ran a convention for Iraq's farmers. Five hundred farmers in this building formed themselves into a union or cooperative so that as

this new government forms, they can find voice. They had banners, they had platforms and planks and all kinds of Robert's Rules. And it was a wonderful thing to see. And we set it up. And I can't tell you how many of them came forward to tell us that that was as big an indication that we're serious about this as anything we do on the battlefield.

Okay. Now, in the cases where there is an innocent civilian injured, God forbid killed, property damaged, there is a process, and everyone knows exactly how it works except me, to be honest. I just know it's out there, and I know that because my SJA gives me a report every day about property damage claims and how much money we've paid to try to redress wrongs that we may have created -- committed.

But to the point of people being bewildered, I've actually had -- it's been more often the case that the citizens of Baghdad, who recognize that it's really not outsiders, come forward to us and say, you know, we understand what you're doing.

Now, you know, I'm not running for mayor, so I'm not trying to convince you that I have the popular support of the people of Baghdad every time I shoot an Apache helicopter. What I am telling you is that after we do that, 100 percent of the time we go back, and 100 percent of the time we try to make sure that people understand what we're doing.

Now, the last point -- I lost it. But you had one other point -- oh, about the building. What do we gain by shooting an empty building? Well, first of all, I tried earlier, and I'll try one more time. That particular building -- I know the one you're talking about. It was a die factory before the war; completely looted, absolutely useless. You know, I don't know what anybody's telling you, but that building was a frame. That particular frame had been used on countless occasions. Remember, I told you the way we do intelligence is we gather it and then we do pattern analysis over time -- day of week, time of day, angle of attack -- any number of things that turn what is, relatively speaking, this thing into a scientific approach, and then we apply the art part of it. But in the scientific side of it, that particular location had been used countless times to attack us.

"Now why shoot it twice?" you might say. Well, if you shot a target like that once -- the enemy's a pretty cagey fellow. He probably says, "well, they're done for tonight, aren't they?" And so you fly away. He comes over. Next thing you know, you're getting shot at again from the same building.

What I want to make sure -- we went back and shot it again. What I want to make sure the enemy knows is that there is no sanctuary in Baghdad. And I also want the good people of Baghdad to know that we're very careful about what we do and always make it right if we make a mistake.

And that was the last question. And I thank you for your interest, and God bless you all.

(C) COPYRIGHT 2003, FEDERAL NEWS SERVICE, INC., 1919 M ST. NW; SUITE 220; WASHINGTON, DC - 20036, USA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. ANY REPRODUCTION, REDISTRIBUTION OR RETRANSMISSION IS EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED. UNAUTHORIZED REPRODUCTION, REDISTRIBUTION OR RETRANSMISSION CONSTITUTES A MISAPPROPRIATION UNDER APPLICABLE UNFAIR COMPETITION LAW, AND FEDERAL NEWS SERVICE, INC. RESERVES THE RIGHT TO PURSUE ALL REMEDIES AVAILABLE TO IT IN RESPECT TO SUCH MISAPPROPRIATION. FEDERAL NEWS SERVICE, INC. IS A PRIVATE FIRM AND IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. NO COPYRIGHT IS CLAIMED AS TO ANY PART OF THE ORIGINAL WORK PREPARED BY A UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE AS PART OF THAT PERSON'S OFFICIAL DUTIES. FOR INFORMATION ON SUBSCRIBING TO FNS, PLEASE CALL JACK GRAEME AT 202-347-1400.



[Printer-friendly Version](#)



[Email A Copy](#)

[Site Map](#) | [Privacy & Security Notice](#) | [External Link Disclaimer](#) | [Web Policy](#) | [About DefenseLINK](#) | [Contact Us](#)