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Sent: Friday, December 23, 2005 4:17 PM
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Cc: Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD
Subject: Media coverage of the SecDef's trip by the traveling press
Attachments: SecDefTrip.IraqJordan.12.23.doc

Attached please find an overview of the Iraq and Jordan portions of the Secretary's trip. Included is coverage from the traveling press, as well as general media coverage on the Secretary's troop adjustment announcement.

Note: due to the nature of the coverage, this is a lengthy report. We have included several TV clips from today discussing the troop adjustment – a few of which include interviews with military analysts.

The Secretary's Trip: Iraq, Jordan

December 22 - 23



Secretary Rumsfeld and Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari arrive for a news conference in Baghdad, Iraq, Friday, Dec. 23, 2005

(AP Photo/Jim Young, Pool)



Secretary Rumsfeld is surrounded by soldiers after a Town Hall meeting in Fallujah, Iraq, December 23, 2005

(REUTERS/Jim Young)

The traveling press includes:

Bret Baier, *Fox News Channel*
Bob Burns, *AP*
Grigory Khananayev, *Fox News Channel*
Lesley Wroughton, *Reuters*
Maya Zumwalt, *Fox News Channel*

Jerome Bernard, *AFP*
John Hendren, *NPR*
Steve Shelton, *Fox News*
James Young, *Reuters Photo*

Print/Online highlights:

Traveling press overview:

AFP, AP and Reuters all reported on the Secretary's troop drawdown announcement, which was the focus of most reports from the traveling press on Friday. The language used in the reporting included "withdrawal," "cutback," "pullback" and "drawdown" without using the Secretary's language of "adjustment."

The outlets reported on the Secretary's announcement of the troop drawdown in the context of other Iraqi-related news, specifically, the protests denouncing the "fraudulent" Iraqi elections and the UN's announcement that it will not conduct an independent review of the election results. The violence that continues in Iraq was also a key focus in coverage of the troop drawdown announcement.

General coverage of the troop reduction announcement:

As part of coverage from the traveling press and in other media outlets, there was little unique commentary on the general announcement, as most stories simply summarized the Secretary's comments and details included in the Pentagon's statement.

However, later in the day, AFP, AP and other outlets reported on positive reaction from Sen. Democratic leader Harry Reid, a sense of disappointment from Congressman Murtha and comments from House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi. Some outlets, including Reuters, highlighted the Secretary's announcement of a drawdown in the context of the day's violence that killed 10 Iraqi soldiers and wounded 20. While the media did not state as such, there was a hint of contradiction implied in the two events – as one Reuters headline read: "Iraqi Troops Killed, Rumsfeld Signals Pullback."

Traveling Press Coverage:

AFP:

- Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid was "pleased" to hear about the drawdown
- Congressman John Murtha said the announcement "fell short of his expectations"
 - "That's not what I had in mind," he said in a statement. "Our logistics convoys remain vulnerable and the US troops remain the targets."
- House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.: Hopes the reduction "will quickly be followed by others that will result in all U.S. combat forces being redeployed from Iraq next year."

Reuters:

- "Guerrillas stormed an Iraqi army post on Friday, killing 10 soldiers and wounding 20, as Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told U.S. combat troops their numbers would fall as Iraqi forces were trained to take over."

AFP

Fallujah:

- SecDef troop drawdown announcement
 - Remarks came the day after British Prime Minister Tony Blair, also visiting Iraq, suggested a British troop withdrawal next year. While no

timetable was given, British tabloid *The Sun* alleged the drawdown would start in May '06, while the *London Times* said 1,000 troops had already been withdrawn

- SecDef lauded progress and high voter turnout in Fallujah
- Supposed to meet with Iraqi leaders Friday about the new government, which will be "difficult," especially with the recent protests about the "fraudulent" elections

AP

Fallujah:

- SecDef troop drawdown announcement: no details on exact size of cut or timetable – but indications are that a series of significant cuts could come in 2006, possibly before the November midterm elections

Jordan:

- SecDef traveled to Amman to visit a military training center outside the Jordanian capital to see Jordanian special operations soldiers in a mock assault on a building, using live ammunition. He also told a group of soldiers undergoing training that their work is key in the eventual withdrawal of U.S. troops

Afghanistan:

- Although military officials said they were making gains toward curbing violence against U.S. forces and Taliban resistance, some officers said the hostile forces were making some gains through improved training and organization, and more advanced weaponry, such as armor-piercing munitions

REUTERS

Fallujah:

- SecDef troop drawdown announcement: Number of troops to be cut, more will be involved in training the Iraqi military
 - Reasons for drawdown are based on progress with Iraqi elections, economics and security
 - Iraq still faces the threat of violence and other challenges
 - The Administration has been pressured by Democrats for withdrawal details
 - Gen. Casey: U.S. forces will now use a baseline of 130,000, down from 138,000. He also said that, while the plan is to scale back troop numbers, we will increase them again if necessary

Baghdad:

- After a meeting with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani and Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, Jaafari applauded the troop cutbacks, as it shows the "growing capabilities and confidence of Iraqi security forces."

Broadcast/Radio Highlights:

TV/Radio Coverage: Traveling Press

- Troop reduction characterized as "an early Christmas gift" from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld
 - Reductions will be about 7000 troops—move from 17 to 15 brigades

- Secretary expects reductions to continue
- Traveled to Jordan to review Iraqi special operation forces train—"pretty impressive"
- In his discussions with Iraqi officials, the Secretary is pushing for an inclusive, competent and centrist government.
- Discuss General Casey's comments about "fewer U.S. troops are better in Iraq" in comparison with Congressman Murtha's position.
 - Mentions that General Casey qualified his statement by linking his comments to the capabilities of Iraqi troops and the need to avoid creating a dependency on their part to U.S. forces.

TV/Radio coverage: general coverage of the troop reduction announcement

- Reduction discussed in terms of two separate groups of troops
 - 20,000 troops in Iraq for election security
 - 7,500 troops from two brigades
- Reductions characterized as a "Christmas present" to the troops
- Troop reductions continue to be based on ground conditions
- Troop reductions do not affect troops in Iraq right now
- Expect to see lot more reductions in the New Year
- Readiness of Iraqi troops questioned—troop reduction story linked to news about gunmen attacking a Iraqi base
 - "They're able to get past the defenses, kill 10 Iraqi soldiers and wound 20 others. There will be some concern about the readiness level of trained Iraqi troops if this sort of thing can happen" (Fox)
- Dangers faced by U.S. soldier's linked to the reduction announcement
 - "For the soldiers who remain in Iraq right now they are still very much in harm's way. Two U.S. soldiers are dead after an explosion in Baghdad" (Headline News)
- More troops in certain specialties to assist Iraqi forces, less troops as "grunts on the ground" (CNN)
 - Shift focus to training and supporting Iraqi security force
- Drawdown will be "metered, very, very disciplined" (CNN)
- Brigade in Kuwait will not deploy to Iraq but the "first armored brigade of the first infantry division will actually be sending an awful lot of soldiers" (Fox)
- Discussed the difference between withdraw and drawdown (Fox)
- Questioned whether reductions announcement is due to pressure from Congress (Fox)
- Iraqis welcoming troop reductions with caution while Iraqi officials say that troop drawdown does mean a "loss in security" but a sign of the strengthening of the Iraqi security forces.

PRINT/ONLINE EXCERPTS – THE TRAVELING PRESS

AFP – JEROME BERNARD

Rumsfeld announces further Iraq troop withdrawal

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld announced Friday that the United States would withdraw two combat brigades, totalling between 5,000 and 9,000 soldiers, from Iraq by next spring.

That would bring the number of US troops under the level of 138,000 for the first time since April 2004, a year after US-led forces first invaded the country.

His remarks came just a day after British Prime Minister Tony Blair raised the prospects of beginning a British troop pull-down next year...

The prime minister refused to be drawn on a timetable, but Friday's first edition of British tabloid The Sun said the process would begin in May. London's The Times claimed 1,000 troops had already been pulled back from frontline duties as the first stage of withdrawal...

Speaking of Fallujah, Rumsfeld praised progress made there, saying it has "some of the highest voter registration and turn-out rates in the country and has increasingly capable and confident Iraqi security forces in the streets helping to maintain order and to hunt down terrorists"...

Rumsfeld was also expected to meet with Iraqi leaders on Friday to discuss the ongoing political process and the formation of a new government...

The likely difficulty of forming a new government was highlighted on Thursday, when 35 Iraqi political groups, including secular Shiites and Sunni Arabs, rejected early election results...

Rumsfeld also expected that time was needed to crush the insurgency in Iraq...

Speaking to around 200 US soldiers at Camp Victory shortly after his arrival and following meetings with US Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad and US force commander General George Casey, Rumsfeld praised the forces for their contributions.

"The economic progress that has taken place in this country has moved forward as well and certainly the military progress is impressive," he said.

The 1100 GMT news advisory

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld announces that the United States will withdraw two combat brigades, totaling between 5,000 and 9,000 soldiers, from Iraq by next spring.

AP – ROBERT BURNS

Rumsfeld Announces Iraq Troop Cutbacks - December 23

* Reprinted by at least 150 online outlets

Just days after Iraq's elections, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld on Friday announced the first of what is likely to be a series of U.S. combat troop drawdowns in Iraq in 2006. Rumsfeld, addressing U.S. troops at this former insurgent stronghold, said

President Bush has authorized new cuts below the 138,000 level that has prevailed for most of this year...

Bush, Rumsfeld and other administration officials have said a withdrawal would begin when the U.S.-trained Iraqi security forces show sufficient signs of being able to defend the country against insurgents.

U.N. says it won't review elections; eight Iraqis killed at army checkpoint -

December 23, 6:20 AM EST

* Robert Burns contributed to this report

Sunni Arab and secular Shiite factions demanded that an international body review complaints about voting fraud in last week's elections and threatened to boycott the new legislature. But the United Nations rejected the idea.

"The U.N. is not going to conduct an independent review of the election results," U.N. associate spokesman Robert Sullivan said in New York.

In violence Friday, gunmen attacked an Iraqi army checkpoint in Adhaim, 60 kilometers (35 miles) north of Baqouba, killing eight soldiers and wounding seventeen, an Iraqi army officer said on condition he not be identified for fear of reprisal attacks. Earlier this month 19 Iraqi soldiers were killed in an ambush in Adhaim.

A suicide bomber detonated his explosives belt outside of a Shiite mosque in Balad Ruz, 75 kilometers (45 miles) northeast of Baghdad, killing four others and wounding eight, the Diyala police said. Among the dead was a policeman guarding the mosque.

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld on Friday said President Bush had authorized new cuts in U.S. combat troops in Iraq, below the 138,000 level that prevailed for most of this year. Rumsfeld did not reveal the exact size of the troop cut, but Pentagon officials have said it could be as much as 7,000 combat troops.

Iraqis March, Say Elections Were Rigged - December 23

* Robert Burns contributed to this report

Large demonstrations broke out across the country Friday to denounce parliamentary elections that protesters say were rigged in favor of the main religious Shiite coalition. Meanwhile, two Arab satellite television channels said that a Sudanese diplomat and five of his countrymen had been kidnapped in Iraq, and a Sudan Foreign Ministry spokesman appealed for their release...

Also Friday, a lawyer for Saddam Hussein said he saw evidence that his client had been beaten...

In Balad Ruz, 45 miles northeast of Baghdad, a suicide bomber detonated his explosives belt outside a Shiite mosque, killing four people and wounding eight, Diyala police said. Among the dead was a policeman guarding the mosque.

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said Friday that President Bush had authorized new cuts in U.S. combat troops in Iraq, below the 138,000 level that prevailed for most of this year. Rumsfeld did not reveal the exact size of the troop cut, but Pentagon officials have said as many as 7,000 combat troops could be leaving.

Rumsfeld signals Iraq force reduction. Up to 7,000 would be cut by spring -
December 23

The United States soon will trim its military force in Iraq to below 138,000 troops, the level it has considered its core force this year, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld and other U.S. officials hinted yesterday.

The cuts, probably in the 5,000 to 7,000 range, would be achieved by canceling the planned deployment to Iraq of two Army brigades and could be announced as early as today, officials said.

The reduction would bring the troop level in the insurgency-torn country to just above 130,000 sometime in the spring, said one U.S. Defense Department official who spoke on condition of anonymity because an announcement was not yet finalized.

President Bush is under growing pressure from two fronts to pare back the American force in Iraq: the Republican-run Congress and a public increasingly disenchanted with the war and its growing casualties, which have surpassed 2,100 U.S. war dead and 15,000 wounded.

Bush Cutting U.S. Troops Levels in Iraq - December 23

Two army brigades that had been scheduled for combat tours - one from Fort Riley, Kan., the other now in Kuwait - will no longer deploy to Iraq. That will reduce the number of combat brigades in Iraq from 17 to 15.

"The effect of these adjustments will reduce forces in Iraq by the spring of 2006 below the current high of 160,000 during the (Iraqi) election period to below the 138,000 baseline that had existed before the most recent elections," Rumsfeld said.

Rumsfeld aides said details were to be provided later at the Pentagon.

Further reductions will be considered "at some point in 2006," after the new Iraqi government is in place and is prepared to discuss the future U.S. military presence, said Rumsfeld.

During Rumsfeld's stop in Afghanistan, military officials said they were making good progress toward eliminating the Taliban resistance and al-Qaida terrorists who continue sporadic violence against U.S. troops. But some officers said the hostile forces were making some gains by acquiring more advanced weaponry, such as armor-piercing munitions, and improving their training and organization.

REUTERS - LESLEY WROUGHTON

Combat troops to be scaled back: Rumsfeld - December 23, 3:20 PM

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on Friday the number of U.S. combat forces in Iraq would be cut by some 7,000 by early next year, but the numbers involved in training Iraq's new military would increase.

Army General George Casey, the U.S. commander in Iraq, later told reporters that the U.S. force would be reduced to a new baseline of about 130,000 from the current standard level of 138,000...

Casey said he did not have a target for troop withdrawals by the end of next year, but added that a further reduction was likely in the spring when he reviews the situation again.

"This is going to be a measured and gradual process that will play out over the next year or two," he said, adding that the cut back was part of broader strategy to gradually hand over security powers to the Iraqi military.

"It's a step on the way to total independence for Iraqi security forces which will be some time down the road," he said.

Casey said while the plan was to reduce troops he was also prepared to increase numbers again if needed...

He later returned to Baghdad for a meeting with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani and Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari. Jaafari welcomed the U.S. decision on troop cutbacks, saying it demonstrated the "growing capabilities and confidence of Iraqi security forces."

Rumsfeld eyes US pullback in Iraq - December 23, 11:07 AM

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on Friday the number of U.S. combat troops in Iraq would be cut by some 7,000 by early next year, but the number involved in training Iraq's new military would increase.

Rumsfeld, the second senior U.S. official to visit Iraq this week in the wake of last week's election, said progress in Iraq's politics, economics and security lay behind the decision to scale back the combat troops...

The Pentagon said in a statement: "The effect of these adjustments will likely reduce the forces in Iraq by the Spring of 2006 below the 138,000 baseline," the current normal level of U.S. troop strength in Iraq...

He cautioned that Iraq still faced enormous security challenges...

After leaving Falluja by helicopter, Rumsfeld boarded a cargo plane for Amman to see the training of Iraqi forces at a Jordanian special operations center...

He later returned to Baghdad for a meeting with Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

Rumsfeld says to scale back combat forces in Iraq - December 23, 3:33 AM

Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on Friday U.S. combat forces in Iraq would be reduced by two brigades by early next year, but troops involved in training Iraq's new military would be increased...He did not give the exact number of troops but a brigade normally consists of between 4,000 and 5,000 soldiers...

Democrats have been pressuring the Bush administration to lay out plans for a withdrawal.

BROADCAST EXCERPTS
THE TRAVELING PRESS

FOX NEWS - BRET BAIER

Fox News -- Fox News Live - December 23
(12:32 PM)

Bill Hemmer: Back to Iraq quickly now where a cautious realignment plan is taking shape on the ground there. Donald Rumsfeld announcing the first of what should be a series of U.S. troop drawdowns. Brett Baier traveling with the Defense Secretary joins me live back on the phone in Baghdad with the news of the day. Bret?

Brett Baier: Hey Bill. We started out in Fallujah where Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld made that announcement going from 17 combat brigades to 15. He laid it out in speech to about 400 Marines at Camp Fallujah, of course, the site of one of the most famous battles of this war. Now the people there, the commanders there, say it's relatively quiet in Fallujah and they are counting the success they had in getting people to the polls on the election. Secretary Rumsfeld then traveled to Jordan and saw -- we saw some special operations training at a Jordan -- Jordanian facility where they're training Iraqi special ops troops. Pretty impressive, the Secretary going into a live fire exercise, real bullets, just fired a few feet from him as they kicked down doors and went through room to room and also showed him an exercise where they took down a bus and rescued a hostage. Pretty impressive, these elite groups, only about 400 that have come out of this school but goes shows what they're trying to head to get these troops up and running.

Bill Hemmer: General George Casey also made some comments today talking about fewer forces in Iraq, fewer U.S. forces is better and also saying that more troops fuel the insurgents. Does that start to sound little bit like what John Murtha has been saying in this country?

Brett Baier: It's interesting you say that. There are a couple of us who listened to General Casey's remarks and thought that right off the bat, that fewer is better. And it sounded a lot like that. However, he then added that it is better as long as they are capable, the Iraqi security forces, that is, of taking the reins. So he qualified it a bit but he did make the statement, fewer U.S. troops are better in Iraq, he feels, because it doesn't fuel the insurgency and doesn't create an dependency that Iraq expects the U.S. troops to do the stuff they need to be doing

Fox News -- Fox News Live - December 23
(10:47 AM)

Page Hopkins: This is a Fox News alert. We're getting new information on troop levels coming out of Iraq from General Casey. Our Bret Baier is traveling with secretary Rumsfeld. He's on the phone. Bret, what can you tell us?

Bret Baier: Page, we just wrapped up a briefing with General Casey and got some real specific details about this drawdown that's happening, that Secretary Rumsfeld announced today. He said the total number is actually 7,000 U.S. troops with these two brigades. One will be stationed in Kuwait as a quick reaction force but they won't be deployed into Iraq. The other will stay home in the U.S. he also said more reductions are expected as conditions improve, the Iraqi government gets set and he said the earliest he will make that decision is by the spring. But he says the way the trend lines are going he expects reductions to continue. He did not say he had a goal in mind by the end of the year but he says he's going to analyze it periodically.

Page Hopkins: Ok, Bret Baier, thank you so much. Again, getting word now that the total number is 7,000 U.S. troops. This is part of the troop drawdown we've been hearing about today. Bret Baier is traveling with Secretary Rumsfeld. These are two brigades that will not be deployed to Iraq that would be 7,000 combat troops who will not be going into Iraq. One brigade will stay in the U.S. and one b will stay in Kuwait. That was our Bret Baier traveling with the secretary. We'll continue to follow this good story coming out of Iraq.

Fox News -- Fox and Friends – December 23

(7:32 AM)

Brian Kilmeade: Bret Baier has made the heroic effort to travel with the Secretary of Defense, he promised Donald Rumsfeld he would go with him and Donald Rumsfeld held him to it. Bret Baier you're on the phone in Iraq, what's happening, Bret?

Bret Baier: I promised I would go and here I am. We are waiting outside President Talabani's office. Secretary Rumsfeld is in a meeting right now, expected to come out pretty soon. It's been a long day. We started this morning in Fallujah where Secretary Rumsfeld met with about 400 Marines down there. He talked to them for about 30 minutes in a prepared speech in which he announced officially that two combat brigades were going to be held back, essentially not rotated into Iraq. It's the first official announcement that the U.S. is going to drop below that 138,000 baseline we've heard and he said the reason its happening is because Iraqi security forces are getting better and taking over more territory. From there we want to Amman, Jordan, saw Iraqi special operation forces training and now we're back in Baghdad and it's raining. I'm getting wet. So maybe Steve, you can ask for an umbrella and I'll get one of those.

Brian Kilmeade: Hey Bret, overall is there any feeling about the election results that's getting American officials and maybe this current Iraqi administration nervous?

Bret Baier: You know, not really nervous, Brian. There's more positive feelings about the election not causing a lot of violence. They still see the number of attacks really dropping. As far as who's winning and the percentages for the Shiite alliance, etc., that's really one of the reasons Rumsfeld is stopping the push and talking to both Talabani and Prime Minister al Jaafari, because he's going to try to push for this inclusive, competent and centrist government. There is a concern that it could go the other way.

Steve Doocy: Bret Baier live on the phone, we thank you very much. Have a merry Christmas.

NPR – December 23

(5:01 AM)

Paul Brown: From NPR news in Washington, I'm Paul Brown. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told a group of cheering Marines in Fallujah today that he's cutting the number of American troops in Iraq by five thousand. NPR's John Hendren is traveling with the secretary and has this report

John Hendren: The Pentagon had already announced it would reduce troop numbers from election season high of 160,000 the new cuts bring the level below the usual baseline level of 138,000 troops that will allow two Army brigades to stand down. Defense sources say those units are one brigade from the first infantry division based in Fort Riley, Kansas and another brigade from the first armored division. That unit is based in Germany but is already in Kuwait. Soldiers thought they were on the way to Iraq. Rumsfeld said the move was made possible by economic and security improvements and by political progress following this month's historic parliamentary elections. The move was recommended by U.S. Central Command Chief General John Abizaid and by General George Casey the top commander in Iraq. John Hendren traveling with the Defense Secretary in Fallujah.

GENERAL PRINT/ONLINE EXCERPTS ON TROOP DRAWDOWN

Democrats maintain call for Iraq withdrawal timetable

(AFP) – December 23, 12:30 PM

Two Democratic lawmakers welcomed the US administration's announcement that about 7,000 US troops will be pulled from Iraq but maintained demands for a timetable for full troop withdrawal.

"I am pleased to hear that some American families will be reunited with their brave sons, daughters, fathers and mothers in the coming weeks as the Bush administration brings troops home from Iraq after nearly three years of war," Senate Democratic leader Harry Reid said in a statement.

"It is good news during this holiday season for these families and all Americans, and I would hope that the full regiment of additional forces that had been mobilized to support the Iraqi elections could soon begin to come home."

Reid said he hoped President George W. Bush will "level with the American people and inform us of what conditions on the ground must be met in order for more families to be reunited with their loved ones".

Congressman John Murtha, a decorated Vietnam War veteran who shook the establishment recently by calling for a full troop withdrawal from Iraq, said Friday's announcement fell short of his expectations.

"That's not what I had in mind," he said in a statement. "Our logistics convoys remain vulnerable and the US troops remain the targets.

"Our presence in Iraq continues to unify the insurgents against the US forces," he added.

"We have to give the Iraqis a timetable to take charge of their own destiny."

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld earlier announced that the United States would withdraw two combat brigades from Iraq in coming months. The Defense Department said US forces in Iraq would fall by about 7,000.

Al-Qaeda claims deadly Iraq attack – December 23

Guerrillas stormed an Iraqi army post on Friday, killing 10 soldiers and wounding 20, as Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told U.S. combat troops their numbers would fall as Iraqi forces were trained to take over.

While Rumsfeld made a pre-Christmas visit to a Marine base in the former rebel stronghold of Falluja, west of Baghdad, gunmen launched a dawn assault on the roadside outpost near Adhaim, north of the capital, that lasted all morning.

Al Qaeda in Iraq claimed responsibility for the attack.

GENERAL BROADCAST EXCERPTS ON TROOP DRAWDOWN

Fox News -- DaySide – December 23

(1:07 PM)

Juliet Huddy: The Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has an early Christmas gift for some soldiers in Iraq who may get to come home earlier than expected.

Steve Doocy: And Secretary Rumsfeld announced the Pentagon will begin to withdraw thousands of troops next year so how significant is this? Fox news military analyst Lt. Colonel Bill Cowan joins us live. Howdy Colonel . . . Colonel, it sounds like two

battalions will be two battalions lighter sometime next year. It is not a troop withdrawal, it's a drawdown. What's the difference?

Lt. Colonel Bill Cowan: Well actually its two brigades, Steve. We upped the troop strength in Iraq by about 20,000 to make our way through the elections and all we're doing now is continue to bring troops out and rotate them. We've elected not to send some other troops back in to replace those coming out so we're drawing down on the number of forces over there. We're getting to reasonable numbers. It all shows progress on the part of the Iraqis and that's what we want.

Juliet Huddy: here is the concern that a lot of folks have of the security forces there, the Iraqis being trained, what does this do to that?

Cowan: There are a lot of good stories about how the Iraqis are coming along. I think we all agree we got off to a late start in trying to stand up the Iraqi security forces, but by all accounts they've been doing well and in fact as you knew over the fall here we've had a number of battles out in al Anbar out toward the Syrian border and Iraqis were right at the front of many of those battles where U.S. forces had been at the front. The Iraqis that stood there and fought did a really good job. We continue to push the training programs, but more importantly get some of the Iraqi units out there so they can actually get in the battle and develop confidence in their capabilities. All that leads to U.S. doing exactly what we want to do all along and that is start drawing down of U.S. forces...

Steve: Hey, Bill, let me ask you this. Do you think that there are democratic members of Congress who are patting themselves on the back, thinking, you know, it was our pressure on the President to have him draw these troops down?

Cowan: Great question Steve. You bet there is going to be guys over there thinking that. I honestly believe I always say things the way I think I see them. Here in D.C. I really believe that this has all been part of the Pentagon strategy. I don't think that the President or the Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld crumbled to any pressure whatsoever from anybody. They have a plan and are sticking with that plan. You know we'd all like to get our forces out of there as soon as we can but that's not a plan that's going to take us on to victory. So some guys are patting themselves on the back. Democrats over here behind me but the reality is that this is the plan and we're sticking to it.

(Question from audience): Colonel, we have been training Iraqi troops now for a couple of years and we're all used to seeing single file columns of American soldiers walking up and down the Iraqi streets. Are we now starting to see Iraqi soldiers walking up and down the streets instead of the American soldiers?

Cowan: That's a really good question and that goes back to what I was saying a few minutes ago those battles we have been fighting out in al Anbar, we've been going into towns--you will probably recall over the course last year, year and a half, we went into a lot of towns out there. Fallujah of course being the first, Ramadi, Tal Afar. . . right out there on the border all of these places, those were typically U.S. operations, U.S. forces went in Iraqi forces were way off in the background. We did what we had to do or wanted to do. We left and the insurgents came back in. And really these operations have been going on since October, starting out in Tal Afar those were Iraqi forces that went right into those towns. The U.S. guys were backing them up. We were not the ones out there in the front. The Iraqi guys did a great job. And then when those battles were over as you probably know. Iraqis stayed behind which is not something that we have done in the past.

Fox News -- Fox News Live – December 23

(12:44:21 PM)

Bill Hemmer: The U.S. military is giving Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld a warm welcome. How are the Iraqis though feeling about the news just announced about a planned U.S. reduction in the military operations there? Greg Palkot taking the pulse, live in Baghdad again today Hey Greg what are they saying?

Greg Palkot: Hey, Bill. They're welcoming it with caution, but it's certainly welcome news for Iraqis. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is detailing this news amid a whirlwind of travel. He first visited U.S. troops in that former terror hot spot of Fallujah, then traveling outside of the country just across the border to Jordan to watch the training up of Iraqi special forces and back here just across the river from where I am in the international zone to meet with the leadership of the current interim government here. Prime Minister al-Jaafari is in fact saying that the troop drawdown talk was a sign of the strengthening of the Iraqi security forces, but also significantly does not mean a loss in security. A sign of exactly what the Iraqi forces are dealing with, a suicide bomber detonating explosives by a Shiite mosque east of Baquba, killing four. But more seriously, Bill just to the north of Baghdad, a sustained attack, the kind of attack we usually don't see on an Iraqi army outpost. 10 Iraqi soldiers killed. 20 wounded. Iraqi police also involved. The attackers are not only using heavy machine guns but also rocket propelled grenades.

Fox News -- Fox News Live – December 23

(10:59 AM)

Paige: Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in Iraq announcing President Bush's approval of a cautious reduction in the number of U.S. combat forces in the country. Troop levels will be trimmed by roughly 7,000. Fox News correspondent Greg Kelly has a live report from the Pentagon.

Greg Kelly: Hi Paige, a politically charged debate indeed at the Pentagon and the President have always maintained that any troop level reduction will be dictated by conditions on the ground and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld assessing those conditions are conducive to a reduction in U.S. troops level. Now we're going from 17 combat brigades in Iraq down to 15 - within a brigade there are about anywhere from 3,000 to 4,000 soldiers. Overall the numbers are still a little bit murky but right now about 160 thousand troops in Iraq, 160,000, 20,000 were there to augment security for the recent elections. They'll go away. They're actually already starting to move out. And then these two additional brigades will bring the total down to roughly 135,000. Here is Secretary Donald Rumsfeld from earlier today in Fallujah, Iraq.

Secretary Rumsfeld clip: The affects of these adjustments will reduce U.S. forces in Iraq by the spring of 2006 below the high, the current high of roughly 160,000, during the election period when it was bulked up and also below the 138,000 baseline that had existed prior to the most recent election.

Greg Kelly: Now in a subsequent press release the military announced that the first brigade of the first infantry division will not deploy to Iraq as a brigade and the second brigade of the first armor division will remain in Kuwait as what is called a call forward force essentially on standby to respond to a situation in Iraq as needed. Now, regarding

the two brigades that are not going to Iraq, the first infantry -- the first armored brigade of the first infantry division will actually be sending an awful lot of soldiers to Iraq in the end. They won't be going as a brigade but 1,000 soldiers from various companies inside that unit will be deploying to Iraq to perform security functions, to perform Iraqi training missions, things of that nature. This troop level reduction as announced by the Pentagon does not affect troops in Iraq right now. Any marines or soldiers who were there on scheduled unit deployments will fulfill those deployments as schedule. But we do expect, as does much of Washington, to see a lot more reductions as the New Year gets underway. Back to you, Paige.

Fox News -- Fox News Live – December 23

(10:31 AM)

Page Hopkins: The best Christmas present ever for our troops overseas. Donald Rumsfeld traveling in Iraq announcing the troop levels will be decreased by about 5,000 soldiers. David MacDougall is in Iraq. He joins us with the story, David.

David MacDougall: ...He started off in Fallujah, a town hall meeting with troops, then off to Jordan reviewing Iraqi special forces in training there. Then Secretary Rumsfeld was back here to a rather rainy Baghdad where he's just had a meeting with Iraq's President Talabani and Prime Minister al-Jaafari. The big story is an announcement that a lot of people wanted to hear - the U.S. is cutting the number of forces it deploys in Iraq. That affects two brigades who now won't be deployed here; it's about 5,000 troops from Fort Riley in Kansas and one brigade already stationed in Kuwait. Troop levels will be down to about 138,000 to put it into context, the numbers had been up at about 160,000 for the election for extra security but they will fall back as more Iraqi troops complete their training and get ready to take over. But there are some problems today for the Iraqi troops and gunmen attacking a base north of Baghdad here. They're able to get past the defenses, kill 10 Iraqi soldiers and wound 20 others. There will be some concern about the readiness level of trained Iraqi troops if this sort of thing can happen.

CNN Headline News – December 23

(10:01 AM)

Renay San Miguel: Defense Secretary Rumsfeld made a stop today in Iraq with a holiday message of his own. He told a group of U.S. troops at camp Fallujah that President Bush has approved a move to cut the number of U.S. troops in Iraq.

Secretary Rumsfeld: President Bush has authorized an adjustment in U.S. combat brigades in Iraq from 17 to 15. The size and composition of U.S. forces, of course, will fluctuate as commanders continue to shift their focus to emphasize training and supporting the Iraqi security forces. This will include some increases in U.S. forces involved in transition teams, intelligence support and logistics to assist the security forces as they continue to assume greater responsibility for the security of their country.

Renay San Miguel: The Pentagon says two Army brigades that had been scheduled for combat tours will no longer deploy to Iraq. For most of the year there have been at least 138,000 U.S. troops in Iraq. For the soldiers who remain in Iraq right now they are still very much in harm's way. Two U.S. soldiers are dead after an explosion in Baghdad. The military says they were killed when their vehicle struck a roadside bomb. Elsewhere in Iraq, two separate attacks left 18 people dead and 2 dozen wounded. Gunmen killed a

police officer and eight Iraqi soldiers at a check point along a highway north of Baquba. Suicide bombing outside a Shiite mosque also left nine dead. It happened during noontime prayers.

CNN -- American Morning

(9:00: AM)

Soledad O'Brien: Same sentiment, of course, for the military families, who cannot come soon enough to have a loved one home. And we start this hour, in fact, with the plans to cut troop levels in Iraq. The Pentagon canceling the deployment of thousands of combat personnel. Thousands more troops are going to start coming home. Let's get right to Barbara Starr. She's live at the Pentagon for us this morning. Hey, Barbara. Good morning. How many troops are we actually talking about overall?

BARBARA STARR: Well, Soledad, we're talking really about two separate groups of troops. First, about 20,000 troops that had been in Iraq for election security for those December 15 elections, they already knew they were going to come home. That mission now done, and their return to the United States is under way. But what Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld made official earlier today, announcing it in Fallujah at a town hall meeting with the troops, is that deployment orders for two additional brigades, about 7,500 troops that were going to go to Iraq in early 2006, those deployment orders now canceled. Those brigades will not have to go to Iraq. It is part of the shift, the overall shift in strategy that more focus will be paid to helping the Iraqi security forces and that there won't be as much need, they hope, for U.S. troops, boots on the ground in combat. So the bottom line is, about 17 brigades that were in Iraq will now become 15 brigades. Two brigades won't be replaced, and that will bring it about 7,500 troops below the 138,000 that was sort of the steady state, the post-election security level. So it's good news for a lot of families, but still a bit of a shift in strategy that they're going have to see how it plays out in early 2006 -- Soledad.

O'BRIEN: Barbara, does it overall mean actually fewer troops on the ground?

STARR: Well, that's really the key question, because with this shift in strategy, what Secretary Rumsfeld is already warning about is that there may be more troops doing particular kinds of jobs: support, training, intelligence, air support, the kinds of things that U.S. troops still will have to do to help out the Iraqis. So there may be more troops in certain specialties, but what they do hope is less troops, if you will, as the grunts on the ground, the combat forces conducting patrols, doing the cordons, doing the knock-and-search operations. They want the Iraqis to take over more of that in 2006, get the U.S. troops out of that job. But more U.S. troops may be in those support roles -- Soledad.

O'BRIEN: All right. Barbara Starr at the Pentagon for us with some good news for military families.

CNN -- American Morning -- December 23

(7:33 AM)

Soledad O'Brien: A decision from President Bush on reducing troop levels in Iraq. Secretary of State Donald Rumsfeld made the announcement after meeting with military commanders near Fallujah.

Secretary Rumsfeld: As you know, we made plans for all kinds of possibilities. And when we get specific recommendations from General Abizaid and General Casey, why we have the task then of considering those recommendations.

Soledad O'Brien: The planned adjustments including drawing down to about 130,000 troops by the spring. There are currently about 160,000 troops in Iraq. Some additional troops are likely to be sent in for the so-called non-combat missions like intelligence and training Iraqi soldiers. There are the numbers there. Let's put a little perspective. Let's get right to retired Brigadier General James "Spider" Marks. Nice to see you. Thanks for talking with us.

MAJ. GEN. JAMES MARKS, U.S. ARMY (RET.): Hi, Soledad.

Soledad O'Brien: All right. Let's get to these numbers. First, the 7,000 to 10,000 soldiers who will not be deployed now. Are you surprised by that?

MARKS: No, not at all. In fact, if you'll recall, for the last 15 years, we've had a presence in Kuwait as a staging area for the possibility for combat operations, not only in Iraq, but for any contingency that might arise in the region. So retaining a brigade in Kuwait vice (ph), moving that brigade into Iraq is not unusual. And then giving the order to retain a brigade or at least cancel their deployment orders to go into Iraq, that unit still remains very combat ready and literally it's just an airplane ride from Ft. Riley, Kansas, into the region. So it remains on what we would call a string. So that's not surprising.

Soledad O'Brien: All right. So none of those soldiers are going home any time soon. How about the 20,000 soldiers that will be sent back home from Iraq? Give me a sense of what you think of the timing here.

MARKS: Soledad, that's going to take probably, you know, six to eight weeks. You know, a couple of months. And the intent was to spike the number of troops, both marines and soldiers on the ground and all service members in the region, but to spike them for the elections and then to have that presence remain in place during the period of the parliament sitting in place and getting going, frankly. And so over the course of the next couple of months, you'll see that draw-down. So what you saw was a spike and now back to what I would call a level of normalcy that we're going to see. And then what you really need to do is kind of step back from that and say, what is the new normal that we're going to see in Southwest Asia? Clearly there will be a presence over the horizon for contingencies and you'll see in country increased number of soldiers and troops that are involved in the training of Iraqi forces. Soldiers and marines embedded in units. Those Iraqi units as they stand up to get those organizations on the ground and more combat ready. And then certainly you're going to have units that are in place conducting combat operations as well.

Soledad O'Brien: So this is the beginning of the draw-down. Are draw-downs generally done this way, little bits here and there?

MARKS: They are. What you're not going to see and what you truly want to avoid is the image from April of 1975 on the embassy compound in Saigon where there just was a precipitous withdrawal because everything went really bad really quick. So you're going to see this metered, very, very disciplined. You're going to see the forces draw down and assume what I would call a new normalcy.

Soledad O'Brien: Is there a sense that then when you talk about monitoring this new normalcy, do you monitor the violence too? I mean if there's an uptick in violence after some soldiers have been brought back out, that potentially they could be brought back in?

In other words, the cancellation of the deployment orders could be canceled? You know, reinstated?

MARKS: Like that, Soledad. Absolutely. And that's why you have those possibilities. I mean, you walk your way through all the potential contingencies, good and bad, and you provide yourself options with the placement of forces in different locations to respond to those kinds of possibilities.

Soledad O'Brien: And is this because of pressure from the American people, pressure from lawmakers, because this has become the draw-down issue, become such a headline issue now, do you think? I mean what part does that play?

MARKS: Soledad, that's a great question. Certainly a soldier would never respond in a way that says, look, we have some political pressures or there are other pressures that would dictate what it is we're going to try to accomplish. But, clearly, there is political and economics, security, informational. There are all these elements of power that come into play that allow our political leaders and masters to make those decisions on the specific military presence that exists.

Soledad O'Brien: Retired Brigadier General James "Spider" Marks. Nice to see you, as always. Thanks.

NPR – December 23

(11:01 AM)

Paul Brown: From NPR news in Washington on Paul Brown the President and the Pentagon have authorized a reduction of U.S. troop numbers in Iraq. Defense officials say around five thousand troops could leave the Gulf sometime in 2006. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld told Marines in Iraq today that the number of U.S. service members there will continue to change.

Secretary Rumsfeld clip: The size and composition of U.S. forces of course will [uh] fluctuate as commanders continue to shift their focus to emphasis training and supporting Iraqi security force.

Paul Brown: Rumsfeld said U.S. troop levels would go below the one hundred thirty eight thousand maintained for much of two thousand five. Today in Iraq, two U.S. soldiers were killed by a roadside bomb and at least ten Iraqi troops died in a protracted firefight with insurgents.

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To: (b)(6) LTC, OCJCS/PA
Cc: (b)(6), CDR, OCJCS/PA; (b)(6) COL, JCS NMCC; Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, CAPT, OCJCS/PA; Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Merritt, Roxie T. CAPT, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; (b)(6) LTC, OASD-PA; Vician, Todd, Maj, OASD-PA; (b)(6) LCDR OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV - OASD(PA); (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV OASD-PA; (b)(6) CTR, OASD-PA; (b)(6) AFIS-HQ/NEWS; (b)(6), CIV, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Subject: Transcript -- Conway with military analysts
Attachments: 12-23-05 Conway on the record Iraq troop adjustments.doc



12-23-05 Conway
on the record ...

Attached is the transcript of the on-the-record portion of LtGen Conway's 0930 briefing today with the military analysts. The call lasted just short of 30 minutes.

Transcript: Military Analyst Call
Friday, Dec. 23, 2005, 0930
LtGen Conway re U.S. troop adjustments in Iraq
Portions on the record; portions off the record
OSD Public Affairs, Room (b)(2) The Pentagon
Host: (b)(6) Joint Chiefs Public Affairs
Transcriber: (b)(6)

Note: This transcript includes the on the record portion of the general's update

LtGen Conway: ...Folks that I think are tuned in this morning, pretty much the normal list of suspects. And again, we'd be happy at any point here when we've finished to take your questions, and we'll take as long as we need to.

What I would like to do is split the time this morning to the extent that we can. I would like to pitch to you all for about 15 minutes, both the essence of what's taking place and then some points that I would have for you that I think would help you with your analysis, and then use the rest of the time to go ahead and answer your questions.

First of all, I don't think it's a surprise to you at this point with the secretary having announced and with some articles having appeared as early as a week ago, but certainly in the papers in this morning that the 2d Brigade, 1st Armored Division, out of Schweinfurt, Germany, (note, DoD release says Baumholder) will be prepositioned on its gear in Kuwait, serving as a call-forward force.

The Army has been busy prepositioning the equipment of an armored brigade, analogous to what we used to have there I guess before OIF. That equipment is generally arriving and will be in place this month, and that's what the 2d of the 1st Armored is falling in on; they will be again in this call-forward status for an undetermined period of time, based on some recommendations that are going to be coming from the secretary from the commander of CENTCOM.

Okay, secondly – and more in a moment about this call-forward status. Secondly, the 1st Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division, out of Fort Riley, Kan., was notified, oh, mid-November or so that they would be in delayed status pending their deployment to Iraq. They were told to enjoy Christmas and their status would be provided to them shortly after Christmas and after the first of the New Year.

They were scheduled to arrive in Iraq – actually in Kuwait -- on 13 December with the latest arrival date, and then to be in Iraq and ready to transfer authority on the 12th of January.

Their status is being updated by virtue of the orders the secretary has signed, and they will not be deployed to Iraq as a brigade. Again, that's one of the points that I want to raise with you, in the points that I want to make.

And let me get into those points now. There are four of them, essentially. The first deals with the 1st of the 1st Infantry. As I said, they will not be going into theater as a brigade, but elements of the brigade will be deploying to Iraq – and or as it turns out this morning, perhaps, a small number into the Horn of Africa.

What's intended for the brigade, and this is based upon Army decisions and who's best available, who's best trained (up on step?) and that type of thing, is that the brigade will provide seven or eight security companies that will perform security roles – convoy escorts, those type things – in and around Iraq as a part of their number.

The brigade is also tasked with providing a number, I don't know how many, frankly, at this point, but a number of the transition teams that will work with Iraqi forces and continue their modernization and professionalism efforts, and also the brigade headquarters has been tasked with the training of Army transition teams, and perhaps even other Service transition teams, depending upon their makeup.

But those are the three functions that the brigade will be performing now over the next year or so, again, with certainly a portion of them going into Iraq.

Now, I would add that it is still a net plus in terms of the total numbers, okay? Because they are going in as security companies, somebody else is not going, okay? So this isn't a shell game, certainly, in that context, it's just that these people are, again, readily available; they're more prepared than some of the other companies from the other units that might be tagged a later point in time.

Let me talk to you some about the math, okay? Simplicity says that until about August, and for the several months leading up to that, we were about 138k as what we call the baseline force. You all are well aware, because you tracked it, that we started to bump up at that point, first for the mid-October referendum, and following that, of course, the mid-December election, and peak numbers went to about 160,000.

Now that was obviously for the election; we've done that before and every case we've come back down to baseline, and that certainly is the intent this time.

Simple math would say, okay, we go back to about 130,000, two brigades, 3,500 each, that's about 7,000, so we'll be at 131, right? Well, the answer is no, that's not quite right. And the reason for that is since about August of last year, we've been looking at transition requirements to hand over this fight, and ultimately, security responsibilities to the Iraqis. And we've been providing to them, since about August, the numbers of people that will be necessary for transition teams – these 10-, 12-man elements that will be working with the Iraqi units, with combat support – combat service support types of people that will strengthen that Iraqi capability, and eventually allow them to do it themselves as opposed to us doing it for them; detainee operations types of folks that will train and assist the Iraqis in taking over this function as soon as we can hand it off to them with new facilities built in some cases, old facilities being rehabbed and or, again given over to Iraqi control.

So, what you see is some growth in terms of those transition capabilities that offset that simple math I posed to you earlier. We think right now that the essence of it will be a reduction of 3(000) or 4,000 troops from that 138, but quite frankly, that's a projection. We are talking about March by the time we would get everybody out of theater and stood down that were there for the election, and of course, that's three months-plus hence from this point.

But I just want to caution you all that some of the things that you may have heard or even have seen in the paper this morning, unfortunately, are not precisely correct, and you all need to be able to talk to that I think intelligently when you see it.

The third point I would make is on the 2d of the 1st AD. General Abizaid has his strategic reserve; it's the MEU. General Casey's operational reserve if you will is for all intents and purposes the 2d of the 1st AD. But we're choosing not to call it that. It's being labeled a "call forward" force, and if you all would be explicit in your terminologies when addressing it, that would help us with regard to what we do here.

Now, how long they're going to be in that capacity, again, that remains to be seen. We know they are there for at least 90 days. You all understand, of course, there's routine assessments and decision points that are being exercised by the commander in theater. He is simply going to have to watch the situation to see how long all or portions of that brigade need to stay in Kuwait. So I think we'll leave that with simply the byline more to follow.

The last thing is that I would emphasize is that this all is coming about as a result of Iraqi progress. I mean, right now, the numbers are at 216,000 trained and equipped; 120-plus Iraqi army and police battalions in the fight; 44 of those own ground as we speak here this morning; that number is going up to 50 or so by the end of January. Seven brigades that are providing leadership roles right now in that; two division headquarters; that number of brigade headquarters will go up to 11 or so by the end of January. So it's a northeast trendline in terms of the Iraqis, both coming on line and assuming control of ground and battle space as they are able to do.

And again, that's how General Casey, General Vines, General Abizaid, the secretary and the chairman are all able to arrive at the decision that has now been made.

I would emphasize to you that it's done in a military chain of command that goes all the way to the president; it is not based on political events. And that's all as a military man I suppose I need to say about that.

Okay, that didn't take a full 15 minutes, but that just gives us more time for questions. I'll be happy to field anything that you guys have.

Q: This is Jeff McCausland. Two quick questions. On the 1st of the 1st, you said that they are going to be training the transition teams. Will they be doing that back at Riley, the

international training center, Kuwait, Iraq, where will that occur? And on the 1 AD brigade, when will they actually close in Kuwait with troops and equipment, and then lastly, any comments about the future if things go well at the end of spring?

LtGen Conway: Well, first of all in terms of the training, you know, I think, and I'll have to confirm this for you, but I think it's going to take place at home station in Riley. That would certainly limit the logistics requirements of going elsewhere to do it. I can tell you it is not going to take place in theater. It is going to take place in the United States.

In terms of the 2d of the 1st AD, they're there. They had an LAD (latest arrival date) in Kuwait late November. They made that. They have been essentially there doing training, doing commanders' reconnaissance; some of their leadership I think went into Iraq just to expedite the process if they were called forward. They have essentially satisfied all of those what we call RSO&I requirements that allow them now to deploy quickly if the event should necessitate that.

In terms of what will happen down range Jeff, I mean, it just depends. This has always been situation based, and we are going to have to read the situation as it develops. Right now there's some pretty positive trend lines out there compared to what we saw during the referendum in terms of casualties, in terms of numbers of attacks, in terms of VBIEDs, suicide VBIEDs, those types of things. If those things continue in a positive fashion, and Iraqis continue to show that they can manage it, then I think there's probably good news to follow. But that will be dependent upon General Casey's assessment when those things pop on to the calendar.

Q: Thank you.

Q: Hey General, Jed Babbin. We heard from General Casey, and I guess more recently from the secretary, that we're trying to balance things between providing the Iraqis with the support they need and not creating in them a dependency on us to do all of those things. I understand the concept. Give us a couple of points – you know, how do you make the judgment? What do you balance one against the other in terms of trying to not create that dependency?

LtGen Conway: Yeah, Jed, I think that's a good question. And it's a finesse question in a sort of way, because it just depends on what you're dealing with at the time. I mean, clearly, just like in our military, some Iraqi units are better than others. But as they are able to step up, we are pretty much requiring that they do so.

I can tell you that in the reports this morning, that there's the first what they are calling Iraqi brigade-level sweep that's taken place out in the Euphrates River Valley. There's a Marine rifle company out of RCT-2 that is there as observers. But these guys conceived of it, planned it and executed all on their own. So that's the type of growth that we see and that we want to encourage. And I think there's a belief on the part of our military and certainly our leadership that, you know, some of these units will be reticent to step forward unless you absolutely compel them to do so, but that's our responsibility to both

train the Iraqis as job one, conduct the necessary counterinsurgency as job two, but to make sure that that first job is understood and executed as soon as we can make it happen.

Q: Great, thanks.

Q: This is Jeff McCausland again. One other question – on the transition teams – what's in the future? Is that going to be Army-Marine, or is that going to be solely Army?

LtGen Conway: Jeff, actually it's all Services. The guys who are out doing the close combat kind of stuff is clearly Army and Marine. But what we've seen is the direction, and subsequently the willingness, on the part of the Navy and the Air Force to step up where they can. So some of these transition teams are base -- facilities (base facilities?) training teams; some of them are logistics training teams. So where it's plausible that a transition team can work to do the type of things that we find resident in the Air Force or the Navy, again, those Services are stepping up big time to help relieve some of the stress on the two ground Services.

But clearly, where there is a ground combat role, and that extends out to the border transition teams -- the special police and the police transition teams -- you are going to find most of those are Army and Marine.

Q: Hey, Jim, Tom McInerney.

LtGen Conway: Yes sir.

Q: How are we coming, particularly with the MEF, of impressing upon the Sunnis that the U.S. and the Coalition forces are there last great hope, that if they continue the insurgency then, you know, time will just force us to turn it over the Kurds and the Shi'a to solve it for them, and we can help them more than anybody with revising the constitution, economic resources, positions in the cabinet. Are we making progress with them?

LtGen Conway: Tom, I think so. I see some really positive signs, without sounding overly optimistic. One is just the turnout of the Sunni vote. I think they realize that they hosed (?) it last time, and they are not willing to see that occur that way this time around. So that's I think a positive sign.

Secondly, you know, we're actually seeing some red on red, in and around Ramadi, and out on the western border. The -- some of the bad guys have really had it with the AQI folks in Ramadi, and there are fights taking place there, there are threats, there is intimidation -- on both sides, really. But it's the old thing the enemy of my enemy is my friend. And although these, you know, FRE (former regime elements?) and former Saddamists aren't going to really befriend us in ways that we are seeing out west, we still see that as a positive thing, and I think a realization on the part of those folks, that, you know, the final solution here is going to be political, not kinetic.

The other thing is that out on the border, one, the border posts are now in place and manned up, so we think we can start to throttle, you know, some of the numbers that we've seen coming across, but secondly, you've got tribal sheiks out there that have fought the AQI previously, who are offering their young men to join the military in a militia-sort of way; we call them Desert Protectors. And we've got three platoons of those folks out and about. And they are providing a good bit of intelligence; they're helping of course with the security role; and it's a good tie between sheiks out there that weren't necessarily favorable to the Marines in the west that are now by necessity caused to work somewhat in sync.

Q: And have some of them continued with the cease fire they put in during the election?

LtGen Conway: You know, I think we're probably, certainly the J-2's best guess, we're going to start to see the numbers of attacks go up some. There was never really a cease fire; I think that was perhaps a little misunderstood. I think there probably were some discussions taking place, but those aren't new. I mean, I had those when I was out there, and these guys can never quite come across with the goods. We said, hey, show us your power by cutting off the attacks and we'll start to believe that you speak for large numbers of people.

They were never quite able to do that. And although I think there have once again been discussions this time, nothing that approached a cease fire, and attacks still did occur, so – although they were somewhat diminished. And these people did help us in securing the polling sites.

So, I don't know that there's a one-for-one return on the effort, certainly one that we'll continue to see as we approach the new year.

Q: Thank you.

Q: General, Bob Maginnis. On the Horn of Africa, you indicated in your explanation of the first point that the 1st of the 1st of course isn't going over in its entirety, but elements might go to the Horn of Africa. Are we growing, or is this a replacement effort in that area?

LtGen Conway: Bob, I'll be honest with you, I don't know the answer to that. The information I gave you is about 30 minutes old. When I stepped in the Army had actually reduced the number of security companies that were going to be headed into Iraq, and included in that number was one for the Horn of Africa.

I will tell you that we are trying not to grow it; that's the thrust. It's an economy of force mission, and any request for forces that come in from there are very closely scrutinized, so I am going to have to dig more into what they see is this requirement. I do know there's a security effort there that is existent in Djibouti at the base. Whether or not these are guys that are just scheduled to go in and rotate them out, I can't say for sure.

We are not providing a lot of security elsewhere with regard to convoys and that type of thing. So, I would say 60-40 that they're replacement, but I can't say that with 100 percent assurity.

Q: Thank you.

Q: General, Tim Eads. Could you give us a little background on the timing of this announcement? I mean, is it based almost exclusively on the capability of the Iraqi forces to step in, is there something else in play – you know – the election was less than a week ago. Some may think it's strange that we are announcing troop withdrawals before the government has stood up.

LtGen Conway: Yeah, Tim all those things certainly went into consideration. I can tell you that there's been discussion on this now for some time, but that the election hanging out there was a major consideration in terms of the announcement. You know, we needed to see – we were getting reports, of course, that the bad guys were going to try to disrupt and eradicate, you know, the success of the election as much as they could. That obviously didn't happen. I mean, you had a huge turnout and the ability of the Iraqi forces to defend it was just excellent.

So, it was believed that we would wait and see how all that panned out before there were any real announcements of the decision, and that's essentially what you see here. Now, we realize that if you look at what happened recently with this interim government that it took, some would argue, 90 days or more to stand up. We're hoping that doesn't happen this time; time will certainly tell. And I think there's a lot of backroom discussion, a lot of tea that's going to be drunk before this one really is settled out. But, I think people would say that we all lost momentum when they took, you know, so long to put it together. That's a lesson learned and we just hope it's applied as they bring this one around.

Q: Thank you.

Q: General, this is Jeff McCausland. I'm sorry. One more question. While I fully am more than happy to use this phrase call forward force as opposed to operational reserve, and I am sure all my colleagues will be happy to do that as well, could you kind of tell us why you want to do it that way? I mean, all of us are comfortable with operational reserve, makes sense in terms of military terms (crosstalk).

Begin off-the-record discussion.

End off-the-record discussion.

LTC Battaglia: Okay, I thank you for joining us, gentlemen. Is there anything I need to follow up on?

Q: (Jeff McCausland?) (inaudible) verify training sites (inaudible) Riley, that might be helpful.

(b)(6) [REDACTED] Wilco.

LtGen Conway: Hey guys, great to be with you again. Have a wonderful Christmas. We will be talking to you again after the New Year.

Q: Likewise, sir.

Q: Thanks general.

Q: Great rundown.

Q: Thank you very much.

(call ends).

(b)(6)

From: McCausland, Jeffrey [mccausj@(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2005 5:41 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: IMAR anecdotes

Eric -- I really did not get any anecdotes from my discussions that you would find useful. I let them ask me questions and they seemed timid but wanted to know if we were going to stay with them. I must say having taught at both West Point and the Naval Academy I found them to be the same kind of young person! Full of enthusiasm, told me about their girl friends, etc.

I also would like to take you up on your offer of getting any info you can provide on the QDR. I am running a one day seminar on the future of US-UK relations on 10 January at the Royal United Services Institute for Defense Studies in London. I know all the Brits in attendance (and RUSI will turn out a pretty distinguished group) will want to know.

Best for the holidays!

Jeff

Jeffrey D. McCausland, PhD
Director, Leadership in Conflict Initiative
Dickinson College
233 Louthier Street
Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013
Tel: (b)(2)
Fax: (b)(2)
Email: mccausj@(b)(6)
www.dickinson.edu/departments/leadership/

From: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA [mailto:Eric.Ruff@(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 12:37 PM
To: COL(Ret) Allard; McCausland, Jeffrey; CSM(Ret) Greer; LTC(Ret) Jed Babbin; LTG(ret) McInerney; Maj(Ret) Messing
Subject: IMAR anecdotes

following up on the conversation i had with most of you in kuwait, would you please send me an anecdote or two from the conversations you had during the lunch we shared with the imar cadets? all of us were spread out and it really sounded like we heard some inciteful things that it might be worthwhile for all of us to know about -- and possibly used as part of a story, speech, etc.

in my conversation with one of the imar cadets, i asked him if he believed the united states when we say that we are not interested in occupying iraq and that we do in fact wish to turn everything over to the country, eventually. the cadet responded, "yes, because i know what america did in germany and japan."

i certainly found that interesting and ha've not heard that before.

thanks to everyone for making the trip. it was a pleasure working with you. eric

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6) MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV [mailto:richard.moon@(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 12:04 PM
To: COL(Ret) Allard; COL(Ret) McCausland; CSM(Ret) Greer; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; LTC(Ret) Jed Babbin; LTG(ret) McInerney; Maj(Ret) Messing
Subject: [U] comms check

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Gentlemen - could I ask for times if you are on TV so we are able to watch?

Maj (b)(6)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

If this e-mail is marked FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY it may be exempt from mandatory disclosure under FOIA. DoD 5400.7R, "DoD Freedom of Information Act Program", DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release", and DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release" apply.

(b)(6)

From: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2005 8:12 AM
To: (b)(6) CAPT, JCS OVCJCS/PA
Subject: RE: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official (TUESDAY)

Attachments: image001.gif

Greg, sorry for the much delayed response, we are happy to help anytime

Dallas B. Lawrence

Director, Office of Community Relations & Public Liaison

United States Department of Defense

W(b)(2)

From: (b)(6) CAPT, JCS OVCJCS/PA
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 3:58 PM
To: (b)(6), CIV, OASD-PA
Cc: Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official (TUESDAY)

Thanks for all your help today. ADM G thought it went very well. Let us know how we can support in the future. r, gjs

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 1:36 PM
To: (b)(6) CAPT, JCS OVCJCS/PA
Cc: Barber, Allison @ (b)(6) [Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA]; Lawrence, Dallas @ (b)(6) [Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA]; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official (TUESDAY)

here is the list of participants thus far. anticipate the possibility that more may join. see you in (b)(2) at 3:15.

thanks

(b)

Confirmed Retired Military Analysts:

Colonel Ken Allard (USA, Retired)

Mr. Jed Babbin (USAF, JAG)
Lieutenant General Frank B. Campbell (USAF, Retired)
Lieutenant Colonel Rick Francona (USAF, Retired)
Colonel John Garrett (USMC, Retired)
Command Sergeant Major Steven Greer (USA, Retired)
Colonel Jack Jacobs (USA, Retired)
Lieutenant Colonel Robert L. Maginnis (USA, Retired)
Lieutenant General Thomas McInerney (USAF, Retired)
Captain Chuck Nash (USN, Retired)
Captain Martin L. Strong (USN, Retired)
General Tom Wilkerson (USMC, Retired)

From: (b)(6) CAPT, JCS OVCJCS/PA [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 12:43 PM
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA]
Subject: RE: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official TOMORROW (TUESDAY)

Tara,

When do you estimate providing a list of names? ADM G is tied up in QDR meetings right up to the time of the conference call. I will need to work something up and slip it to him during the QDR meeting.

Thanks. (b)

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA]
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 12:09 PM
To: (b)(6) CAPT, JCS OVCJCS/PA
Subject: RE: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official TOMORROW (TUESDAY)

yes, we'll plan on allison's office at 3:15.

From: (b)(6), CAPT, JCS OVCJCS/PA
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 11:43 AM
To: (b)(6), CIV, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official TOMORROW (TUESDAY)

Thanks. It may be a good idea to send them a copy of yesterday's Blue Top on the Meigs announcement. Did you get the word that we need to use a OASD PA space to conduct this. We don't have speaker phones on the Joint Staff. I was told perhaps Allison's office would work. Please confirm. gjs

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6), CIV, OASD-PA]
Sent: Tuesday, December 06, 2005 9:43 AM
To: (b)(6), CAPT, JCS OVCJCS/PA
Subject: FW: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official TOMORROW (TUESDAY)

sir, here is the invite that went out to the analysts. contains call in information, etc. i will forward the agenda and participants list separately, early this afternoon.

thanks

(b)(6)

From: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 05, 2005 5:18 PM
Cc: (b)(6), CIV, OASD-PA
Subject: Conference Call with Senior DoD Official TOMORROW (TUESDAY)

MEMORANDUM

To: Retired Military Analysts

From: Dallas Lawrence
Director, Community Relations and Public Liaison
Office of the Secretary of Defense

Date: December 5, 2005

Re: **Conference Call with Senior DoD Official**

We invite you to participate in a conference call, **TOMORROW, December 6, 2005, from 3:15 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. EST**

Admiral Edmund Giambastiani, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will provide you with an update on the Department's IED Task Force announced today.

To participate in this conference call, please dial (b)(2) and ask the operator to connect you to the Analysts conference call.

Please R.S.V.P. to (b)(6) at (b)(6) or call her at (b)(2)

We hope you are able to participate tomorrow.

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Tuesday, December 20, 2005 12:25 PM
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Cc: Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, RDML, OASD-PA; (b)(6) Maj, OCJCS/PA; (b)(6) CIV - OASD(PA); (b)(6) (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Vician, Todd, Maj, OASD-PA; (b)(6) LTC, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Subject: Renuart transcript -military analysts
Attachments: 12-20-05 Renuart Afghanistan.doc



12-20-05 Renuart
Afghanistan.d...

Attached is the transcript from this morning's 0930 call with Lt Gen Renuart and the military analysts regarding Afghanistan.

The call was on background.

Transcript – Military Analyst Call
Air Force Lt Gen Gene Renuart, Director of Strategic Plans and Policy, Joint Staff
Tuesday, Dec. 20, 2005, 0930
OSD – Public Affairs, Room 2E556, The Pentagon
Lt Gen Gene Renuart, BG Jeffery Hammond
Host: (b)(6) OSD Public Affairs
On background – quote as senior DoD official
Duration approximately 20 minutes
Transcriber: (b)(6)

(b)(6) This is (b)(6) at the Pentagon. Welcome to the conference call. Thanks for joining us this morning. I want to remind you that today's call is on background, so you may quote a senior DoD official.

I have with me General Hammond from the Army and General Renuart from the Joint Staff. They will be briefing you on troop adjustments in Afghanistan, and we look forward to your questions at the end. With that, I will turn it over to General Renuart.

Lt Gen Renuart: Okay, thanks (b)(6) Good morning. We – as you've seen in some press reports, there will be an announcement that will be out shortly within the hour here in the Pentagon that will outline an adjustment of troops for our forces in OEF in Afghanistan.

It will outline the fact that 4th Brigade, 10th Mountain Division will not deploy as a brigade unit; rather, one battalion task force pulled from that brigade will go forward to provide support to the NATO transformation in the south – what will be called Regional Command South, and they will be partnering with UK, Canadian and others in the south to create a multi-national force under the NATO ISAF flag as it makes its transition.

The end result of this will mean a decrease in overall U.S. presence in Afghanistan by something on the order of about 2,500 folks. Number's a little bit soft, but it will be pretty close in that category.

It signals kind of a beginning of an expansion of NATO's mission. This is based on an assessment that General Eikenberry – Karl Eikenberry – has made in the theater, with recommendations to General Abizaid that the security conditions, the progress on the ground has been such that we can begin to transition from direct combat operations in the southern part of the country to stability operations that are more closely aligned with the NATO ISAF mission. And NATO has stood up to that.

So this is another step in a success story in Afghanistan. It comes on the heels of parliament being seated; it comes on the heels of some progress being made in reconstruction in the south; it comes on the heels of some improvement in the stability in the number of provinces; and it allows for NATO to continue to take on an expanded role in Afghanistan.

So, good news story. Good news in that we can reduce the number of folks that are deploying; good news in that NATO is able to begin an expansion of its ISAF mission; and good news because all that signals some success on the ground in Afghanistan.

So that's kind of a quick overview. We are probably best suited to let you all fire away at questions, so I'll stop there and let you jump in, and we can go from questions. And I've got folks from the Army as well who can be the experts better than I.

Q: General, Bob Maginnis. Question with regard to ISAF and the Dutch. I understand they're not going to turn over prisoners perhaps to us because of their restrictions on capital punishment. Is that going to at all harm our intelligence gathering operations in Afghanistan?

Lt Gen Renuart: Bob, I think first it's important to understand that as NATO assumes this new mission, they will come with a set of rules of engagement that will deal with detainees as they take them. There is, for example, in RC-West and RC-North, where they are today, they have an agreement with the government of Afghanistan on turning those over. We work closely with Afghanistan on intelligence gathering, and we are comfortable with that relationship.

So I really don't think this will have any substantial effect at all. I think we are very comfortable with the way NATO approaches detainees in the other parts of the country; we see that continuing as they move into the south; and we feel like we'll have more than adequate ability to share in that intelligence information with the Afghan government.

Q: Thank you.

(b)(6) Gentlemen, any other questions for the general?

Q: This is Gordon Cucullu, general. Do we see this as likely to accelerate over the course of 2006, or would it be safe to say we're trying this on a trial basis to assess it after a couple of months?

Lt Gen Renuart: Gordon that's a good question, and I think you want to be a little careful to signal, you know, this being the bow wave of large-scale changes. But I think it is important to characterize it in that we see this as the beginning of further expansion of the NATO mission, which generally is a stabilization, reconstruction, governance role, with certainly capable security forces should they be needed.

So what I see accelerating is the progress that we've made in Afghanistan with respect to governance and restoration of a reasonable quality of life for the Afghan people.

As to how that will affect U.S. troops, I think it's also fair to say that this reduction could continue based on the conditions we see further on down the road. You don't want to overuse – I mean, we beat up the conditions-based approach, but truly this is the beginning of a routine assessment, a routine update, a reevaluation by CFC-Alpha and

General Abizaid and the secretary on conditions as they continue to improve, and it gives us the ability to further transition forces to a broader NATO mission in the country.

It's also important to note that it does not in any way reduce our commitment to the counter-terrorism mission in the country. We will retain all of the very highly trained and well-equipped Special Forces units that we have in the country that can continue to press the fight against al Qaeda and those Taliban elements that want to continue to fight.

It also signals a, if you will, an expansion of our relationship with Afghanistan in the area of strategic partnership, because it becomes a more multi-national force that's there in the country. And then I think, finally, it is a measure of our confidence in the Iraqi - I'm sorry, Afghan - government beginning to stand up more and more on its own, and allows us to work closely with both the Afghan government and the international community on the future of Afghanistan.

Q: Can I ask a follow-up to that please?

Lt Gen Renuart: Sure.

Q: The - I know we're going to be asked or that the question will come up and I don't want to lean too far forward in the foxhole on this, but is this then conceptually at least a working model for what we would hope to achieve in Iraqi Freedom?

Lt Gen Renuart: You know, Gordon I think there -- while there are parallels between the two theaters, and certainly an assessment of situations on the ground will continue in both places. It's important to also understand the differences. In Afghanistan, we are, we are, we have been obviously engaged there with a large multi-national presence for quite a while, and we've begun to really isolate the terrorist element, if you will, in a small portion of the south and predominantly the eastern border area in Afghanistan, and we'll continue to stay focused on that. But the process of assessing situations on the ground are parallel, and General Casey clearly will continue to make those assessments over time, and he, too, like General Eikenberry, will make some recommendations to the secretary in terms of how we adjust and shape in Iraq, as well. So, there are parallels, there are differences; I would be cautious about drawing too much into that just yet.

Q: Thanks very much.

Lt Gen Renuart: Sure. Any other questions?

Q: Bob Maginnis again. On PRTs (provincial reconstruction teams), the distribution of PRTs, is that shifting at all more in NATO's favor, are we downsizing our presence there, or what is the distribution?

Lt Gen Renuart: Well, Bob, as NATO assumes more and more of a role throughout the country, they will also take on more responsibility for the PRTs that are deployed. As an example, the PRT in Lashkar Gah (Helmand Province), which is right now a U.S. PRT

will transition to UK as the UK moves into that region. The Canadians are taking over a PRT in the Kandahar region as they move in. So it is a transfer of PRT responsibility to NATO, and that really is a central element of NATO's mission in each of these regions as they move forces in.

The U.S. will still retain leadership on a number of the PRTs. The number I think that sticks in my head today is we'll still have somewhere around 12, but please don't quote me on that because my public math is usually wrong. But essentially we'll keep all of the PRTs – the vast majority of the PRTs in the east; we will work a couple of PRTs up in the Panjsher Valley (near Kabul), and then - but the intent being that we would encourage and welcome other nations picking up some of those responsibilities. And we'll still keep one or two of those PRTs as part of NATO as well, and that's important to mention, as well.

And one point I'd mention here that some might say, well, you're letting NATO take this on so you can go home. In fact, we'll continue to have more forces contributing to NATO than the other nations in the process, and so as we make this final transition – I mean, ultimately, as NATO might assume the entire country, the U.S. will still be the dominant partner there. So, in addition to ground forces of course we'll continue to provide all the air and the intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance, the supporting fires (?), a great deal of logistics support. So, the U.S. will still be present in the NATO mission for the foreseeable future. So it is not a – should not be characterized as handing this over to some other nations in NATO and the U.S. not participating.

Q: General, Tim Eads. Can you tell us how this is going to affect the rotation schedule in Iraq, or if it will affect the rotation schedule in Iraq, if you're (bringing?) up these troops?

Lt Gen Renuart: Well, as you may know, Tim, the rotation – I mean, we work the yearly rotation schedules a good deal in advance. The forces earmarked to go to Afghanistan and the forces earmarked to go to Iraq are kind of done in separate bins.

What this will do obviously is ease the tempo of 4th Brigade, 10th Mountain, because they are not going to Afghanistan, and in theory, if you extrapolate that over time, that force could be available for some other mission sooner than they might normally be.

But there are some unknowns in this. One of the key elements here is this brigade will remain on a prepared to deploy order, which really means that if General Eikenberry found a crisis developed that he needed that additional force, we'd push that forward.

So they're not completely off the hook, but they'll be at home station in a PTDO status. So it may not necessarily free up that brigade as quickly as we'd hoped, but it does signal that we are beginning to change the size of the force in Afghanistan, and so there is some relationship to how the Army will view that in the, you know, longer term in terms of sustainability. Maybe General Hammond might have another comment here.

BG Hammond: No, sir, I really don't. I think generally that's a --

Lt Gen Renuart: That's a fair way to describe it?

BG Hammond: I think it's a good (description?) –

Lt Gen Renuart: I think with respect to Iraq, you know, we don't all know what we don't all know right now, and until we see how General Casey assesses the success of the elections, and how this – what it (portends?) for the future, and really understand his recommendation (to?) the secretary, we can't really comment there, and that's probably as good as it gets for right now.

Tim, does that kind of answer your question?

Q: Yes, sir, it does. Thanks very much.

Lt Gen Renuart: Okay. Any other questions? Well you all are pretty well-behaved today. I was warmed up for all the worst, but, I appreciate it. If there's something that you think of in follow-up, get back to Tara, and we'll try to get you whatever information we can. We appreciate all of your support. You're doing great work.

Q: Well, thank you very much.

(b)(6) All right, thank you gentlemen, take care, happy holidays.

Q: Merry Christmas.

Q: Merry Christmas.

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
 Sent: Monday, December 19, 2005 11:48 AM
 To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
 Subject: (Babbin) All the President's Spies

http://www.spectator.org/dsp_article.asp?art_id=9169

All the President's Spies

By Jed Babbin

Published 12/19/2005 12:09:32 AM

There are politically motivated criminals in our government who should be unmasked and punished to the fullest extent of the law. These people have leaked some of our most sensitive secrets and damaged our national security for no reason other than to discredit President Bush. Forget the Plame nonsense. That -- according to a CIA assessment -- caused no damage at all. No, I'm talking about the leaks of the secret CIA detention facilities in Europe and elsewhere where terrorist detainees are kept. I'm talking about the leak of a top-secret satellite program, apparently by three U.S. senators. And I'm talking about last week's *New York Times* report about the NSA's domestic intelligence gathering effort that's paying off handsomely. Or was, until the leakers told the *Times*.

Friday, in a report that the White House asked not be published because it could jeopardize ongoing anti-terrorist operations, the *Times* revealed that in 2001 the president authorized the National Security Agency to collect intelligence from conversations routed through the United States and possibly including people within the United States. And the media feeding frenzy aimed at declaring George W. Bush a criminal started all over again.

It's pretty clear that NSA's domestic intelligence gathering was -- and is -- legal. But before we get to that, we have to set the context for this debate correctly, which is more than the *Times*, the *Washington Post*, or any of the other politico-media will do. We need only two data points to accomplish that.

First, the last time a war was fought on American soil, the president then didn't merely authorize intelligence gathering within our borders, he suspended the writ of *habeas corpus* for anyone held in military custody (even though we didn't yet have a base at Gitmo), and declared that anyone opposing the war would be tried and punished under martial law in military courts. Thank heaven that George Bush isn't as radical as Abraham Lincoln was when he signed that proclamation in September 1862. Or as radical as FDR was in interning Japanese citizens in World War II.

Second, the price of inaction in the war against terrorists is too high. We know, from Mansour Ijaz's accounts and from the admissions Clinton national security adviser Sandy Berger has made in several interviews, that the Clinton administration turned down Sudan's repeated 1996 offers of bin Laden on a silver platter because its lawyers didn't believe we had enough evidence to indict him in a U.S. court. Instead of telling the lawyers to find a way to put OBL out of business, the Clintons took the easy way out their lawyers had provided and let bin Laden get away. Now, we have a president who apparently tells his lawyers what Andrew Carnegie once told his.

In what may be an apocryphal story, 19th century industrial baron Carnegie, in a long meeting with

his planning staff, endured a few "you can't do that" objections from a new lawyer. Carnegie took the young man into the hall and fed him a dose of reality: "Young man, I don't pay you to tell me what I can't do. I pay you to tell me how I can do what I want to do." And that sums up President Bush's approach to the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.

FISA requires that intelligence gathering regarding conversations to which "U.S. persons" are a party can only be done pursuant to a search warrant issued (usually in secret) by the special FISA court, made up of sitting U.S. district court judges and located in the Department of Justice building in Washington.

Second, the FISA court issues warrants based on findings of probable cause, like other U.S. courts issuing criminal search warrants. There are too many situations -- like the one we were in before 9-11 -- in which too many possible terrorists are talking to each other and their helpers to sort them out one by one and get individual warrants. Which is why the law, and the regulations that implement it, allow the Attorney General to bypass the FISA court.

The regulations implementing FISA clarify the law's exceptions to the requirements for a FISA court warrant. U.S. Signals Intelligence Directive, dated July 27, 1993, is the primary regulation governing NSA's operations. It is a secret document. (We at *TAS*, unlike the *NYT*, never, ever, disclose government secrets that may damage national security. What follows is taken from a declassified version obtained from an open source.)

Under Section 4 of USSID 18, communications which are known to be to or from U.S. persons can't be intentionally intercepted without: (a) the approval of the FISA court is obtained; *OR* (b) the approval of the Attorney General of the United States with respect to "communications to or from U.S. PERSONS outside the United States...international communications" and other categories of communications including for the purpose of collecting "significant foreign intelligence information."

USSID 18 goes on to allow NSA to gather intelligence about a U.S. person outside the United States even without Attorney General sanction in emergencies "when securing the approval of the Attorney General is not practical because...the time required to obtain such approval would result in the loss of significant foreign intelligence and would cause substantial harm to national security."

So FISA itself and USSID 18 provide a lot of swinging room for what the president ordered. If the people subjected to the intelligence gathering weren't "U.S. persons," if Attorney General Gonzales made certain findings (which he did, according to several accounts) and if the NSA went ahead because it reasonably believed it would lose significant foreign intelligence if it held its hand, the operation is legal. Period. Everyone who is ranting and raving about illegality has neither the facts (most of which we don't know) or the law and regulations (which weigh heavily in favor of legality) on their side.

In his Saturday radio address, the president said that the NSA program he authorized has been reviewed over and over, and reauthorized by him more than three dozen times:

The activities I authorized are reviewed approximately every 45 days. Each review is based on a fresh intelligence assessment of terrorist threats to the continuity of our government and the threat of catastrophic damage to our homeland. During each assessment, previous activities under the authorization are reviewed. The review includes approval by our nation's top legal officials, including the Attorney General and the Counsel to the President. I have reauthorized this program more than 30 times since the September the 11th attacks, and I intend to do so for as long as our nation faces a

continuing threat from al Qaeda and related groups.

Illegal? I don't think so. A good idea? No, a great idea. Many of the congressional Dems whining the loudest about the president breaking the law (such as Sen. Carl Levin, ranking Dem on the Armed Services Committee) were almost certainly among those who were briefed repeatedly on the program since it began in 2001. In short, the Dems' objections are as hollow as the people shouting them to the television cameras. Let Congress ask its questions, and answer some as well. (Such as why weren't they concerned about this when they were briefed on it four years ago?) But let the intelligence be gathered.

America has lived in the shadow of 9-11 for more than four years. Everyone expects more terrorist attacks on our shores, but none has yet occurred. One reason for that is probably the NSA domestic intelligence gathering program.

We can do a lot, and must do it all. Spying on aliens and some "U.S. persons" here in accordance with the law, asking our allies to spy on Americans overseas, sharing intelligence gathered abroad with law enforcement authorities here, and much more. Our Constitution and laws set broad bounds for intelligence gathering. We should do everything within those bounds. Everything.

TAS contributing editor Jed Babbin is the author of Inside the Asylum: Why the UN and Old Europe Are Worse Than You Think (Regnery, 2004).

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Researcher
Speechwriting Group, 2D554
Office of the Secretary of Defense
Work: (b)(2)
Fax:

(b)(6)

From: Thomas McInerney [tmcinerney@(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, December 20, 2005 12:35 AM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: FW: [U] RE: THANKS

FYI

I meant to send CC to you.

Does OSD have any problem with the Generals doing live RADIO?

Hope you saw O'Reilly's rerun of SD interview last night.

Tom

Thomas G. McInerney
Lt. Gen. USAF (Ret)

(b)(6)

Voice: (b)(2)
Cell: (b)(2)
Fax: (b)(2)

----- Forwarded Message

From: Thomas McInerney <tmcinerney@(b)(6)>
Date: Mon, 19 Dec 2005 21:21:56 -0800
To: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief <donald.alston@(b)(6)>
Subject: Re: [U] RE: THANKS

Don

Unfortunately the NYT article on NSA is stepping all over the magnificent election you all just had. It is no accident by the way!

I was with Tony Snow yesterday and I suggested that it would be good to get some of your leaders Casey, Dempsey Vines Lynch, yourself on his RADIO SHOW which runs from 0900-1200 EST. This is an ideal way to expand the dialogue. I always find Radio to be a better medium as you have more time. In addition your people can do it from a cel phone - no studio required.

Your thoughts?

Tom

Thomas G. McInerney
Lt. Gen. USAF (Ret)

(b)(6)

Voice: (b)(2)
Cell: (b)(2)
Fax: (b)(2)

> Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

>

> Sir,

>

> Great to hear from you, and we've been watching. We appreciate your
> support and your ability to tell this story.

>
> We will stay in touch and are ready to move what you need anytime.
>
> Merry Christmas!
>
> VR,
> Don
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Thomas McInerney [mailto:tmcinerney@(b)(6)]
> Sent: Sunday, December 18, 2005 3:24 PM
> To: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief
> Subject: THANKS
>
> Don
>
> My belated thanks to you and your team during our visit. I have been
> busy trying to get the word out thru TV, Radio and personal
> discussions with anchors and columnists etc.
>
> It was a superb trip and your personal commitment was incredible. I
> talked to Chief about it. He will be your way shortly.
>
> I do a HIT tomorrow at 1320 EST with Brian Wilson. I will follow one
> of your chaps. You all have been doing a great job and Fox has really
> used you all a lot.
>
> CONGRATULATIONS ON THE ELECTION!
>
> I will send you my short summary to Brit Hume and Bill O'Reilly. I did
> Brit but Bill had White House and SEC DEF so maybe next week but I am
> heading for Palm Beach on WED.
>
> Thanks again. BTW SEC DEF invited Bill O'Reilly to visit Iraq which
> was my input. Bill very much wants to go so expect him in March.
>
> Tom
>

> Thomas G. McInerney
> Lt. Gen. USAF (Ret)
> (b)(6)
>
> Voice: (b)(2)
> Cell: (b)(2)
> Fax:
>
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>
> Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
>
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> mandatory disclosure under FOIA. DoD 5400.7R, "DoD Freedom of
> Information Act Program", DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD
> Information for Public Release", and DoD Instruction 5230.29,
> "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release" apply.

----- End of Forwarded Message

(b)(6)

From: JedBabbin@[b)(6)]
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2005 8:27 AM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: SecDef Interview for China Book

Eric: Just checking in. Is there a way to get him on the phone for about 15 minutes before the first of the year?
Best, Jed.

Jed Babbin

(b)(2) (home office)
(home fax)
(mobile)

(b)(6)

From: JedBabbin@**(b)(6)**
Sent: Monday, December 19, 2005 8:08 AM
To: tmcinerney@**(b)(6)**; paulvalley@**(b)(6)**; nashct@**(b)(6)**; Glenstrae77@**(b)(6)**; BURM41516@**(b)(6)**; **(b)(6)**; CIV, OASD-PA; WSSInter@**(b)(6)**; roberthscales@**(b)(6)**; **(b)(6)**
Subject: The NSA Domestic Spy Op: Today's Spectator

The NSA, despite what the press is saying, apparently acted legally in conducting domestic intelligence gathering. What's more, the president was wise to order them to do it.

The American Spectator

Jed Babbin

(b)(2) (home office)
(home fax)
(mobile)

(b)(6)

From: McCausland, Jeffrey [mccausj@(b)(6)]
Sent: Sunday, December 18, 2005 6:08 PM
To: (b)(6) MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; (b)(6)
(b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA
(b)(6) BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief
Cc:
Subject: RE: [U] RE: Any analysis outcomes?

(b)(6) -- once again my sincere thanks for the great hospitality and congratulations on what has been an unbelievable outcome. You guys are making history.

Dallas had asked us to give a rough summary of our work since we departed. I have been really busy but best I can tell I did nine interviews while I was in Iraq for CBS network radio, a TV broadcast on Up To the Minute, about a dozen "two-way" live interviews with various CBS affiliate stations around the country (New York, Charlotte, Seattle, Los Angeles, St. Louis, San Antonio, and a bunch more I cannot remember....), a couple of additional interviews for the CBS national news, and a pod broadcast for the website...whew....

In many ways this was totally a derivative of being able to get a first hand impression of what was happening on the ground in the run up to the elections.

Anything else I can do for you -- just call or email.

Jeff

Jeffrey D. McCausland, PhD
Director, Leadership in Conflict Initiative
Dickinson College
233 Louther Street
Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013
Tel: (b)(2)
Fax: (b)(2)
Email: mccausj@ (b)(2)
www.dickinson.edu/departments/leadership/

From: (b)(6) MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 4:01 PM
To: (b)(6); (b)(6) robertscales@ (b)(6); CAPT (Ret) Nash; COL (Ret) Garret;
(b)(6) COL(Ret) Allard; McCausland, Jeffrey; CSM(Ret) Greer; HON Eric Ruff; LTC(Ret) Jed Babbitt; LTG(ret) McInerney; Maj(Ret) Messing
Cc: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief
Subject: FW: [U] RE: Any analysis outcomes?

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Gentlemen – On behalf of Brig Gen Alston he wanted to insure that you received a copy of our Media Operations Center update. Congratulations to the Iraqi people and thank you for your support.

Maj (b)(6)

XO, COMMS DIV, STRATEFF

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

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From: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 10:45 PM
To: (b)(6) MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV
Subject: FW: [U] RE: Any analysis outcomes?

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Rick,

Pls pass this to the military analysts. Already sent to Bob Maginnis.

Thanks.

CDA

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

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(b)(6)

From: tmcinerney@**(b)(6)**
Sent: Saturday, December 17, 2005 10:08 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: Re: FOX NEWS HIT AT 1320 18 DEC 05

Eric
I will try tomorrow. Doesn't always work.
Tom

-----Original Message-----

From: "Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA" <Eric.Ruff@**(b)(6)**>
Subj: Re: FOX NEWS HIT AT 1320 18 DEC 05
Date: Sat Dec 17, 2005 6:13 pm
Size: 1K
To: "'tmcinerney@**(b)(6)**" <tmcinerney@**(b)(6)**>

Re: FOX NEWS HIT AT 1320 18 DEC 05

Feel free to use the japan germany anecdote, if you get the opportunity. Didn't get to use it last time w/britt, I noticed. Good luck.

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

-----Original Message-----

From: Thomas McInerney
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; **(b)(6)** CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Sun Dec 18 07:15:49 2005
Subject: FOX NEWS HIT AT 1320 18 DEC 05
Eric et al
I am doing a Hit tomorrow at 1330 on Fox News.
Tom

Thomas G. McInerney
Lt. Gen. USAF (Ret)

(b)(6)

Voice: **(b)(2)**
Cell: **(b)(2)**
Fax: **(b)(2)**

(b)(6)

From: Major Andy Messing [ndcf@(b)(6)]
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2005 11:10 AM
To: steven@(b)(6)
Cc: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; (b)(6) Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA;
george murray; LTG(ret) McInerney
Subject: Fw: Please read
Importance: High

> Dear Friends...
> This is my Op-Ed in todays Washington Times... my thoughts from my
> trip to IRAQ last week...which I reflected on FOX News TV too, two days ago...
> Best Regards, ANDY

> > -----
> > WINNING IN SLOW MOTION
> > By F. Andy Messing Jr.
> > -----
> > An open secret among the military is that the operational plan to
> > invade
> Iraq was remiss in outlining an effective and robust program of civic
> action
> and civil affairs.
> This would have brought the populace off its knees by providing
> organization
> and assets, establishing the sincerity and benevolence of the
> occupying forces. Besides failing to do this, the blanket disbanding
> of the Iraqi security forces made recovery a costly and protracted
> affair. Accordingly, saying that we had a slow start is being
> extremely polite. As we move
> toward
> \$500 billion spent and 2,500 of our valuable soldiers killed in action
> (KIA), the race is on to see if the American people will hang onto the
> notion America can push democracy into a void, regardless of the
> weapons
> of
> mass destruction issue.
> > Many military briefers use Vietnam-era jargon like "body counts"
> > to
> describe the situation, albeit with modern PowerPoint. But one general
> radically departs from that. The 3rd Infantry Division commander, Maj. Gen.
> William G. "Fuzzy" Webster interlaces his comments with quotes from
> psychologists Abraham Maslow's "Hierarchy of Needs" and B.F. Skinner's
> behavioral concepts, highlighting how providing clean water and sewage
> systems reduces violence. He states that in more than a year in Iraq,
> he
> has
> not fired artillery or called in air strikes in his area of operation.
> His division has taken to heart the concept "make no more enemies" in
> a constituency that encompasses more than 7 million people.
> > He segues into how his combat ready troopers will be aiding
> > newly
> trained Iraqi Security Forces to ensure a safe election. This is a
> positive
> departure from the ideas espoused in our military schools, such as "we
> are here to just break things," that a gullible and naive U.S.
> Congress incorporated into military training in past decades. This
> metamorphosis reflects a seminal change in military thinking about
> warfare in the 21st century. One officer says, "It seems that the
> military is the only part of our government on a war footing," which
> could explain why an infantry commander has had to become sensitive to

> the situation, and is wearing multiple hats. The result of this new
> thinking is, as one Marine officer involved in civic action in
> Fallujah says, "progress is slow, but we have progress. It isn't all about killing bad
guys.."
> Despite this progress, some of the American military retains its
antiquated
> thinking. The new Iraqi military is being trained to mirror our
conventional
> forces, complete with "infantry combat divisions" designed mainly to
> break things. While security is paramount, it will require more than
> just a hard fist ? it will also require a helping open hand.
> In El Salvador, where our military influence succeeded in the 1980s,
> we spent a major proportion of our time instructing the military, and
> later
the
> police, on human rights, civic action and civil affairs. The dividend
> was enormous and led to a diminution of conflict. Fortunately, other
> segments
of
> the Coalition effort and Iraqi citizens' own initiatives are picking
> up
the
> pace in Iraq, with thousands of helpful projects completed and
> thousands more being planned and implemented. The combined effort has
> led to lower unemployment, the expansion of education and health
> services, and the
growth
> of basic security. However, much of this effort is in slow motion,
> some barely visible to the naked eye, mixed in with a few clear
> failures to
learn
> from. The administration's efforts to inform the American public, as
> the Reagan administration did on the controversial Contra movement,
> will be an important measure of progress in Iraq.
> Initially it appeared the Iraq effort was akin to putting a size 13
> foot into a size 7 shoe, but the energy and resources being put into
> this fledgling democracy, is in effect, reducing the disparity in
> size. Our flag-draped caskets prove the sincerity of our physical and
> intellectual effort. Furthermore, reduction in forces need not be
> viewed as a lessening of American commitment ? providing quantity of
> effort is matched by
quality
> of effort ? as Iraq transitions into a self-sustaining mode.
> The political investment by President Bush may yet make him the
> Abraham Lincoln of the 21st century, if he can convince the American
> public to
hang
> tough. Failure to do so will trigger a cascade of turmoil costing a
hundred
> times more than our current investment, with "evil doers" running
> unfettered.
> >
> >
> F. Andy Messing Jr. is a retired Special Forces major who served in El
> Salvador, Grenada and Vietnam. He has just returned from his third
> trip to Iraq since 1991. He is executive director of the National
> Defense Council Foundation, which has placed 142 tons of medicine in
> 13 countries in conflict, including Iraq.</i>
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> > -----
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>

(b)(6)

From: Thomas McInerney [tmcinerney@(b)(6)]
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2005 11:29 AM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: Re: BRIT HUME'S SHOW TONIGHT AT 1820.

Eric

HOME RUN!!!!

Congratulations!

Of the President, Condi and SD he was the most articulate in the last two days.

His detractors are going to be very angry.

Tom

Thomas G. McInerney
Lt. Gen. USAF (Ret)

(b)(6)

Voice: (b)(2)

Cell: (b)(2)

Fax:

tom, the sd invited o'reilly to iraq between segments of the show tonight. i wasn't there but i've gotten word a few minutes ago. thanks for the suggestion. sounds like the interview focused primarily on today's elections. will know more at 8 p.m. thanks again. eric

-----Original Message-----

From: Thomas McInerney [mailto:tmcinerney@(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2005 6:09 AM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: Re: BRIT HUME'S SHOW TONIGHT AT 1820.

Eric

I intend to use your quote from the academy about Germany and Japan if you don't object.

Tom

great, tom. i'll be pedaling hard in the poac and paying very close attention! thanks, and

thanks for making the trip. eric

-----Original Message-----

From: tmcinerney@**(b)(6)** [mailto:tmcinerney@**(b)(6)**]

Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 1:07 PM

To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA

Subject: BRIT HUME'S SHOW TONIGHT AT 1820.

Eric

I am on Brit Hume's show tonight around 1820 plus or minus.

TOM

Thomas G. McInerney

Lt Gen USAF Retired

(b)(6)

(b)(2)

(b)(6)

From: Thomas McInerney [tmcinerney@(b)(6)]
Sent: Friday, December 16, 2005 10:21 AM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: Re: BRIT HUME'S SHOW TONIGHT AT 1820.

Eric

THANK YOU

SD will come off great and he should TODAY. WHAT A DAY!!!

GOD BLESS YOU ALL!

Tom

tom, the sd invited o'reilly to iraq between segments of the show tonight. i wasn't there but i've gotten word a few minutes ago. thanks for the suggestion. sounds like the interview focused primarily on today's elections. will know more at 8 p.m. thanks again. eric

-----Original Message-----

From: Thomas McInerney [mailto:tmcinerney@(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2005 6:09 AM
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Subject: Re: BRIT HUME'S SHOW TONIGHT AT 1820.

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From: tmcinerney@(b)(6)
[mailto:tmcinerney@(b)(6)]
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Eric

I am on Brit Hume's show tonight around 1820 plus or minus.

TOM

Thomas G. McInerney
Lt Gen USAF Retired

(b)(6)

(b)(2) office
cel
Fax

(b)(6)

From: **(b)(6)** MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV [richard.moon@**(b)(6)**]
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 4:01 PM
To: **(b)(6)** shepdonald@**(b)(6)** robertscales@**(b)(6)** CAPT (Ret) Nash;
 COL (Ret) **(b)(6)**; COL(Ret) Allard; COL(Ret) McCausland; CSM(Ret)
(b)(6) Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; LTC(Ret) Jed Babbin; LTG(ret) McInerney; Maj(Ret)
 Messing
Cc: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief
Subject: FW: [U] RE: Any analysis outcomes?
Attachments: [U] STRATEFF Media Ops Center // Iraqi Elections SITREP #14 // 2100

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Gentlemen – On behalf of Brig Gen Alston he wanted to insure that you received a copy of our Media Operations Center update. Congratulations to the Iraqi people and thank you for your support.

Maj **(b)(6)**
 XO, COMMS DIV, STRATEFF

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

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From: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 10:45 PM
To: **(b)(6)** MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV
Subject: FW: [U] RE: Any analysis outcomes?

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED**(b)(6)**

Pls pass this to the military analysts. Already sent to Bob Maginnis.

Thanks.

CDA

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

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(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) AFIS-HQ/PIA (b)(6)
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 3:17 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: media analysts

I apologize. I am only just now seeing this message. I need to do better checking.

-----Original Message-----

From: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA [mailto:Eric.Ruff@(b)(6)]
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 7:08 AM
To: (b)(6) AFIS-HQ/PIA
Cc: SFC, OASD-PA
Subject: media analysts

(b)(6) can you please compile all the statements of the military analysts that have come out since the trip. need it by 1030 a.m. for a meeting today. thanks.

(b)(6)

From: Paul Vallely [paulvallely@(b)(6)]
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2005 12:16 PM
Cc: 'Paul Vallely'
Subject: A New Al-Qaeda Focus on Israel

The US needs to get on top of this immediately with greater Middle East strategy less we get caught short..... Close hold but releasable through selected sources/

PV.....

For the first time, Israeli defense experts are noting that groups identifying with al-Qaeda - or the global jihad - are determined to acquire operational footholds close to Israel's borders. The most dramatic sign was the November 9, 2005, suicide bombing of three Jordanian hotels in Amman by "al-Qaeda Mesopotamia" - the organization led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Militant Islamic websites immediately announced: "After the attack in the heart of Jordan, it will soon be possible to reach Jewish targets in Israel."

* Al-Qaeda operations around Israel are becoming more prominent. In August 2005, an al-Qaeda rocket strike at the Jordanian Red Sea port of Aqaba also reached the Israeli resort town of Eilat. To Israel's south, a growing al-Qaeda presence in Sinai led to attacks on Israeli tourists in Taba and other coastal resorts in October 2004, followed by a major bombing at a hotel in Sharm al-Sheikh in July 2005. Sinai has also served as a rear base for the beginning of an al-Qaeda presence in the Gaza Strip. Zarqawi's terrorist network formally joined al-Qaeda in October 2004.

* Ayman al-Zawahiri, the deputy head of al-Qaeda, has encouraged Zarqawi to extend his jihad in Iraq to neighboring states (i.e., Jordan and Syria), where there are already increasing signs of jihadi activity. In the next stage, Zawahiri envisions "the clash with Israel." The head of Israeli military intelligence, Maj.-Gen. Aharon Zeevi (Farkash), concluded recently: "We are not a high priority [for al-Qaeda], but our prioritization for them is increasing."

* Many Western sources are convinced that Zarqawi was training his recruits in the use of toxins, including poisons and chemical weapons, at the Herat training camp in Afghanistan. In 2004, a Zarqawi associate named Azmi al-Jailusi confessed to trying to set off a chemical explosion in central Amman, near the headquarters of Jordanian intelligence, which had the potential to kill 80,000 people. In April 2005,

the U.S. Department of Homeland Security warned that recurrent U.S. intelligence reports indicated that Zarqawi was seeking to obtain a "radiological explosive."

* It would be a cardinal error for Israel to conclude that after the U.S. war in Iraq, the region to Israel's east is moving in the direction of greater stability and, therefore, Israel can take the risk of conceding its strategic assets in the West Bank. Zarqawi now wants to destabilize Jordan, but clearly seeks to target Israel as well. Dismissing the value of Israel's security fence, Zarqawi's organization has declared: "the separation wall...will feel the might of the mujahidin," hinting that Israel could face the same waves of insurgent volunteers that have entered Iraq. Were Israel to withdraw from the strategic barrier it controls in the Jordan Valley, then Israeli vulnerability could very well attract more global jihadi elements to Jordan, who would seek to use the kingdom as a platform to reach the West Bank and then Israel.

For the first time, Israeli defense experts are noting that groups identifying with al-Qaeda - or the global jihad - are determined to acquire operational footholds close to Israel's borders.¹ The most dramatic sign of this development was the November 9, 2005, suicide bombing of three Jordanian hotels in Amman by "al-Qaeda Mesopotamia" - the organization led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian insurgency leader fighting the U.S. in Iraq. Militant Islamic websites immediately announced: "After the attack in the heart of Jordan, it will soon be possible to reach Jewish targets in Israel."² Dismissing the value of Israel's security fence, Zarqawi's website declared that the "separation wall...will feel the might of the mujahidin."³ This implied that his insurgent volunteers that had been used in Iraq might also be employed against Israel, as well.

Earlier, in August 2005, an al-Qaeda rocket strike in the Jordanian Red Sea port of Aqaba also reached the Israeli resort town of Eilat. To Israel's south, a growing al-Qaeda presence in Sinai led to attacks on Israeli tourists in Taba and other coastal resorts in October 2004, followed by a major bombing at a hotel in Sharm al-Sheikh in July 2005. The al-Qaeda presence is based in central Sinai, which serves as the rear base for al-Qaeda's entry into the Gaza Strip.

Al-Qaeda's Changing Priorities

Until recently, Israel was not a high-priority target for al-Qaeda and its affiliate organizations that have embraced its goals of worldwide jihad. Al-Qaeda was formed in Afghanistan after the Soviet defeat in 1989 by the various mujahidin groups who were emboldened by their victory over a superpower and hence sought to carry their war to other arenas. Given its geographic location, however, the early al-Qaeda was

more involved in militant Islamic struggles in Chechnya, Kashmir, and against the Taliban's Afghan rivals in the Northern Alliance - but not in the war against Israel. As Arab rulers in the heartland of the Middle East succeeded in suppressing Islamic militant movements, al-Qaeda began to plan to strike at the "Far Enemy" (i.e., the U.S.), since the "Near Enemy" (the Arab regimes) was still too strong.⁴ With Osama bin Laden obsessed in the 1990s with the idea of evicting the U.S. from Saudi Arabia, America very quickly became his primary target. Israel, according to Bernard Lewis, was at best a third priority.⁵

A New Al-Qaeda Focus on Israel

This began to change as al-Qaeda perpetrated a hotel bombing and a missile attack on an Israeli Arkia airliner in Mombassa, Kenya, in November 2002. But the greatest factor behind the new focus of the global jihad on Israel has been the war in Iraq led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, which has created a new center for radical Islamic militancy in the Middle East itself. Thus, Zarqawi wrote in 2004: "Among the greatest positive elements of this arena [Iraq] is that it is jihad in the Arab heartland." For Zarqawi, the main battle of Islamic militancy was to be fought here and not in the Hindu-Kush mountains bordering Pakistan, India, China, and Afghanistan: "the true, decisive battle between infidelity and Islam is in this land, i.e., in [Greater] Syria and its surroundings." A U.S. counterterrorism official has concluded that Zarqawi's real goal is to establish a single Islamic state throughout the Levant, from Turkey down to Egypt.⁶ Like other radical Islamist groups, he is part of the movement to destabilize and then replace present Arab regimes with a new caliphate. Zarqawi's goals merged with those of al-Qaeda when he pledged his allegiance to Osama bin Laden in October 2004 and formally made his Jama'at al-Tawhid wa al-Jihad part of the global al-Qaeda network.

Zarqawi's shift of focus to the heartland of the Middle East has received the full blessing of the al-Qaeda leadership. On October 11, 2005, the U.S. Director of National Intelligence, Ambassador John D. Negroponte, released an intercepted letter dated July 9, 2005, from Ayman al-Zawahiri, the deputy head of al-Qaeda, to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in Iraq. Praising this relocation of the global jihad to the Arab heartland, Zawahiri lays out for Zarqawi the next desirable stages of the jihad in Iraq, from the standpoint of al-Qaeda. After defeating the U.S., Zawahiri wants to see Zarqawi "extend the jihad to the secular countries neighboring Iraq (i.e., Jordan and Syria). Indeed, Jordanian authorities were told a few months later in October 2005 that documents found on a dead Zarqawi operative in Iraq indicated that orders had been given to begin to move into neighboring countries.⁷

But Zawahiri's recommended strategy did not stop there. In the next stage, he envisions "the clash with Israel."⁸ From Zargawi's own past behavior, this newly emerging focus on Israel was already being implemented in mid-2001 when, according to the U.S. Treasury, Zargawi received funds apparently from Hizballah "for work in Palestine," including "finding a mechanism that would enable more suicide martyrs to enter Israel."⁹ It should have come as no surprise when on February 15, 2002, Turkish police intercepted two Palestinians and a Jordanian who had been dispatched by Zargawi to conduct bombing attacks in Israel.¹⁰ Additionally, at the global level, al-Qaeda has intensified its interest in attacking Israel. As the head of Israeli military intelligence, Maj.-Gen. Aharon Zeevi (Farkash), concluded recently: "We are not a high priority [for al-Qaeda], but our prioritization for them is increasing."¹¹

Zargawi the Jordanian

Abu Musab al-Zargawi, as his name implies, was born in 1966 in the Jordanian town of al-Zarqa, some fifteen miles northeast of Amman. His real name was Ahmad Fadhil; he took on the name al-Zargawi during his second stay in Afghanistan. His family belonged to the al-Khalailah tribe, a branch of the Banu Hassan, a large Transjordanian Bedouin tribe known for its loyalty to the Hashemite Royal Family.¹² He was not a Palestinian, as some initial reports suggested. The radicalization of the pro-Hashemite East Bank Bedouin in Zarqa and nearby Salt with militant Islam has been attributed by Arab observers to the control of the Jordanian Education Ministry that King Hussein granted to the Muslim Brotherhood, as an expression of his appreciation for their support of the Hashemite monarchy during the Black September clashes with the PLO in 1970.¹³

This helped set the stage a decade later for the spread of Salafi groups in northern Jordan, with their rigid rejection of any innovations in what they thought was the purist Islam of the seventh century and their deep anti-Westernism, and spawned the adoption of violence by many of their offshoots. Salafism is the more generic term for all such movements including the Wahhabis, the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizb ut-Tahrir, and similar North African organizations. Zarqa, for example, became a base for radical preachers like Sheikh Nasr al-Din al-Albani, who was educated in Syria but became a prominent scholar at the Islamic University of Medina in Saudi Arabia, where he maintained close ties with the Wahhabi establishment, despite some disagreements over ritual questions.¹⁴

When Zargawi first went off to Afghanistan in 1989 in order to join the struggle of the mujahidin against the Soviet Union, the war had already come to an end by the time he arrived. He nonetheless remained until 1993. What was significant for his

religious transformation was his meeting in Pakistan with Sheikh Abu Muhammad al-Maqdisi, who would become his most important spiritual mentor. Maqdisi was a Palestinian who emigrated from the West Bank to Kuwait, and as a young follower of Salafism he eventually made his way to Saudi Arabia. He was employed in Mecca by the Muslim World League, the great global Wahhabi charity.¹⁵ From Afghanistan, Maqdisi would not be able to return to Kuwait, whose Palestinian population of 250,000 had been expelled after the 1991 Gulf War. Over 150,000 of the Palestinian Kuwaitis moved to Zarqa, bringing to Jordan conservative religious traditions from the Gulf region and transforming the population.¹⁶

Zarqawi joined forces with Maqdisi in Jordan and sought to recruit Jordanian Afghan veterans: both were imprisoned in 1994 for possessing illegal weapons. After a royal amnesty was given by the newly crowned King Abdullah in 1999, both were released from prison after having erected a jihadi network in Jordan while they were incarcerated. But while they were in prison, Zarqawi was able to command greater support than Maqdisi from young Jordanian jihadis; Zarqawi would argue that he was a pure Transjordanian - and not a Palestinian like Maqdisi - and hence had more legitimacy in Jordan to challenge the Hashemites. Maqdisi would criticize Zarqawi for turning away from the Palestinian cause and preferring other jihadi priorities.¹⁷

Zarqawi did not stay in Jordan, but rather moved back to Pakistan and ultimately to Afghanistan in 1999. In 2001, he took an oath of allegiance to Osama bin Laden, but subsequently he seemed to have a major falling out with al-Qaeda on doctrinal issues.¹⁸ Al-Qaeda wanted to launch the global jihad against the "Far Enemy" - i.e., the U.S. In contrast, Zarqawi preferred to focus efforts against the "Near Enemy" in the Middle East, especially the Jordanian government. The Taliban leader, Mullah Omar, asked Zarqawi to set up his own training camp near the Afghan city of Herat, which was close to the Iranian border, and a good distance from al-Qaeda's training camps that were closer to Pakistan.

At the Herat training camp Zarqawi established his own group called Jund al-Sham (the Army of the Levant), whose name gave away the territorial focus of his interests.¹⁹ Unlike al-Qaeda's training camps, which were mostly made up of Saudis, Yemenis, and Egyptians, Zarqawi's recruits came from the countries of the Levant, namely Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and the Palestinian areas.²⁰ Many of his Jordanian followers came from Zarqa or Salt. This became the core of the Zarqawi network. Its initial aims, besides overthrowing the Hashemite monarchy, were to attack Israel as well as Jewish targets in Europe.²¹

Non-Conventional Terrorism

Two other features of Zarqawi's second period in Afghanistan are worth noting. First, many Western sources were convinced that already at the Herat training camp, Zarqawi was interested in training his recruits in the use of toxins, including poisons and chemical weapons.²² This point was reiterated by former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell on February 5, 2003, before the UN Security Council. According to Powell, with the U.S. defeat of the Taliban, Zarqawi transplanted his training camp - with its specialization in poisons - from Herat to Iraqi Kurdistan, where he joined forces with the radical Kurdish Islamist group Ansar al-Islam.

Powell specifically reported that the training camp was working with ricin, a poisonous biological agent. Powell added that another Zarqawi operative, caught at the Iraqi-Saudi border, admitted that he was trained in the Herat camp in the use of cyanide. Powell further argued that parts of the Zarqawi network fled from Afghanistan to the Pankisi Gorge and Chechnya; he explained that "their goal was to kill Russians with toxins."²³ While the U.S. Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence would subsequently find fault with aspects of Powell's presentation of U.S. pre-war intelligence on Iraq, it did not attack the terrorism portions of his speech.

There were good reasons why some of Powell's key terrorism charges had to be taken seriously. In 2004, a Zarqawi associate named Azmi al-Jailusi testified in a Jordanian court: "At Herat I started training for Abu Musab. The training included handling high-level explosives and learning about poisons. I then took an oath of allegiance to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and agreed to work with him without asking any questions."²⁴

What made this statement particularly important was that al-Jailusi had just confessed to trying to set off a chemical explosion in central Amman on April 24, 2004, near the headquarters of Jordanian intelligence (GID). The blast was estimated to have had the potential to kill 80,000 people. In other words, Zarqawi's interest in biological and chemical weapons, which began in Herat, would become a hallmark of his network years later.

Additionally, there was repeated evidence that Zarqawi's network was seeking nuclear or radiological devices for terrorism. On April 20, 2005, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security published a "National Terror Alert" warning: "Recurrent intelligence reports say al-Qaeda terrorist Abu Musab Zarqawi has obtained a nuclear device or is preparing a radiological explosive - or dirty bombs - for an attack, according to U.S. officials, who say analysts are unable to gauge the

reliability of the information's sources."²⁵

Indeed, in January 2005, German security agents arrested two al-Qaeda operatives for allegedly planning a suicide attack with a "dirty bomb." According to a German federal prosecutor, one of the terrorists was attempting to obtain uranium from a group in Luxembourg.²⁶ Whether the operatives were associated with the global al-Qaeda organization or with Zarqawi's network alone, however, was not specified.

In seeking to employ weapons of mass destruction, Zarqawi was operating in a manner consistent with the parent organization with which his network was affiliated - al-Qaeda. The 9/11 Commission Report, which was otherwise critical of some of the Bush administration's assumptions in the war on terrorism, nevertheless warned: "al-Qaeda had an ambitious biological weapons program and was making progress in its ability to produce anthrax prior to September 11." Similarly, the report on Britain's pre-war intelligence by Lord Butler specifically echoed the concern of the British defense establishment that Zarqawi's sleeper cells in Baghdad, established prior to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, would seek chemical and biological weapons.²⁷ Zarqawi was clearly moving in the direction of employing non-conventional terrorism.

Zarqawi and Iran

There is a second feature of Zarqawi's stay in Afghanistan until 2001 that is worth noting. Because he was situated specifically in Herat when U.S. and Northern Alliance forces defeated the Taliban regime, unlike many al-Qaeda operatives who fled eastward to Pakistan, Zarqawi made his way westward to the closest bordering country, Iran, presumably because he was determined to set up a new center of operations in the remote, mountainous regions of eastern Iraqi Kurdistan. This was not the first time that someone associated with the al-Qaeda network would receive safe passage through Iran; the 9/11 Commission Report disclosed that eight to ten of the nineteen hijackers involved in the 9/11 attacks traveled through Iran between October 2000 and February 2001.²⁸ Some also met with senior Hizballah members in Beirut.²⁹ Thus, despite the wide ideological gulf that existed between Salafi terrorists and the revolutionary Shiite regime in Iran, some kind of coordination between them was possible.

While information about these links is often fragmentary, some revelations about Zarqawi's period in Iran have been reported in the Arab press. Thus, it has been suggested that during his stay in Iran, Zarqawi visited training camps run by Iran's clerical army, the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC), and received logistical support from its Qods Force paramilitary unit. The revelations, which are said to have come from Omar Bizani, a key Zarqawi lieutenant apprehended by Iraqi security

forces, also paint the Zarqawi network as a terrorist competitor to al-Qaeda, with its regional role, according to this analysis, actively being encouraged and nurtured by Iran.³⁰ The German political magazine *Cicero*, using documents from the German Federal Office of Criminal Investigation (BKA) and other information from other intelligence services, backed this assertion when it determined that Iran "provided al-Zarqawi with logistical support on the part of the state."³¹ Other investigations conducted in Spain, Italy, and Germany into the operations of the Zarqawi network in Europe several years ago have traced it back to Tehran, according to various court documents.³²

After leaving Iran, Zarqawi joined forces for a time in late 2002 with Ansar al-Islam, the militant Islamist organization that was situated in a cluster of villages in the mountainous regions of Kurdistan, along the Iran-Iraq border. After U.S. special forces destroyed the Ansar al-Islam camps in March 2003, its members fled to Iran where they trained and planned operations over the Iraqi border. According to Kurdish intelligence sources, Iran continued to supply Ansar al-Islam and its ally, Aba Musab al-Zarqawi, smuggling supplies for the insurgency against the U.S. and its coalition partners.³³ In this way, the Zarqawi-Iran connection was maintained from his retreat from Afghanistan to his arrival in Iraq.

The critical point is that there is considerable evidence that Zarqawi may have developed an Iranian connection for financial and logistical support. It was not the first time Shiite Iran reached out to radical Sunni terrorist organizations. For years, Iran has sponsored Palestinian Islamist groups, particularly Islamic Jihad but also Hamas, as well. Iran had a constant interest to reach out beyond the Shiite Islamic communities of the Middle East to the much wider Sunni Muslim world, and Zarqawi had objective needs that could be met by Iran. Unlike Osama bin Laden, who could fall back on his own family's wealth and the backing of both Saudi charities and individuals, Zarqawi came from a poor background in Jordan. To wage his terrorist campaign, he needed state backing from somewhere. Indeed, *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* wrote in May 2004 that the Iranians had offered Zarqawi about \$900,000 and explosives.³⁴ The same Arabic source reported in August that Brig.-Gen. Qassem Suleimani of the Revolutionary Guards was asked why Iran backs Zarqawi, given his attacks on Shiites. Suleimani reportedly answered that Zarqawi's actions serve the interests of Iran by undermining the emergence of a pro-U.S. government in Iraq.³⁵

Journalists were not the only ones asserting an Iranian tie to Zarqawi and the Sunni insurgency. In late December 2004, Hazim al-Shaalan, Iraq's interim defense minister, also charged that Iran and Syria were aiding Zarqawi's insurgent forces in Iraq.³⁶ Al-Shaalan explained to *Al-Sharq al-Awsat* that the interrogation of one of the head operatives of al-Qaeda in Iraq, who had been captured, revealed that al-

Qaeda recruits were undergoing military training in Iran by the Revolutionary Guards; the captured al-Qaeda operative claimed that he served as an intermediary between al-Qaeda in Iran and Zarqawi in Iraq, to whom he delivered messages.³⁷ There was another underlying logic to the Zarqawi-Iranian link: The resupply line for the insurgency in Iraq's Sunni triangle clearly came through Syria. Volunteers would arrive in Damascus and then be transported to the Syria-Iraqi border. How could one of the heads of the Iraq insurgency, Zarqawi, enjoy close operational relations with Damascus, but not have a similar working relationship with Syria's major strategic ally - Iran?

It is difficult to ascertain the veracity of all the reports about the Zarqawi-Iranian connection. A November 15, 2005, Congressional Research Service report entitled "Iran's Influence in Iraq" by Kenneth Katzman did not reach a decisive conclusion on the matter. On the one hand, the report read: "Iranian support to Sunni Muslim insurgents in Iraq, such as foreign volunteers commanded by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, would not appear to fit Iran's political strategy in Iraq." But then the report suggests, "On the other hand, some believe that Iran might want to support Sunni insurgents for no other purpose than to cause harm to the U.S. military in Iraq." What is clear is that Zarqawi and the Iranians have had many opportunities to communicate directly in the past, and could have established a strategic partnership if they found it in their interests. It is important to remember that historically, terrorist organizations and their state supporters are rarely true allies; their relationships are usually tactical and contain enormous mutual suspicion. Up until now, Iran has used the Shiite Hizballah and Sunni Palestinian groups like Islamic Jihad and Hamas in order to wage a proxy war against Israel. It would be a mistake to rule out the possibility that Iran may seek to open another front with Israel from the east, using the Zarqawi networks. Should such a situation develop, Israel would be facing a completely different strategic situation on its eastern border.

The Radicalization of Jordan and Its Implications

There are serious implications for Israel in the future from the growth of al-Qaeda-related terrorism, as exemplified by the attacks of the Zarqawi network in Jordan. After the November 2005 suicide attacks on three hotels in Amman, King Abdullah stressed that this was the work of Iraqis and not Jordanians. The Western press went out of its way to emphasize how Jordanian opinion had turned against terrorist groups that would kill innocent Jordanian civilians. This analysis, however, tended to paper over the radicalization that segments of Jordanian society had undergone as a result of the Iraq War.

For example, a poll by the Pew Global Attitudes Project in mid-2005 revealed that 60

percent of Jordanians expressed a lot or some confidence in Osama bin Laden.³⁸ In comparison, in Morocco, only 26 percent responded the same way, and in Lebanon just two percent were willing to express support for bin Laden. More worrying was that Jordanian sympathy for bin Laden was increasing in comparison with Pew's findings in 2003, while such sympathy was decreasing at the same time in Morocco, Lebanon, and Turkey.³⁹

The radicalization of Jordanian opinion has many sources. Some attribute it to the Iraq War; if that is the case, then as the Sunni insurgency in Iraq persists, the process of radicalization is likely to continue, even if there was a discernable downturn after the November bombings in Amman. But even prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Zarqawi was not a unique phenomenon in northern Jordan. In the late 1990s, it had been reported that 500 men from Zarqa and the adjacent Palestinian refugee camp were in Afghanistan fighting with the Taliban.⁴⁰ Neighboring Salt has contributed even more mujahidin that have been killed in Iraq than Zarqa, including the suicide bomber who murdered 125 Shiites in one attack on February 28, 2005.⁴¹ What is striking is that many of these volunteers came from the same Transjordanian Bedouin background as Zarqawi.

In the past, radical challenges to the Hashemite regime emanated from the Palestinian population in Jordan. With the spread of Islamic militancy in Jordan, the Hashemites are now facing an added internal threat from the direction of those who had been its most important pillars of support. Of course, Transjordanians had been involved in the Muslim Brotherhood in the past, but they were primarily active in its pragmatic wing that worked with the Jordanian government.⁴² What changed was their entry into the world of Salafi jihadists. This began to be noticeable in 1993, when Jordanian security forces uncovered a plot by Hizb ut-Tahrir to assassinate King Hussein. Radical Islamists set off bombs in cinemas in Amman and Zarqa in 1994.⁴³

But now there was a danger of this activity becoming more widespread. Jordanian security officials have estimated that recently 500 Jordanians have been arrested for links with al-Qaeda.⁴⁴ Indeed, according to a report in the London Sunday Times, Jordanian security sources believed that the Iraqi suicide bombers who attacked in Amman received help from Jordanian soldiers.⁴⁵ If the report is true, it means that Zarqawi's network had penetrated the Jordanian defense establishment in a manner reminiscent of al-Qaeda's recruitment of members of the Saudi National Guard.

Jihadi Networks in Saudi Arabia and Syria: Destabilizing the Eastern Front

In short, Jordan faces multiple challenges to its security. It hosts nearly half a million Iraqi refugees, some of whom could be recruited for jihadi activities. Its

border with the Sunni portions of Iraq is relatively porous.⁴⁶ In addition, Jordan will undoubtedly be affected by developments within two other neighbors - Syria to the north and Saudi Arabia to the south. Saudi clashes with local al-Qaeda cells have become a regular occurrence since May 2003. Syria, which serves as the main conduit for the mujahidin fighting for the insurgency in Iraq, is paying a price for this role. Reports of clashes between Syrian security forces and Islamist groups like Jund al-Sham are becoming more frequent.⁴⁷ Jund al-Sham was recently singled out by the head of Israeli military intelligence, Maj.-Gen. Aharon Zeevi (Farkash), who described it as "al-Qaeda-Syria."⁴⁸ It may not be a coincidence that this was the exact name of Zarqawi's organization at his Afghan training camp in 2000.

Indeed, Zarqawi had spent several months in Syria between May and September 2002, setting up jihadi networks and using it as his rear base for regional operations.⁴⁹ The 2002 murder of U.S. diplomat Laurence Foley appears to have been organized by the Zarqawi network from Syria, which was also the source of repeated infiltration efforts into the Jordanian kingdom by extremists transporting explosives and weapons; Syrians from Zarqawi's network were involved in the attempted chemical attack in Amman in April 2004. By August, Jordan's prime minister was openly charging the Syrians with creating an "unacceptable" situation.⁵⁰ As the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad becomes further isolated and embattled by the pressures of the international community due to its involvement in the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, it cannot be ruled out that militant Islamic elements, that have grown with the Syrian involvement in Iraq, will become emboldened. All this will have implications for Jordan.

Jordan has one of the best intelligence services in the Arab world, particularly in response to domestic challenges. But as the threat to its domestic stability comes from outside its porous borders with Iraq or Syria or even Saudi Arabia, Jordan will have a far more difficult time contending with the threat of terrorism. In the past, Israel could be certain that if there was a violent organization determined to attack it from Jordanian territory, the Hashemites would not permit their kingdom to be exploited for such purposes. With the spread of al-Qaeda-related terrorism throughout the countries neighboring Jordan, the kingdom's capacity to block such attacks may be reduced.

Israel's national security doctrine for decades viewed the Jordan Valley as critical for Israel's security from threats along its Eastern Front. Were Israel to make a territorial withdrawal from the strategic barrier it controls in the Jordan Valley (which it once considered at Camp David in 2000), then Israeli vulnerability could very well attract more global jihadi elements to Jordan, who would seek to use the kingdom as a platform to reach the West Bank and then target Israel's civilian infrastructure. Those advocating such a withdrawal take for granted that Jordan will remain a stable buffer that can thwart threats to its own security and to the security of Israel, as well. Jordanian stability is a global interest of the entire Western alliance. It can only be hoped that this beleaguered state will be provided the resources it needs by the U.S. and its allies to contend with the new threat environment it faces.

The Zarqawi story indicates that the stakes involved in failing to block terrorist attacks are increasing. Terrorism in the past involved roadside bombs and occasional explosive devices in crowded markets. Israel has endured repeated attacks of suicide bombers on coffee shops, discos, and hotel dining rooms. Zarqawi's strategy is based on a significant escalation of the destructive power of terrorist attacks: from bringing down UN headquarters in Baghdad to trying to destroy whole hotels elsewhere. Of greatest concern has been his readiness to employ even the crudest weapons of mass destruction. The sophistication of his network is bound to increase. It becomes a paramount interest for Israel to recognize the changing threat of terrorism as Zarqawi's network threatens to become active in the Israeli-Palestinian struggle.

Al-Qaeda's global strategy has been to seek the weakest link in any region it hopes to penetrate. Al-Qaeda thrives in weak or failed states like Sudan, Afghanistan, remote Iraqi Kurdistan prior to the 2003 U.S. invasion, or Chechnya. If the state structures are in a process of being built up, al-Qaeda is seeking to destabilize them by increasing insurgent activities. That has been the primary goal of Zarqawi's network in Iraq and is likely to become his chief political strategy in Syria and Jordan. All of this indicates that the region to Israel's east is likely to enter a period of greater instability.

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Valley stated this on Fox News in April/May 2003.

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Saddam's WMD Moved to Syria, An Israeli Says

BY IRA STOLL - Staff Reporter of the Sun December 15, 2005
URL: <http://www.nysun.com/article/24480>

Saddam Hussein moved his chemical weapons to Syria six weeks before the war started, Israel's top general during Operation Iraqi Freedom says.

The assertion comes as President Bush said yesterday that much of the intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction was incorrect.

The Israeli officer, Lieutenant General Moshe Yaalon, asserted that Saddam spirited his chemical weapons out of the country on the eve of the war. "He transferred the chemical agents from Iraq to Syria," General Yaalon told The New York Sun over dinner in New York on Tuesday night. "No one went to Syria to find it."

From July 2002 to June 2005, when he retired, General Yaalon was chief of staff of the Israel Defense Force, the top job in the Israeli military, analogous to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the American military. He is now a military fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He made similar, but more speculative, remarks in April 2004 that attracted little notice in America; at that time he was quoted as saying of the Iraqi weapons, "Perhaps they transferred them to another country, such as Syria."

The Israeli general's remarks came on the eve of Mr. Bush's speech to the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, in which the president addressed the issue of

intelligence and defended the decision to go to war. "When we made the decision to go into Iraq, many intelligence agencies around the world judged that Saddam possessed weapons of mass destruction. This judgment was shared by the intelligence agencies of governments who did not support my decision to remove Saddam. And it is true that much of the intelligence turned out to be wrong," Mr. Bush said in remarks that were one of a series of speeches he has given recently on the war.

Mr. Bush's defense of the war echoed themes he has been pressing since before the war began and through his successful campaign for re-election. "Given Saddam's history and the lessons of September the 11th, my decision to remove Saddam Hussein was the right decision. Saddam was a threat - and the American people and the world is better off because he is no longer in power."

An official at the Iraqi embassy in Washington, Entifadh Qanbar, said he believed the Israeli general's account, but that the Iraqi government is "basically operating in the dark" because it does not have its own intelligence agency. He said the issue underscored the need for the new Iraqi government to have control of its own intelligence service. "We don't have any way to find anything out about Syria because we don't have intelligence," Mr. Qanbar said. He said there is a high-rise building in Baghdad with 1,000 employees working on intelligence but that it has no budget appropriation from the Iraqi government and "doesn't report to the Iraqi government."

"Nobody knows who it belongs to, but you should understand who it belongs to," he said, in what was apparently a reference to American involvement.

An Iraqi politician, Mithal Al-Alusi, whose sons were both assassinated in Iraq last year, told The New York Sun's Eli Lake last month that his party would press the Iraqi government to renew the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Mr. Al-Alusi said he believes Saddam clearly had the weapons before the invasion. "They will find the weapons, I am sure they will," Mr. Al-Alusi said.

A spokesman at the Syrian embassy in Washington did not return a call seeking comment. But General Yaalon's comment could increase pressure on the Syrian government that is already mounting from Washington and the United Nations. Mr. Bush has been keeping the rhetorical heat on Damascus. On Monday, he said in a speech, "Iraq's neighbor to the west, Syria, is permitting terrorists to use that territory to cross into Iraq."

Also Monday, Mr. Bush issued a statement saying, "Syria must comply with United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1559, 1595, and 1636 and end its interference in Lebanon once and for all. "The resolutions call for ending Syria's occupation of Lebanon and for Syrian cooperation into the investigation of the assassination of a Lebanese politician, Rafik Hariri.

On Saturday, the White House issued a statement calling attention to Syrian prisoners of conscience such as Kamal Labwani. "The Syrian Government must cease its harassment of Syrians peacefully seeking to bring democratic reform to their country. The United States stands with the Syrian people in their desire for freedom and democracy," said the statement, issued in the name of the White House press secretary.

Yesterday, the State Department spokesman, Sean McCormack, described Syria as an "oppressive regime." He also pointed to a recent report by a United Nations investigator looking into the assassination of Hariri. "The Syrian Government has failed to offer its full cooperation," Mr. McCormack said, citing the U.N. investigator's report that "details allegations of document burning by the Syrians, of intimidating witnesses."

When, during an interview with the Sun in April, Vice President Cheney was asked whether he thought that Iraqi weapons of mass destruction had been moved to Syria, Mr. Cheney replied only that he had seen such reports.

An article in the Fall 2005 Middle East Quarterly reports that in an appearance on Israel's Channel 2 on December 23, 2002, Israel's prime minister, Ariel Sharon stated, "Chemical and biological weapons which Saddam is endeavoring to conceal have been moved from Iraq to Syria." The allegation was denied by the Syrian government at the time as "completely untrue," and it attracted scant American press attention, coming as it did on the eve of the Christmas holiday.

Syria shares a 376-mile border with Iraq. The Syrian ruling party and Saddam Hussein had in common the ideology of Baathism, a mixture of Nazism and Marxism.

Syria is one of only eight countries that has not signed the Chemical Weapons Convention, a treaty that obligates nations not to stockpile or use chemical weapons. And it has long been the source of concern in America and Israel and Lebanon about its chemical warfare program apart from any weapons that may have been received from Iraq. The director of Central Intelligence, George Tenet, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in March of 2004, "Damascus has an active CW

development and testing program that relies on foreign suppliers for key controlled chemicals suitable for producing CW."

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Cc: Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD
Subject: Media Coverage of Military Analysts just back from Iraq: 2 (McInerney yesterday on Fox) and Babb in American Spectator
Attachments: Mil analysts 121405.doc

General Thomas McInerney

- Went out with two questions: are we winning and is it worth it. Answer? “Resounding Yes to both.
- General Casey has a “brilliant” plan
- Iraqi forces now control 35% of the battle space, and when Iraqis control the space they get even better intelligence than we do.
- Key to the voting is Ramadi. If people there vote, it means the Sunnis have taken the political path.
- Our forces know why they are there and know they are winning.

Link to First Portion of Interview and Second Portion of Interview

Fox News Special Report

12/13/2005

Brit Hume: For the view of one who has just been to Iraq, we turn to retired Air Force General and FOX News contributor Thomas McInerney, who just got back two days ago. Welcome back.

MCINERNEY: Thanks, Brit. Good to be back.

HUME: So how long were you there?

MCINERNEY: Four days.

HUME: And where did you go?

MCINERNEY: We went to Baghdad, to Camp Victory, to Fallujah and out to the military academy just north of Baghdad.

HUME: So what did you see?

MCINERNEY: Well, I had two questions when I went out there that I wanted to ask, answer myself.

No. 1, are we winning? No. 2, is it worth it? I came back with personal evidence that I think that I see that it's a resounding yes in both cases. Now, why do I say that? Why are we winning? Well, General Casey, despite what people say that he doesn't have a plan, has got a brilliant campaign plan that, in effect, has gone extremely well, particularly if you consider the three -- coming up on three elections in less than a year, and he's been able to execute that now. Is there tough fighting? Sure there's tough fighting there, but we are winning. We're going through that political process, and this election that's coming up, as everybody knows, is crucial. The one key city that I found out there is Ramadi. If Ramadi votes, it means the Sunnis have taken the political path. If the Sunnis don't take the political path, then I think they're heading into oblivion, because the Shia and the Kurds will solve it the way they have historically. They'll eliminate them. I believe they're going to take a political path, and it's crucial

that they do. **HUME:** You say we're winning on the military side. However, the attacks continue.

MCINERNEY: Yes.

HUME: Americans continue to be killed. Iraqis in great numbers continue to be killed. The appearance that this provides to an American news consumer is that the insurgents can attack at will and that they continue to. So in what sense are we winning?

MCINERNEY: Well, we're winning in the fact that the big objective is to transfer to the Iraqi security forces, the ISF. We have transferred 35 percent of the battle space, as they call it over there, to the Iraqi security forces. We find when they move in, the Iraqi people are proud that there are Iraqi security forces there, and so they increase the intelligence, although we've been getting a lot. They start increasing the intelligence. And then you have, like on the Baghdad International Airport road to the city, called Main Supply Route Irish, all of a sudden you control that. That's ours as far as being peaceful, and it's the Iraqis that are doing it. Now we are kind of over their shoulder mentoring them and training them, because you know, when you go from a totalitarian army to a democratic army you've got to use different procedures, different techniques. And they are -- they are developing this democratic army quite well. Now, is there fighting? Yes. But who are they killing? They're killing some Americans, but it's primarily innocents. So what we have seen right now is the Sunnis are splitting with Al Qaeda. I believe Al Qaeda is going to be finished over there, and the Sunnis are going to do it.

They are on the death knell. Will they still create problems during the election? Will they have car bombs? Well, they won't have many car bombs, unless they've laid them in, because no vehicles can move. But they will create some chaos. The fact is they have lost. They're still creating chaos but they have lost, because the Iraqi people are changing.

Hume: In Vietnam the generals often said we were winning, doing better, the grunts, though, either didn't agree or didn't want to be there, which was in the end part of what undid that effort.

McInerney: Right.

Hume: What about the attitude of the rank and file over there, many of whom are on second and third tours and surely would like to come home?

McInerney: Well, I had four tours in Vietnam. People used to leave on the freedom bird. The people in Iraq do not call the airplanes out of Kuwait the freedom bird. They know they're going back. They know why they're there, to create stability. Now I talked to the lowest (ranking) soldier you can talk to and the highest-ranking soldier as well as the ambassador. They know why they're there. They know it's to create a stability in the region. Otherwise, if the extremists take over ...

Hume: What do they say about it?

McInerney: Well, look, they're volunteers. Some are on their way back with the 3rd Infantry Division. They're going home and the 4th Infantry Division is replacing them. They're scheduled to come back 10 months from now -- and they ask me if they're going to have to come back. I said I don't know but I don't think so. I said the way the Iraqi forces are taking over and having spent a half day at their military academy and seen these young Iraqi officers, they have fire in their belly. Bob Scales, I think got the same impression when he was over there looking. The fact is, as they take it over, and that's why this election -- everybody knows this is a four-year election. They are -- they have made their decision and I think you're going to see a fairly consistent drawdown. Look, George Casey, General Casey knows exactly his timetable. He's going to do it on events. He knows exactly what divisions are taking over, Iraqi divisions from our divisions and then the mentoring and then we'll bring them out. So I've come back very assured that they know why they're there, they know why they're fighting and they are in fact winning.

In Search of Murtha's Army -- Jed Babbin in The American Spectator on 12/13/2005

Selected Excerpts:

- Last week, I went to Iraq to search for John Murtha's army. You know: the one he described as "broken, worn out," and "living hand to mouth." Thanks to the help of some friends in low places, I met with a lot of the troops and almost all of the commanders around Baghdad and at Camp Fallujah. Murtha was not just wrong, but damnably wrong. And so, unsurprisingly, is Democratic

Party Chairman Howard Dean, who declared the war unwinnable.

- I promised to bring back as many of the facts as I could. Here are the two most important ones: First, we are winning this war. Second, as the operations in Iraq enter their fourth year, our forces are beginning to suffer the problems that a prolonged conflict creates. ...
- All the men I spoke to (and, yes, the women as well) didn't believe this job was over. They have committed themselves to the war, and expect their commitment to be matched at home.
- Is our army broken? Not hardly, but it could be. One 4th I.D. colonel said it best: "You want to break this army? Then break your word to it."
- The Iraqi military is doing its job. Half the Baghdad area is in Iraqi control, and about 60% of all Iraqis live in secure areas. One of the biggest mistakes we've made in the information war was all that nonsense about rating the readiness of Iraqi units at Levels 1 through 4.
- The biggest conclusion I drew from the trip is that the Iraqi civilian government lags badly behind the Iraqi army in taking charge and moving forward.

General Thomas McInerney

- Went out with two questions: are we winning and is it worth it. Answer? “Resounding Yes to both.
- General Casey has a “brilliant” plan
- Iraqi forces now control 35% of the battle space, and when Iraqis control the space they get even better intelligence than we do.
- Key to the voting is Ramadi. If people there vote, it means the Sunnis have taken the political path.
- Our forces know why they are there and know they are winning.

Link to First Portion of Interview and Second Portion of Interview

Fox News Special Report

12/13/2005

Brit Hume: For the view of one who has just been to Iraq, we turn to retired Air Force General and FOX News contributor Thomas McInerney, who just got back two days ago. Welcome back.

MCINERNEY: Thanks, Brit. Good to be back.

HUME: So how long were you there?

MCINERNEY: Four days.

HUME: And where did you go?

MCINERNEY: We went to Baghdad, to Camp Victory, to Fallujah and out to the military academy just north of Baghdad.

HUME: So what did you see?

MCINERNEY: Well, I had two questions when I went out there that I wanted to ask, answer myself. No. 1, are we winning? No. 2, is it worth it? I came back with personal evidence that I think that I see that it's a resounding yes in both cases. Now, why do I say that? Why are we winning? Well, General Casey, despite what people say that he doesn't have a plan, has got a brilliant campaign plan that, in effect, has gone extremely well, particularly if you consider the three -- coming up on three elections in less than a year, and he's been able to execute that now. Is there tough fighting? Sure there's tough fighting there, but we are winning. We're going through that political process, and this election that's coming up, as everybody knows, is crucial. The one key city that I found out there is Ramadi. If Ramadi votes, it means the Sunnis have taken the political path. If the Sunnis don't take the political path, then I think they're heading into oblivion, because the Shia and the Kurds will solve it the way they have historically. They'll eliminate them. I believe they're going to take a political path, and it's crucial that they do.

HUME: You say we're winning on the military side. However, the attacks continue.

MCINERNEY: Yes.

HUME: Americans continue to be killed. Iraqis in great numbers continue to be killed. The appearance that this provides to an American news consumer is that the insurgents can attack at will and that they continue to. So in what sense are we winning?

MCINERNEY: Well, we're winning in the fact that the big objective is to transfer to the Iraqi security forces, the ISF. We have transferred 35 percent of the battle space, as they call it over

there, to the Iraqi security forces. We find when they move in, the Iraqi people are proud that there are Iraqi security forces there, and so they increase the intelligence, although we've been getting a lot. They start increasing the intelligence. And then you have, like on the Baghdad International Airport road to the city, called Main Supply Route Irish, all of a sudden you control that. That's ours as far as being peaceful, and it's the Iraqis that are doing it. Now we are kind of over their shoulder mentoring them and training them, because you know, when you go from a totalitarian army to a democratic army you've got to use different procedures, different techniques. And they are -- they are developing this democratic army quite well. Now, is there fighting? Yes. But who are they killing? They're killing some Americans, but it's primarily innocents. So what we have seen right now is the Sunnis are splitting with Al Qaeda. I believe Al Qaeda is going to be finished over there, and the Sunnis are going to do it. They are on the death knell. Will they still create problems during the election? Will they have car bombs? Well, they won't have many car bombs, unless they've laid them in, because no vehicles can move. But they will create some chaos. The fact is they have lost. They're still creating chaos but they have lost, because the Iraqi people are changing.

Hume: In Vietnam the generals often said we were winning, doing better, the grunts, though, either didn't agree or didn't want to be there, which was in the end part of what undid that effort.

McInerney: Right.

Hume: What about the attitude of the rank and file over there, many of whom are on second and third tours and surely would like to come home?

McInerney: Well, I had four tours in Vietnam. People used to leave on the freedom bird. The people in Iraq do not call the airplanes out of Kuwait the freedom bird. They know they're going back. They know why they're there, to create stability. Now I talked to the lowest (ranking) soldier you can talk to and the highest-ranking soldier as well as the ambassador. They know why they're there. They know it's to create a stability in the region. Otherwise, if the extremists take over ...

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(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 6:07 PM
To: Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA
Cc: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; Merritt, Roxie T. CAPT, OASD-PA; Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Subject: Today's report on coverage rec'd by military analysts who went to Iraq-just one-Ken Allard

Colonel Kenneth Allard:

- This is actually the third election these people have had in the course of this year and by every account they've made remarkable progress
- Whether you like it or whether you don't, there's always that question as to whether this is going to be one country or three and this election is going to go a long way in determining that
- The Iraqis have made remarkable military progress there. They're now in effective control of a third of the country. There is effective control of about half of Baghdad itself but I would just tell you that is a very long road.

MSNBC News Live

12/13/2005 10:19:03 AM

Newscaster: Retired Army Colonel Ken Allard just returned from Iraq. Welcome back. **Colonel Allard:** Thank you. Good morning.

Newscaster: Let me start with the political track. How much is riding on this particular election? Again, we have to keep in mind this is the last election for four years in Iraq so obviously it does lay down the groundwork but is it the election or the electoral process that is most important right now?

Allard: It's actually both, Randy, because this is actually the third election these people have had in the course of this year and by every account they've made remarkable progress. But what happens is that this is the finish line in some sense. What you have to have right now is a political process engaging the three major factions in Iraq. Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds and Senator Reid was correct in saying there was no long, democratic tradition. And so it really is a question, do these people have more to gain by working effectively with each other or are they going to split apart? Whether you like it or whether you don't, there's always that question as to whether this is going to be one country or three and this election is going to go a long way in determining that.

Newscaster: Let me just boil it down to this. Is this election, again, and the process of it and importance to the people of Iraq, more important, Colonel, that who actually gets voted into office? While we are watching that very closely because of implications with Iran and other countries, but what in your view with the people of Iraq tends to be the most important thing right now?

Allard: That political process is all important. They have got to come to grips with the fact they probably have got more to gain by working effectively with each other and there's no democratic tradition in Iraq. Everything that has been put in place has been put in place pretty recently and it really is kind of remarkable to see them going through this because that's simply not part of the Iraqi tradition. The way they tend to express descent in that country is with violence and we see that. The question is whether the other democratic tradition can come to plant.

Newscaster: Let's talk about security strategy. On the security front, the president has said that we are working with Iraqi forces to shore up security. We're going into some of the hot bed insurgent areas. Is it working, colonel?

Allard: I think it is. I mean, I caveat that by saying it's always a very tough fight, always a long-term fight. The Iraqis have made remarkable military progress there. They're now in effective control of a

third of the country. There is effective control of about half of Baghdad itself but I would just tell you that is a very long road. It is a tough road particularly when you're also fighting a war in the midst of training and equipping a new army. What was there before was an armed mob.

Newscaster: The administration says it wants to restore Iraq's infrastructure. We're talking about the basic necessities that Iraqis need there, electricity, water, sewage facilities, and things like that. How bad is it right now for the folks of Iraq when you're talking about the bare necessities?

Allard: Randy, it's actually a function of that previous problem. They really have not yet learned to work effectively together. Electricity, water, sewage, basic services like that, you've got to do that on the basis of a whole country, not on the basis of a neighborhood here, a minority over there and that's been a very, very tough sell. What you see is individual neighborhoods trying to act out on their own. So building a nation is a very tough problem just by itself and in some sense, the army that I saw over there has simply had to go back to similar lessons from peace keeping 10 years ago. Simply because of the fact there is no way to defeat that insurgency than by getting people to work together and no better way to do that than by pointing out it is the case and infrastructure of cooperate and graduate.

(b)(6)

From: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 5:43 PM
To: 'JedBabbin@'(b)(6)'; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; 'Allardck@'(b)(6)'; 'mccauslj@'(b)(6)'; 'steven@thegreerfoundation.org'; 'tmcinerney@'(b)(6)'; 'ndcf@'(b)(6)'
Subject: RE: IMAR anecdotes

jed, thanks, it is very helpful. eric

-----Original Message-----

From: JedBabbin@'(b)(6) [mailto:JedBabbin@'(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 3:27 PM
To: Eric.Ruff@'(b)(6); Allardck@'(b)(6); mccauslj@'(b)(6); steven@thegreerfoundation.org; tmcinerney@'(b)(6); ndcf@'(b)(6)
Subject: Re: IMAR anecdotes

Eric: I really didn't get anything memorable from the cadets. As I mentioned, they were all tossing me the "school solution." Here are the few worth repeating:

"Me and the others want to make something work."

"We are very eager to fight."

"We are very proud because we are going to lead."

The best quote I got there was from Brigadier Mousa, on his philosophy of suppressing ethnic and tribal loyalties: "If anyone talks I am Kurd, Shia, Sunni, I kick them outside first day."

Hope this helps. Best, Jed.

Jed Babbin

(b)(2) (home office)
(home fax)
(mobile)

(b)(6)

From: Allardck@(b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 4:56 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: Re: IMAR anecdotes

Eric - At some point over the Atlantic the other night, I lost what little coherency was left - and so missed the chance to thank you for helping to organize a really great trip. Its insights have already been exploited during hits on radio and TV - and they just pulled me back to NY to help MSNBC cover the Iraqi elections.

Like Jed, I cannot remember any memorable lines from the Iraqis. Except that one guy was from Fallujah and talked about how the terrorists there were killing their wives and children with their bombs. I always regard such statements (especially by trainees to the sponsoring nationality) with some skepticism: but what said everything was their presence in the face of some very specific threats to them and their families. Their courage in meeting them was as real as their reactions to Nicole - cause that stuff you don't fake!

One other point: I mentioned to you that I'm currently working on a book - WARHEADS - about the role of the military analysts on cable TV. I have lined up the support of most of them but also wanted to highlight the Secretary's role in having started these gatherings. You see, the Clinton crowd simply ignored us and hoped we would just go away. As I mentioned to Tori Clarke earlier this year, you guys deserve credit for having had the smarts to invite us into the fold. With all the hell that gets raised in Washington about government cover-ups and concealment, it's actually refreshing that somebody thought to inform some rather knowledgeable observers about what was actually going on.

Would there be any chance of interviewing the Secretary to get his personal "take" on how all this came about? Risks, rewards and net assessment?

Best,

Ken

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 4:06 PM
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA
Cc: Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, RDML, OASD-PA; (b)(6) LTC, OASD-PA; Vician, Todd, Maj, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; (b)(6)
Subject: (b)(6) AFIS-HQ/NEWS; (b)(6)
Transcript - Brig Gen Alston with military analysts
Attachments: 12-13-05 Brig Gen Alston.doc



12-13-05 Brig Gen
Alston.doc (...)

Attached please find the transcript from today's background call with Brig Gen Alston from Baghdad and the military analysts. The call lasted about 35 minutes.

Recommend at least skimming for writers/talkers on Iraq.

Highlights/topics covered (chronological):

Intro:

-- Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces have set the conditions that are going to ensure success for Thursday's election; have been setting them since January through operations throughout Euphrates River Valley, etc.

-- We've crossed some threshold with the ISF that enables us to leave them behind to be the persistent presence in these towns; trust building between them and the locals.

-- Excitement in the air with Iraqis re election. Listen for the number 60 percent for turnout. Seventy would be extraordinary. 10 million voters possible under these circumstances.

-- Continue getting encouraging words Sunnis are going to play.

Answers to Questions:

-- Expecting turnout percentages pretty quickly, within a couple days.

-- Key is Sunni participation early. Would love to show pictures of lines of people voting in Ramadi.

-- His team will be loading photos throughout the day on their web site (www.mnf-iraq.com).

-- Discussion about the general/his team sending to the military analysts updates/sit reps on the election news. Will generally be spot reports.

-- Re how fast can the government stand up. MFN-Iraq will be setting expectations this will take a while; hopefully not the 100-day gestation period it took after Jan. 30. It's a challenge to form democracies, takes time.

-- Senator Biden coming in to country. Some other members of Congress; he didn't remember who.

-- Threat picture for election: Anticipates any spike would have happened by now. Indications that Zarqawi is odd man out. He's got no advantage to allowing this democratic process to go unchallenged. Has to make a statement. Would be extraordinary if he is

silent the whole time. Sunni-based groups showing overtures they want Sunnis to be able to vote.

-- Question on reports about Interior Ministry jails. Prime minister had press conference; took ownership of investigative process; reinforced commitment to ensuring investigations completed.

-- External oversight of elections. Pretty good confidence in the IECI's (Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq) ability to job. IECI and UN roles - no concern with how they have managed up to this point.

Transcript
Military Analyst Briefing
Dec. 13, 2005; 1230
Briefer: Air Force Brig. Gen. Donald Alston,
Director of Strategic Communications, Multi-National Force-Iraq
ON BACKGROUND
IDENTIFY AS SENIOR DoD OFFICIAL IN BAGHDAD
Host: (b)(6) OSD-Public Affairs
Transcriber: (b)(6)

(b)(6) Thanks for joining us. As always with these calls they are on background, so you are free to quote as long as you quote a senior DoD defense – excuse me – a senior Defense official.

And with that, if we have General Alston on the line, I would like to go ahead and turn it over to you, sir.

Brig Gen Alston: OK, great. Thanks so much, (b)(6). Appreciate it. So good to see you and I think if everybody joins us, half of them will be folks that came to Iraq either this past weekend or in October. So great for you all – for me to have a chance to talk with you again.

Let me quickly make a few comments and then I am more interested in hearing the questions you might have for me. So first, let me tell you how we've gotten to today, at least briefly.

The Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces have set the conditions that are going to ensure success for this election on Thursday. We have arguably been setting these conditions since January, but you know that deliberate operations that we have done throughout the Euphrates River Valley and in the northwest in the Tall Afar and Mosul area as well in September, and you know that what we have been doing in Ramadi, taking that city a piece at a time in order to reduce the fear, intimidation and the terrorists that have been in there.

They had a great effect on Ramadi during the referendum (Oct. 15) vote. Two percent of Ramadi voted during the referendum. There will be a safe and secure opportunity in Ramadi to vote, it is just a question of how much the fear and intimidation lingers with the people of Ramadi to see whether or not they step out.

Fallujah, just up the road, a little bit farther east of Ramadi, of course you had 100,000 of the 225,000 people in Fallujah vote. So they had an overwhelming turnout and they are expecting to turn out even more.

I will tell you the key to all this is the ability to hold the ground we have cleared. And that ability has been enabled by the Iraqi Security Forces. I can tell you stories about the Iraqi Security Forces today that I could not tell you four months ago.

I do not know if the expression critical mass fits in this particular case, but we have crossed some threshold with the Iraqi Security Forces that enables us to leave them behind, to be the persistent presence in these towns along the Euphrates River Valley and in particular up in Tall Afar, and, because they have been left behind, even though the demographics of the Iraqi army are not necessarily as representative as the people of al Anbar, there is trust building between the persistent presence and the locals, and that is leading to an increased number of caches and things like that as they are willing to approach the Iraqi Security Forces knowing that they are going to hang around and if they come forward they are not going to get their head cut off because these guys are going to hang tight with them.

And I will tell you that I sense that there is a degree of excitement in the air here with the Iraqi people. You know, eight point something voted in January, 9.4 (million) voted in October. I think the numbers that you need to listen for is high 60 percent turnout. Seventy I think would be perhaps a bit beyond reach but boy, if you hear that, it will be extraordinary. And I think 10 million voters is quite possible under these circumstances.

We continue to get great encouraging words that the Sunnis are going to play, and play harder than they did during the referendum. Because after all, no matter what, at the end of voting on Thursday, the Sunnis are in better shape than they were before.

And I will also follow up and tell you that 90 percent of the detainees voted, so that's roughly 10,000 detainees, voted yesterday. And 110,000 Iraqi Security Forces voted yesterday, and those are the folks that are displaced if you will, assigned to areas other than their home province. The rest of the Iraqi Security Forces will vote in their home province on Thursday.

So with that extremely brief once-around-Iraq, let me please turn it over to you for your questions.

Q: Hey, Don, this is Jeff McCausland, and once again, my truly heartfelt thanks to you and your guys, Lieutenant Bornan (sp) and Major. Moon (sp) for just a superb job. And I know as an old soldier what a pain in the butt groups like ours can be. My sincere thanks.

Couple pretty quick and easy questions. One is kind of to Tara, it would help out if when we talk about Don's remarks today, Tara, we said rather on background senior defense official speaking from Baghdad. And I want to know if that's a problem.

(b)(6) : Well I would defer to General Alston and his team on that.

Q: Don, would you feel uncomfortable with that or not?

Brig Gen Alston: No. That's okay. Sure.

Q: Okay, and the second question I have is really as far as the future and that is it seems to me that you put your finger on it – the right question. And that it is what the turnout (looked at?) – when you are talking about democracy (inaudible) at this point in time we don't know how they are going to vote, and because of the complexity of the vote, it will be several weeks probably before we know who actually gets elected. But as quickly as people like us can get, you know, better drafts of what the percentage was that turned out, I think we will better be able to paint that picture for the media while the media is still paying attention. Two weeks from now, when the actual results are published by party, they will be looking at something else.

Brig Gen Alston: That is a great point. I am expecting turnout numbers pretty quick. I am expecting turnout numbers within a couple of days in terms of percentages. I hope we can get it that fast. I am expecting some preliminary voting, and if it tracks like we had for the referendum, they kind of do it by province. So they might, you know, at six days we might get 10 provinces in. And then I understand, unfortunately, that we might not – the IECI (Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq) is only committed to like six January as final result day.

Now for the (Oct. 15) referendum, they also pegged the day way out there. And is it turned out, it was - not only did they come early with that date, but the UN immediately confirmed the results. And of course, that's key, is the UN confirming results. So, anyway, that's the way this is kind of staked out. One week or so for preliminary results, six January for final results, and I am expecting voter turnout numbers in the first day or two.

Q: Well if you can get, as quickly as you can get that to Tara and back to us, and it would be great if you could also, Don, appreciate that, for example, if you could give some indication of turnout in al Anbar which will bespeak, obviously, Sunni participation, or out in Ramadi, you (can?) point out that you went from as you said from two or three percent, obviously, to something several times that number, though still perhaps relatively small, I kind of think (that's the kind of thing?) it will help us in painting this picture.

Brig Gen Alston: I'll tell you my priority is – I mean I am turning all my resources on – well, we have postured ourselves to move this information as quickly as we can. We have a pretty good laydown of embeds throughout the country, so they are going to be doing their own thing quickly.

But I think the key is Sunni participation early. So the first images that I want to get out is, you know, voting in Ramadi. I would love to show you a picture of a line in Ramadi of people voting. But if not Ramadi, it will still be Sunnis voting somewhere, because I think that is the key message of the day, so we truly have the sensors keyed on that.

You'll be able to go to our web site, which is like MNF-Iraq.com, I will make sure you get that perfectly before we hang up (note – www.mnf-iraq.com) and on that web site we are hanging all our images. And I haven't seen -- I don't know the web site's configured

yet, but it will be configured so it is easy for you to find that. And you'll be able to get high-resolution photos, and we are going to be dumping them throughout the day on to that.

We started sending email out on the referendum day, but we were just screwing up people's in boxes doing that. So we ended up chucking out thumb nails to some of our friends, and we found out that as the day went on, the best thing was to park the stuff on the web site and allow people to grab what they needed to grab. So, anyway, that's what we are going to try to do on Thursday.

Q: But please keep in mind, and I don't want to beat this to death, but I know Jed (Babbin) is on here as well, and I am sure he will be nodding his head in a second, but, you know, images don't help me on CBS Radio too much and don't help Jed too much, but I will be on multiple radios on Thursday for major cities all across the United States. So any kind of percentages on Thursday, Friday, (we?) can use would just be great stuff.

Brig Alston: Here's what we'll try to do. I don't know that I am going to like the way that this looks yet, but I've asked – you know, we've never done this before – in this media operations center, and I have asked these guys to design a sit rep, and if the sit rep has the kind of contents that I am hoping for, then maybe that's going to be useful for you. And we are going to pump that out during the day. And what I will do is, I – and since it's kind of an experiment here, I am going to look at the data, and if I feel good just cutting that loose, I will make sure that all of the folks that have, you know, visited the last couple of months, plus anybody else who is on the line who would like it, that you can get these sit reps from us.

Now, the sit rep from my media operations center, I envision that this is going to be trying to track, you know, whatever anecdotal information I am getting from the regional embassy offices, as folks call in and say we've got good things happening in Mosul, good things happening in Ramadi.

I mean, it's going to be spot reports of a lot of stuff to just give us a feel for what's going on, and to see that things are up and operating, and to get those exceptional things like the IECL did not show up in, you know, in Tall Afar, I don't know, and you know, the polling stations didn't open -- the people are opening the polling station themselves – whatever – like happened on the 15th of October.

But it's, you know, so it's going to kind of be spot reports, anecdotal stuff. I mean, there may be some good human interest that would come out of this, but nonetheless, I just don't know what that is going to look like. And, but that's kind of our experiment, and it's all about moving information as fast as I can and giving situational awareness to the leadership as best I can. So, anyway, this is – this is my vision of this thing, and we'll see how it goes, and as much as I can push any information in your direction during the course of the day, I will.

Q: Super.

Brig Gen Alston: What other questions?

Q: Don, this is Bob Maginnis. Question on standing up the new government. As you know it took us, what, two months last spring, or in the winter. Is there something that gives us an indication that perhaps this will come faster, or are we going to go through the protracted back-and-forth until the coalition is built and so forth. Any sense there?

Brig Gen Alston: I think that you are going to find us immediately starting to set expectations that this is going to take a while. I certainly hope it does not take the same 100-day gestation period that it took the last time. I mean, the vote was on January 30th and I think Jafaari was announced as the prime minister on about the 29th of April or so, and then he formed his government roughly the 5th of May, and even that took some iterations it seemed. So I think you are going to find us trying to set, you know, already start the talk about, you know, democracy is challenging to form these kinds of governments. But I do think that depending on the election outcome I hope that that could be used as a tool to leverage, you know, have the Iraqi people leverage against the government to say, you know, if it's mandate-like turnout and mandate-like of, you know, percentages of Sunnis voting and everybody else, you know, already there is going to be, you know, the kinds of words coming out of Sunni leaders that are going to talk about setting their expectations for what this government needs to do to represent all Iraqis.

So, no, I do not have indications that we are going to give birth to this government with any speed. I think if you lay out everything end to end, and the Iraqis take all the time that is allowed, you don't deliver a government before April. But that's if they expend every clause they can to get them, you know, if they had to string this out. So certainly nobody here wants to get into that kind of a protracted thing, but it's not our deal. It's the sovereign government of Iraq's responsibility and charge to make that all come together.

I will tell you that, you know, we will all be looking to see just how the Chalibis and Allawis and all the other folks begin to posture after the election. You know, as I recall, I missed the election – I came a week later, but it was all of that time after the election where all of the friction and challenge came in. And as much as we've seen the politics on the television and on all the posters and the billboards and stuff, you know, of course we haven't seen anything yet. We will be seeing all of that after the vote is in. So, Bob, I wish had a better answer for you than that, but I think you are going to see us start to talk about how it's a challenge to form these democracies and that it's going to take time.

Q: Hey, Don. Jed Babb. (Question on who is coming over to watch.)

Brig Gen Alston: Senator Biden is coming in. And I will see whether or not Rick can find out who else is in that CODEL, so I can tell you exactly what Members are coming in. But I know that Senator Biden is going to be here – I am not sure exactly – I think he might arrive – I wonder if he arrived today, because I mean we start shutting down the airports tomorrow. But I know he is going to be here, and I know he is not alone. So I

will let you know who else is here. But yeah, they are going to be here and I don't know if we are going to get them outside of Baghdad or not. I haven't seen their agenda. But yes, we'll have some folks here.

Q: Is Jimmy Carter coming?

Brig Gen Alston: No.

Q: Thank you.

Q: Hey, Don. It's Jeff McCausland again. Can you comment on, sort of, the evolving threat picture focused on the election. When we left and talked with you and several of the senior people before we left, there was a belief that if something was going to happen, frankly, it was probably going to be today or tomorrow because obviously that has the intimidation factor, as opposed to the direct attacks on the 15th, which could, you know, still intimidate but perhaps a little bit more effective on the run-up. Any changing thoughts on the threat picture towards the election?

Brig Gen Alston: No changes from what you got last week when you were here. We did anticipate that the spike would have shown itself by now. The spike doesn't show itself on election day; it would have done it leading up to election day, and hasn't happened.

I will tell you that there are indications that Zarqawi is the odd man out. The other terrorists and insurgent groups are - that are, you know, Sunni based groups - are looking, are showing some overtures that they want the Sunnis to be able to vote, and that they (audio interference) I am sorry, let me turn this off here, it's - get over that in a second here. Anyway, that in fact, you know, that we could have a decreased amount of violence if we are all blessed and lucky here on election day. And that, you know, Zarqawi will be the one that all will defend against.

I have to believe that Zarqawi has got to make a statement. I mean, if he fails, if he is silent the whole time, you know, that is - that is extraordinary. He's got no advantage to allowing this democratic process to go unchallenged. So, you know, we've got a great plan in effect; the Iraqi Security Forces have a great plan in effect; and we - but we still expect that he's got to do something.

Now, if the Sunnis, on the other hand, you know, choose the political process for the day and see if, you know, and then we'll see how enduring that could be, you know, we could see the Sunni turnout - I don't know that I'll call it enhanced, but certainly there will be - there could be less fear and intimidation if they are not stimulating some of that fear and intimidation.

Q: Thank you.

Q: Don, Bob Maginnis again. The reports about Interior Ministry jails - can you talk about that, provide a context perhaps?

Brig Gen Alston: Well, yesterday the prime minister had a press conference. He did not lead with that information; it wasn't in his statement, I think it was more of a pre-election opportunity, but he was taken on by the media with that.

He took ownership of the investigative process; he reinforced his commitment to ensuring that the investigations were completed; and so that was good for us to see that.

You know, there is a – there certainly have been some who have, at least privately, and we are keeping our eye out to see publicly, who want to cast us impinging on the sovereignty of the government of Iraq with this find in the bunker if you will, and, you know, trying to make overtures that – that in fact, you know, there is some sovereign issues with us walking in on that.

And as you recall, the general officer who began to make the overtures to gain access went directly to the minister, and asked – told him what he needed to do. And the minister supported his efforts to go there.

So, you know, the way this whole thing went down is the way I think you read it in the papers and saw it on television. So I will say that we are engaged, that we are part of the teams that, you know, that went to this other site – this site four the other day and found some issues with that. That was the reason the prime minister was asked yesterday, you know, to talk about this additional find, and he had some decent information at his disposal that was good and accurate for him to share.

That story has been, you know, fairly out there the last couple of days in decent detail. So, you know, there will be more of these inspections that will go on, and we are a part of that process. So I think that that process will continue on, and our participation is key to supporting the central government and the prime minister's commitment to uncover what needs to be uncovered, and fix what needs to be fixed.

Q: Thanks.

Ms. Jones: Gentlemen, any other questions for the general?

Q: Yeah, I have one last one. Can you talk to us for a second on external oversight, you know, what the UN groups are doing, et cetera, to certify that the election was handled in a fair process?

Brig Gen: Well the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq is responsible for the conduct of the election. These guys have been at it now all year long. They were responsible for the January election as well as the referendum, and now this.

So it's a pretty well-heeled process in terms of ballot accountability and, you know, warehouse control, collection, distribution of ballots. The ballots have been flowing in from out of country over the last couple of days. They are on track to be delivered to all

the appropriate centers on time. This is a process that they give us good insight into. Of course, we are helpful to the process, although they privately contract to move all this stuff around, we have great visibility, great transparency, to know how this is being done and how on track it is. So, frankly, we have pretty good confidence in the IECI's ability to do their job.

The UN peak (key?) component to this has also been relatively quiet, but functional – maybe even more so than the referendum. I missed the run up to the elections, but I remember the leadership here having nothing but great praise for the gentlemen that pulled off the elections. The UN leader that was running the referendum has been replaced in her position, but we haven't been concerned about her replacement. It, you know, business seems to be going on in a productive way. So we've got nothing but indicators that this process continues to, frankly, improve and have the bugs worked out.

I will tell you that it is critical that they are – and they are very sensitive to protecting against voter fraud. And so they have their own internal investigative process when there are anomalies, and they have been tracking and accounting for all of their ballots, the voter lists. They had found some discrepancies in voter lists, and they have corrected them to their satisfaction.

They have, you know, distributed whatever – whatever, you know, so they have ensure that all the correct voter lists are out at the polling sites. And don't forget, we have got 19 different ballots – 18 different provinces and one national ballot that they are going to be collecting. And also don't forget for the referendum you never saw any lines of people – or pretty much you didn't see any lines -- because all they had to do was check a block. And now they have a multi-page form that they can vote, you know, either for individuals or for parties or blocks or, you know, teams or whatever. So the voting could be – well, it's definitely going to result in lines of people. So I think you are going to have images – for the non-radio guys, let alone all of us actually but, I mean you are going to see those lines, like you did last January, of people, and you are going to see lots of purple fingers when they are walking out.

So I think the IECI and UN roles -- we have had no concerns with how well they have managed this up to this point, and we understand the daunting task in front of them, and we have been walking with them – or at least having sufficient oversight – to satisfy us that everything is executable and that the timelines that they have established are reasonable.

Q: Can you make sure to give us that MNF-I (Multi-National Force-Iraq) web site again, so we can –

Brig Gen Alston: This is it. www.mnf-iraq.com.

Q: MNF-dash-Iraq-dot-com?

Brig Gen Alston: That is correct.

Q: And Don, you are going to try to send – if those sit reps are good, you are going to try to send us some during the --

Brig Gen Alston: I will. I'll tell you what, I am going to send you guys something anyway, because even if it's a message to say the sit rep's got some stuff in there that's got me weak in the knees, but I am going to cut these pieces out and I am going to give them to you.

So I'll find a way to deliver something, because, you know, we need your help. We've got to get the word out here. I will tell you that, you know, even the government got with the Iraqi press to say, hey, you know how important this is to the nation, so get out early, get out often, and tell our people the story of what's going on for the sake of Iraq. And so, you know, we're -- we know that the Iraq – and that's my biggest concern. You know, you're going to get the word. The guys back home are going to get the word. And I am not taking that for granted, but my concern is last January we appeared to gain momentum and gather steam as the day went on. And so I believe that was a function of Iraqis emboldening Iraqis. I think it was a function of the few courageous that went out and inspired others to go out. And I am not taking for granted that that won't happen again this year. And so whatever we can do to ensure that people get the word that Iraqis are voting, we are going to do our best to do that.

So we are going to be sending out our own MNF-I press releases; we'll be I think incorporating pictures in those kind of things. But the key is Iraqis telling the story to Iraqis, and that – we've got a lot of media in town, and the Iraqis and the pan-Arab folks are going to be telling the story I think pretty effectively. But I'll be monitoring that closely, because I think that's just key to ensuring that all the people of Iraq get the word as soon as possible -- that things are going well, that things are safe, and that they can go out there and take on their democratic responsibility and participate in this constitutionally based, democratically elected permanent government.

Q: Great.

Ms. Jones. All right, gentlemen. I don't think we have any more questions. So I just want to remind everyone the call was on background, but you may say that it was a senior DoD official in Baghdad. Thanks for agreeing to that, general. And again, thanks for your time, and we will follow up and get that stuff out to you guys.

Brig Gen Alston: Call and write any time. Love hearing from you and thanks so much.

Q: Take care, Don.

(end)

(b)(6)

From: JedBabbin@**(b)(6)**
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 3:27 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Allardck@**(b)(6)**; mccauslj@**(b)(6)**
steven@thegreerfoundation.org; tmcinemey@**(b)(6)**; ndcf@**(b)(6)**
Subject: Re: IMAR anecdotes

Eric: I really didn't get anything memorable from the cadets. As I mentioned, they were all tossing me the "school solution." Here are the few worth repeating:

"Me and the others want to make something work."

"We are very eager to fight."

"We are very proud because we are going to lead."

The best quote I got there was from Brigadier Mousa, on his philosophy of suppressing ethnic and tribal loyalties: "If anyone talks I am Kurd, Shia, Sunni, I kick them outside first day."

Hope this helps. Best, Jed.

Jed Babbin

(b)(2) (home office)
(home fax)
(mobile)

(b)(6)

From: Major F. Andy Messing, Jr. (Ret)/ NDCF [NDCF@(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 7:41 AM
To: (b)(6) MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV
Subject: Re: [U] comms check

Dear (b)(6)

I'll be on FOX News TV debating a left-wing Catholic Priest about 2 PM EST...I'll know tomorrow the more or less exact time... additionally, I am writing an Op-Ed on dead-line for the Washington Times... and I need MG "Fuzzy Webster's first name... as I am "Good-mouthing " him....can you help ?

Regards, ANDY Messing

----- Original Message -----

From: (b)(6) MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV
To: COL(Ret) Allard ; COL(Ret) McCausland ; CSM(Ret) Greer ; HON Eric Ruff ; LTC(Ret) Jed Babbins ; LTG(ret) McInerney ; Maj(Ret) Messing
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 5:03 PM
Subject: [U] comms check

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Gentlemen – could I ask for times if you are on TV so we are able to watch?

Maj (b)(6)

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

If this e-mail is marked FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY it may be exempt from mandatory disclosure under FOIA. DoD 5400.7R, "DoD Freedom of Information Act Program", DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release", and DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release" apply.

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) LTC (b)(6)
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 8:00 AM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: nbc news

Eric,

Great news. We had BG Bolger on the radio with Jed Babbin last night as a matter of fact. We gave (b)(6) access to the Police Commandos today all day and an interview with LTG Dempsey and that will run tonight on ABC News. Should be a good piece. I have worked with (b)(6) and (b) before so I look forward to doing a piece with them.

Thanks so much. I enjoyed meeting you and look forward to working together more.

Best,

(b)(6)

LTC (b)(6)

Public Affairs Officer

Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq

Phoenix Base, International Zone, Baghdad

DSN: (b)(2)

Commercial: (b)(2)

MCI Cell: (b)(2)

Iraqna Cell (b)(2)

Read the Advisor newsletter at www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil

From: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA [mailto:Eric.Ruff@(b)(6)]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2005 3:54 PM
To: (b)(6) LTC
Subject: nbc news

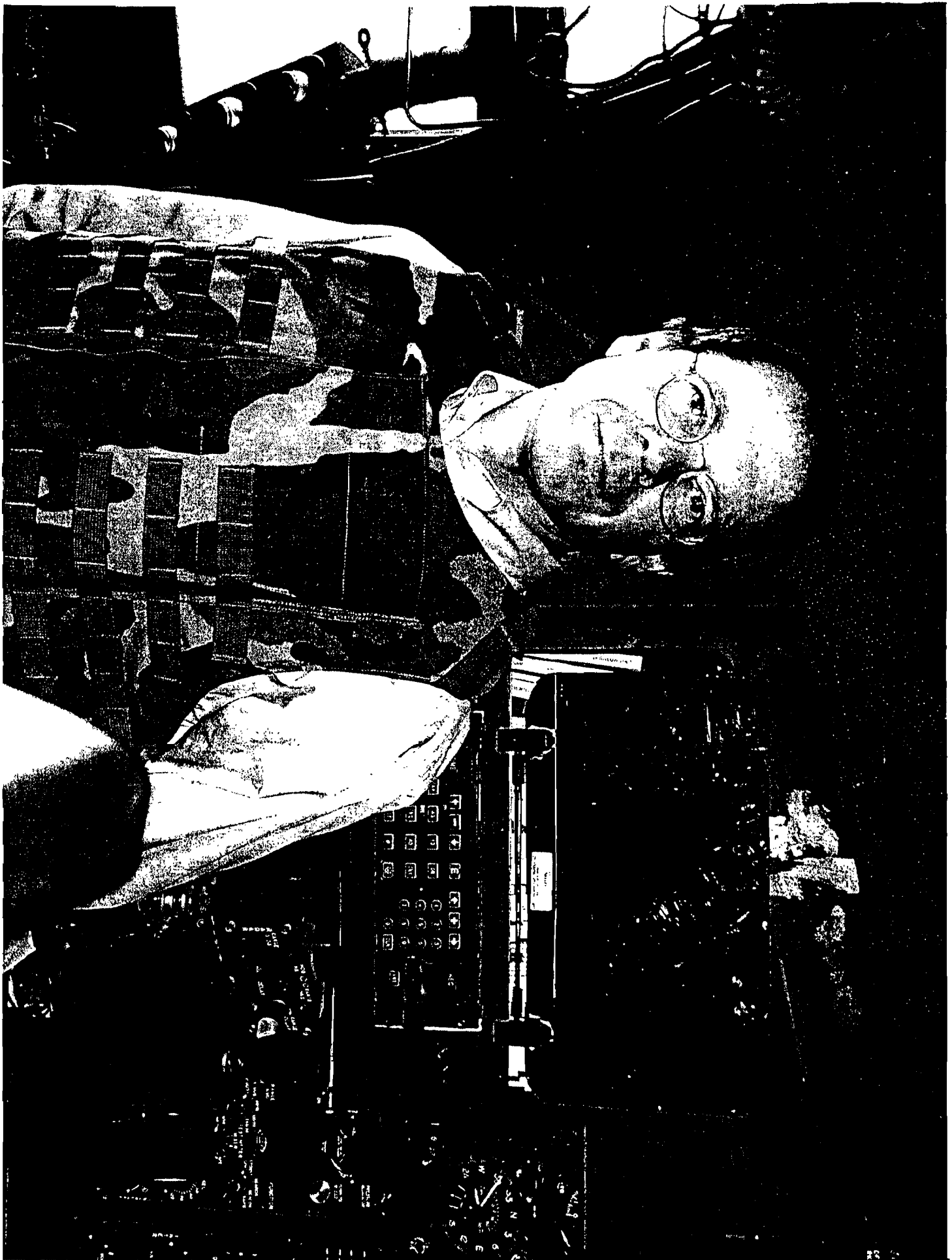
hello, (b)(6) i described the real success that is taking place at imar to nbc producer, courtney kube, who works here with

(b)(6) i expect she or someone from nbc will want to start building a story about the academy, which not only impressed me, but the analysts as well. command sgt major greer was on fox yesterday talking about what he saw. anticipate there will be more as the week progresses. thanks.

(b)(6)

From: Slbabbin@(b)(6)
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 9:48 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: Jed Babbin's photo of you
Attachments: DSCN0003.JPG

Per Jed's request, attached is Jed Babbin's photo taken of you



(b)(6)

From: Allardck@**(b)(6)**
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 7:56 PM
To: NDCF@**(b)(6)** **(b)(6)**; mccaustj@**(b)(6)**
steven@**(b)(6)**; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; JedBabbin@**(b)(6)**
tmcinerney@**(b)(6)**
Cc: Merritt, Roxie T. CAPT, OASD-PA
Subject: Re: [U] Comms check

In a message dated 12/12/2005 6:19:50 P.M. Central Standard Time, NDCF@**(b)(6)** writes.

Best Regards, ANDY Messing

Non Responsive **(b)(6)**

People on the flight back down to Pensacola kept wondering why that guy in the MSNBC hat kept breaking out into unexplained giggles - that's why!

(b)(6)

From: Major F. Andy Messing, Jr. (Ret)/ NDCF [NDCF@h(6)]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 2:22 PM
To: Allardck@h(6) h(6); mccauslj@h(6);
steven@h(6) Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; JedBabbin@h(6)
tmcinerney@h(6)
Cc: Merritt, Roxie T. CAPT, OASD-PA
Subject: Re: [U] Comms check

Dear Major (b)(6)/Richard...

I always enjoy being thrown together with other Type A personalities... but, reflecting on that... it was a generally gracious group who will try hard to continue helping America... and our troops... hence it is always an honor to be with fellow patriots ! Clearly, LTG McInerney classed up an affair which otherwise would have been a low-class event.

As for your conduct... I am still glad I prevented you from killing both "Carl" Allard & Jed Babbin a few nights ago in our Barracks accommodation... when they were snoring and farting at a high pitch and rate ! Fortunately you came to your senses on the third slap ..though taking away that K-Bar from you became difficult at one point ! Steve Greer jumping in to helpmade the difference...Damn, I must vow to get back in shape !

Please convey our sincere Thanks to all... as having run those "tour" groups many times... I know they are difficult...and it was evident that alot of planning and effort went into it.

Stay Safe... and you are invited to come sailing on my yacht in KEY WEST, the ARK ANGEL....just whistle ! We'll toss a few in SLOPPY JOE's Bar offa Duval Street !!

Best Regards, ANDY Messing

Non Responsive

----- Original Message -----

From: Allardck@h(6)
To: (b)(6); mccauslj@h(6); steven@h(6);
eric.ruff@h(6); JedBabbin@h(6); tmcinerney@h(6); ndcf@h(6)
Cc: roxle.merritt@h(6)
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 11:46 PM
Subject: Re: [U] Comms check

(b)(6) - We have you to thank for the fact that the worst part of the trip was the interminable return flight with Brit Airways. Best part was the honor of being back in a combat zone amongst comrades-in-arms, to say nothing of the twin pleasures of enjoying the company of old friends (older than God in Tom's case!) while making new ones like you.

Just wish you coulda been there as we left and your counterpart in Kuwait asked us for our names and seating preferences - which was simply too good a chance for me to pass up: "My name is Andy Messing and I think that

Which may well become the slogan we use if there is ever an official T-shirt made up to commemorate the trip.

God bless - and thanks to you and your crew for putting up with us.

Your friend

"Carl"

PS: First KTSA hit is tomorrow at 5:30, so tell your most attractive/available relatives to listen in! And you don't have a hair on your ass if you don't SWEAR up and down to SFC (b)(6) that Babbin's bag never made it on the bus after

all! :-)

(b)(6)

From: Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 5:45 PM
To: (b)(6)
Cc: Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: FW: Military Analysts Who Went to Iraq; as of Monday at 5pm

The analyst are back from Iraq and starting to make do their thing -- very positive contribution to the reporting.

All commentary by military analysts thus far is positive. Some highlights:

Jeffrey McCauslin:

- * The U.S. troops I talked to feel that life is getting better for Iraqis

Steven Greer:

- * The three tier strategy (political, economic and security) is working
- * The Iraqi security forces are much better than they were six months ago
- * The U.S has transferred authority of a key border town (between Iraq and Syria) to Iraqi forces and we have disrupted foreign fighters and terrorists coming from Syria

WCBS □ New York

12/10/2005 4:00:47 AM

Reporter: CBS news military analyst Jeffrey McCauslin has been talking with us troops in Fallujah. McCauslin: I've just been asking the U.S. troops if they believe through their patrols throughout the city that life in Iraq is getting better. They all uniformly thought it was getting better all over the country.

Fox News -- Fox and Friends

12/12/2005 8:17:02 AM

Newscaster: As the people in Iraq start voting today for people in hospitals and prisons and military installations, how long will it be from before the forces can take over the security? Our next guest just got back from Iraq. Newscaster2: Retired Major Steve Greer joins us now from Washington, D.C. thanks for being with us. Greer: Hey, good morning. Newscaster2: First, give us an update. Because here in the states, I'm sure you realize this, there is this big debate over people like Joe Lieberman that just got back are more accurate about the upbeat picture of what's happening in Iraq or if others are more accurate when they say it's just not going well. What did you find? Greer: Good morning. Yeah, I would tell you, as a whole, the strategy is working. There is no doubt that this three tier strategy, of the political, the economic, and the security, is working. And that is a correct structure. And I would also tell that you the Iraqi security forces are much better than they were six months ago in terms of their capability, their commitment to the progress of their new country and their desire to be part of a team effort. And so that's the good news. There are some 212, 220,000 Iraqi security forces currently. They're continuing to assume more and more of their battle space which allows our forces to disengage and eventually to return home. Newscaster: Sergeant, what do you know about the way we're approaching this election as opposed to the

other two? The other two went pretty well from the security perspective. What are we going to do to make sure the Sunni areas allow those that want to vote to be able to vote?

Greer: Well, certainly the Anbar Province is a critical area. What we've done recently transferred the authority of Osaba, the first border town between the Iraq and Syrian border that is the first critical note. We disrupted the flow of foreign fighters and terrorists coming from Syria. So that's a key point. The next point here is that I think you're looking at the Sunni rejectionists, those who are not part of the terrorist network or the foreign fighter network. Those guys are fence sitters. I think you might see those guys vote in the morning and conduct attacks in the afternoon. Their strategy is a duel strategy. Newscaster: Steve, let's talk about how long it should take to get an army up and running. Some critics of the president said, look, we train men and women to go into combat with just three months combat training. And now it's already been two years for many the Iraqi forces. To some it might seem like their heart just isn't in it. Greer: Anybody that thinks that doesn't know what they're talking about. I tell you, up front, you know, we don't train our forces in three months to go into combat. Those guys are funneled into a unit and the armed forces have had 226 years of experience. And so the lessons that we learned over such a long time frame are directly impacting the quality of training that goes into Iraqi security forces. And I can tell you I was at the military academy. I was watching the new lieutenants that are becoming lieutenants and about to go out to the field. And those guys figured this thing out. Newscaster2: All right. Command Sergeant Steve Greer, thank you very much. Greer: Take care.

(b)(6)

From: Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 5:22 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, RDML, OASD-PA
Cc: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD
Subject: Re: Military Analysts Who Went to Iraq; as of Monday at 5pm

(b)(6) always does the week roll up for us.

Ab

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

-----Original Message-----

From: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, RDML, OASD-PA
CC: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD
Sent: Mon Dec 12 17:16:37 2005
Subject: RE: Military Analysts Who Went to Iraq; as of Monday at 5pm

thanks, (b)(6) i know you'll keep monitoring this. if you haven't been asked already, could you be sure to compile an end-of-the-week (through this weekend) report on what the analysts said? we'll want to be sure and get it to folks in theater. thanks again.

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 5:04 PM
To: Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, RDML, OASD-PA
Cc: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD
Subject: Military Analysts Who Went to Iraq; as of Monday at 5pm

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WCBS - New York

12/10/2005 4:00:47 AM

Reporter: CBS news military analyst Jeffrey McCauslin has been talking with us troops in Fallujah. McCauslin: I've just been asking the U.S. troops if they believe through their patrols throughout the city that life in Iraq is getting better. They all uniformly thought it was getting better all over the country.

Fox News -- Fox and Friends

12/12/2005 8:17:02 AM

Newscaster: As the people in Iraq start voting today for people in hospitals and prisons and military installations, how long will it be from before the forces can take over the security? Our next guest just got back from Iraq. Newscaster2: Retired Major Steve Greer joins us now from Washington, D.C. thanks for being with us. Greer: Hey, good morning. Newscaster2: First, give us an update. Because here in the states, I'm sure you realize this, there is this big debate over people like Joe Lieberman that just got back are more accurate about the upbeat picture of what's happening in Iraq or if others are more accurate when they say it's just not going well. What did you find? Greer: Good morning. Yeah, I would tell you, as a whole, the strategy is working. There is no doubt that this three tier strategy, of the political, the economic, and the security, is working. And that is a correct structure. And I would also tell that you the Iraqi security forces are much better than they were six months ago in terms of their capability, their commitment to the progress of their country and their desire to be part of a team effort. And so that's the good news. There are some 212, 220,000 Iraqi security forces currently. They're continuing to assume more and more of their battle space which allows our forces to disengage and eventually to return home. Newscaster: Sergeant, what do you know about the way we're approaching this election as opposed to the other two? The other two went pretty well from the security perspective. What are we going to do to make sure the Sunni areas allow those that want to vote to be able to vote? Greer: Well, certainly the Anbar Province is a critical area. What we've done recently transferred the authority of Osaba, the first border town between the Iraq and Syrian border that is the first critical note. We disrupted the flow of foreign fighters and terrorists coming from Syria. So that's a key point. The next point here is that I think you're looking at the Sunni rejectionists, those who are not part of the terrorist network or the foreign fighter network. Those guys are fence sitters. I think you might see those guys vote in the morning and conduct attacks in the afternoon. Their strategy is a duel strategy. Newscaster: Steve, let's talk about how long it should take to get an army up and running. Some critics of the president said, look, we train men and women to go into combat with just three months combat training. And now it's already been two years for many the Iraqi forces. To some it might seem like their heart just isn't in it. Greer: Anybody that thinks that doesn't know what they're talking about. I tell you, up front, you know, we don't train our forces in three months to go into combat. Those guys are funneled into a unit and the armed forces have had 226 years of experience. And so the lessons that we learned over such a long time frame are directly impacting the quality of training that goes into Iraqi security forces. And I can tell you I was at the military academy. I was watching the new lieutenants that are becoming lieutenants and about to go out to the field. And those guys figured this thing out. Newscaster2: All right. Command Sergeant Steve Greer, thank you very much. Greer: Take care.

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 5:17 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: Military Analysts Who Went to Iraq; as of Monday at 5pm

Will do!

From: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 5:17 PM
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, RDML, OASD-PA
Cc: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD
Subject: RE: Military Analysts Who Went to Iraq; as of Monday at 5pm

thanks. (b)(6) i know you'll keep monitoring this. if you haven't been asked already, could you be sure to compile an end-of-the-week (through this weekend) report on what the analysts said? we'll want to be sure and get it to folks in theater. thanks again.

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 5:04 PM
To: Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA; Thorp, Frank, RDML, OASD-PA
Cc: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; Smith, Dorrance, CIV, OSD
Subject: Military Analysts Who Went to Iraq; as of Monday at 5pm

All commentary by military analysts thus far is positive. Some highlights:

Jeffrey McCauslin:

- The U.S. troops I talked to feel that life is getting better for Iraqis

Steven Greer:

- The three tier strategy (political, economic and security) is working
- The Iraqi security forces are much better than they were six months ago
- The U.S has transferred authority of a key border town (between Iraq and Syria) to Iraqi forces and we have disrupted foreign fighters and terrorists coming from Syria

WCBS - New York

12/10/2005 4:00:47 AM

Reporter: CBS news military analyst Jeffrey McCauslin has been talking with us troops in Fallujah.
McCauslin: I've just been asking the U.S. troops if they believe through their patrols throughout the city that life in Iraq is getting better. They all uniformly thought it was getting better all over the country.

Fox News -- Fox and Friends

12/12/2005 8:17:02 AM

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(b)(6)

From: Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2005 11:07 AM
To: (b)(6)
Subject: Re: [U] comms check

Please don't for me. I got retasked about 45 mins after landing in kuwait. Ill be back in iraq tomorrow. I know you missed me. :) Dallas Lawrence Director, Office of Community Relations and Public Liaison

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6) MAJ MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV
To: COL(Ret) Allard; COL(Ret) McCausland; CSM(Ret) Greer; Lawrence, Dallas, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; LTC(Ret) Jed Babbin; LTG(ret) McInerney; Maj(Ret) Messing
Sent: Mon Dec 12 09:50:44 2005
Subject: [U] comms check

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Gentlemen - just a reminder to check and see if you have cleaned out your boxes I will send pictures of your visit in a few hours. Please reply with a comms check at your convenience. Thank you

Maj (b)(6)

XO, COMMS DIV, STRATEFF

703-343-8434/8738

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY If this e-mail is marked FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY it may be exempt from mandatory disclosure under FOIA. DoD 5400.7R, "DoD Freedom of Information Act Program", DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release", and DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release" apply.

(b)(6)

From: Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2005 12:38 PM
To: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: RE: More calls for SecDef resignation?

Hey--where are you? How's it going?

-----Original Message-----
From: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2005 12:35 PM
To: Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA
Subject: Re: More calls for SecDef resignation?

We ought to get this to warner. He should know mccauffrey is using his name and tagging him to reed, et al. Thanks.

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

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From: Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Wed Dec 07 11:47:54 2005
Subject: RE: More calls for SecDef resignation?

yes. it would be useful to see what you found. tnx..

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From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2005 11:47 AM
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Would it be useful for us to explore this further for you to provide "crunchy numbers" as best we can?

Just FYI - Here is how one blogger reviewed the Matt Lauer/Barry McCaffrey exchange on "Today" this morning.

Lauer & McCaffrey: Bring Us the Head of Donald Rumsfeld!

Posted by Mark Finkelstein on December 7, 2005 - 07:26.

The forces of NBC, in the persons of Matt Lauer and Barry McCaffrey, launched a major attack on the enemy this morning. No, not on Al-Qaida or the Baathist dead-enders. We're talking of a real MSM enemy: Donald Rumsfeld.

Lauer: "Sticking to the subject of morale, it's clear that there were miscalculations going into this war. Clearly the way we were going to be greeted hasn't turned out to be the reality, the level and the scope of the insurgencies [were underestimated], so when it comes again to military commanders and troops, do you feel they may be frustrated that back home in Washington no one has lost their job over this?"

McCaffrey: "Clearly bad judgments were made by the civilian leadership in the Pentagon going into this war. It got away from us, it didn't have to be this way. One would think Sec. Rumsfeld and others would be held accountable for it."

Lauer, finally sensing blood in the water: "These military people live by a code, among other things, of accountability, so do you think they would want someone like Sec. Rumsfeld or others to be held accountable?"

McCaffrey suggested that troops in the field wouldn't focus on that, but that "the military leadership" realizes that the civilian heads of the Pentagon engaged in "widespread" misjudgements.

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Lauer hit the Mother Lode, as McCaffrey replied:

"I'm surprised to be honest he's still there. His judgments were egregiously wrong. He's staying now to shape the Armed Forces over the next 20 years. It's hard to imagine why someone who made that series of bad calls would be allowed to be the architect of future armed forces."

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From: Di Rita, Larry, CIV, OSD-OASD-PA
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2005 11:48 AM
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA; Whitman, Bryan, SES, OASD-PA; Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; Barber, Allison, CIV, OASD-PA
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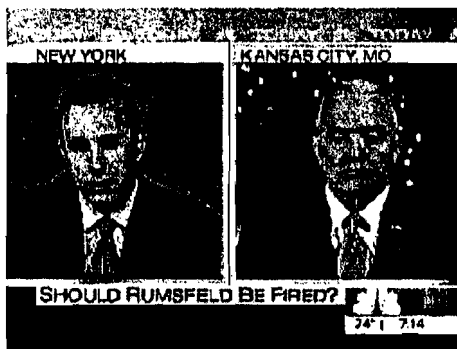
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(b)(6)

From: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief [donald.alston@(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2005 10:32 AM
To: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA
Cc: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA; (b)(6) 1LT MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV; Ford Dewey G COL MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV
Subject: [U] RE: military analysts call - final transcript
Attachments: 12-06-05 ADM G, BG Ham, BG Votel IEDs.doc

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Can do easy.

Thanks.

BG A

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

If this e-mail is marked FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY it may be exempt from mandatory disclosure under FOIA. DoD 5400.7R, "DoD Freedom of Information Act Program", DoD Directive 5230.9, "Clearance of DoD Information for Public Release", and DoD Instruction 5230.29, "Security and Policy Review of DoD Information for Public Release" apply.

From: (b)(6) CIV, OASD-PA [mailto:(b)(6)]
Sent: Wednesday, December 07, 2005 5:55 PM
To: Alston C Donald BG MNFI STRATEFF COMMS DIV Chief
Cc: Ruff, Eric, SES, OASD-PA
Subject: FW: military analysts call - final transcript

sir,
attached is the transcript from the call to the military analysts with ADM G, BG Votel and BG Ham from yesterday. the call was on the new ied task force. eric ruff asked me to pass this along to you. not all of those on the trip were able to join the call. it would be great if they could get a copy of this... could one of your staff provide copies for them and hand them to mr. ruff to pass along?? appreciate the assist!

hope you are well,

(b)(6)

Note: The call was ON BACKGROUND.

<<12-06-05 ADM G, BG Ham, BG Votel IEDs.doc>>

Transcript

Military Analyst Call – IEDs

Dec. 6, 2005 – OSD Public Affairs (b)(2)

Hosts: Allison Barber, (b)(6) OASDPA

Briefers: ADM Giambastiani, BG Ham, BG Votel

Transcriber: (b)(6)

ON BACKGROUND

Ms. Barber: Hello folks, it's Allison Barber. We are ready to get started. Thanks so much for calling in today. I think you have the agenda. We'll open up with General Ham is going to make some remarks for us this morning – or this afternoon, and then we'll turn it over to Admiral Giambastiani. Thank you, sir, for being with us today.

ADM G: Sure Allison.

Ms. Barber: And with that, we'll get started. Please remember this is on background. But we're happy to take your questions, field them, and get back to you with any thing in addition to this after the call. General Ham.

BG Ham: Thanks Allison. In Iraq, over 214,000 members of the Iraqi Security Forces are engaged in operations to secure their country and prepare for the Dec. 15 elections. The Iraqi Ministry of Defense has about 100 battalions – Army, Special Operations, and Strategic Infrastructure Protection – that are in the fight today.

And over one third of these battalions are leading operations with U.S. and other Coalition forces in support.

Yesterday, as another indicator of progress, the Iraqi Air Force flew their first C-130 mission with an all-Iraqi crew. And elements of the Iraqi Army's first battalion, first brigade, 9th Division, completed their T-55 and BMP-1 (sp) gunnery qualifications in preparation for their conduct of operations in the western part of Iraq.

Iraqi Ministry of Interior forces are also progressing, with over 112,000 members in operational units, ranging from the well-known special police battalions, of which there are 12, to border forces, highway patrol, dignitary protection and civil intervention forces.

Today, there are approximately 73,000 local and provincial police, which is about half of what will eventually be required throughout the country. Each Iraqi unit has a Coalition transition team with it, and, at both Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior there are Coalition advisory teams focused on strengthening these national-level organizations.

For the U.S., we have approximately 156,000 on the ground in Iraq today. This number will stay at about this level through the (Dec. 15) elections. Shortly after the elections, we'll transition as many as five brigades nearly simultaneously, so the actual in-country numbers will spike for a short time in January until the outgoing units actually redeploy.

In addition to the U.S., other Coalition partners have 21,000 personnel committed to operations in Iraq.

As we help the Iraqis plan and prepare for the upcoming elections, there are some very positive indicators of wide-spread voter participation. Still, security preparations are ongoing, and there are multiple operations ongoing in an effort to disrupt terrorists and other enemy forces from what we believe will be an effort to interfere with the electoral process.

And to be sure, there have been reports of threats and intimidation. We have seen Iraqi Security Forces attacked across the country, including the attack on the police academy classroom today in Baghdad.

But despite these attacks, Iraqi Security Forces continue to improve. There are occasional setbacks, but the progress is evident and momentum is building.

Operation Sayaid in the Euphrates River Valley is a good example of what can be accomplished when Coalition and Iraqi security forces work together. From November 26th until December 3rd, from al Qaim to Hadithah to Ramadi, Iraqis and Coalition forces conducted coordinated, simultaneous operations which resulted in the establishment of multiple outposts from which the Iraqi Security Forces can now operate.

Together, Coalition forces and Iraqi Security Forces detained over 1,000, many resulting from tips provided by local Iraqis.

Almost 300 weapons caches were discovered. But probably most importantly, the people of the Euphrates River Valley saw their forces – Iraqi Security Forces – operating against the terrorists in this critical area of the west.

The Euphrates River Valley remains a difficult area to secure, but through Operation Sayaid Iraqis have made some notable progress. This type of progress is occurring across the country, as every day Iraqi Security Forces march toward the day when they will be able to secure their people and their nation.

Thanks.

Ms. Barber: And with that Admiral Giambastiani we'll open up to you to talk about the IED Task Force.

ADM G: Okay, Allison. I assume everybody can hear me okay here.

Ms. Barber: Let me do a check real fast. Is the volume okay for our folks on the call?

Voices: Yes. Yes, it's good.

Ms. Barber: Thank you, sir.

ADM G: Okay, great. What I wanted to do is just take a couple minutes – you saw, I suspect most of you saw -- an announcement that came out of public affairs naming retired four-star General Montgomery Meigs, United States Army, to take over as the new head of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Task Force.

Now here with me today is Brigadier General Joe Votel, who has been heading up this effort for a significant period of time. Joe will become the deputy commander as of the 12th, once Gen. Meigs comes in.

And there's a couple reasons why we did this. But first of all, it's clear to all of you, I suspect, as it is clear to us, that the single most significant threat that we face in theater – and I say around the world, but particularly in Iraq, and we'll probably see more of in the future – not probably, we know we will – are these improvised explosive devices.

Now what I wanted to just tell you is is that you may not have heard this ever before, but I look at these IEDs – it just happens to be a name – I call them weapons of indiscriminate destruction. And I think that it's important for – and I'm not telling you we're changing the name of this task force because everybody understands what an IED or this improvised explosive device is – but it's used, and it's killing a lot of civilians in addition to military personnel.

But the primary source of U.S. casualties, both injuries and deaths, are from these IEDs. And the number of civilian casualties continues to increase, in particular in locations such as Iraq, but obviously you've seen them used in other countries around the world.

The Joint IED Task Force is, along with the Services and all of DoD, is designed to take on this end-to-end threat. And I'm not talking just about technologies; I am talking about looking at intel, tactics, techniques and procedures, operational analysis, research and development, there's a whole variety of things that we're using here.

Now along with Monty Meigs coming on board on the 12th of December, and he'll be working full time on this particular job, we're going to grow the IED Task Force from about 175-ish, somewhere in there, to almost 300 people. And part of the reason why we're doing this is we're going to open an improvised explosive device center of excellence out at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California. And this will help us synchronize, it will help us integrate technology, training and concept development, frankly, with not only the NTC, but other training centers for all of the Services around the country so that we in fact can bring about the best practices, the best equipment, the best techniques, the best tactics that we learn into the training regime in an even more comprehensive and coherent way.

So, we brought that through the Service chiefs; we brought that through all of the Services and washed it through the leadership here in the Pentagon. And this is all part of this broader effort to look at these evolving threats in the mid- to long-term, in addition to those that we're dealing with immediately.

Just a reminder here: Again I said end-to-end. This is meant to be a defeat of the entire IED system again. We are looking at just about anything we can. We want to make sure that we continue and do even a better job of sharing best practices amongst all of our troops, our forces that are deployed, and also on the training end of this.

Now, for the sake of time, and I know you all want to ask some questions, I'm not going to go through right here the history. I can answer that in one of the questions, if you'd like, of the evolution of this task force. But we've done quite a bit.

Let me just suffice it to say that Gordon England is the acting deputy secretary of defense, and myself as the vice chairman, currently have General Votel and his group reporting directly to us, if you will, in an effort to make sure there is nothing between what this task force needs to execute its mission to help our soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen, and also to deal with civilians, that there's nothing between the task force and us.

We have significantly removed a lot of speed bumps, road blocks, whatever you want to call it. We've given General Votel in the form of directives signed by the deputy secretary quite a bit of authority involving contracting up to \$25 million a pop for literally anything we need to execute within the IED realm.

The task force has expended in FY '05 \$1.345 billion and again in FY '05 on IED initiatives and there is a substantial increase in that for FY '06 between what we've got funded mainly out of supplementals from the Congress, and we're working to spend that in a very smart way.

I guess with that, rather than me continuing on and talking about what this adaptive, innovative enemy is like and how we respond to this, and also what initiatives we've got going on, and talking about some of the success stories, let me just open it up for questions. Now I suspect we're going to get part of that. Is that reasonable Allison?

Ms. Barber: Perfect.

ADM G: OK.

Ms. Barber: That's great. Thank you, sir.

ADM G: And I think we've got about 15 minutes left here. And that way we'll have a good 15 minutes of questions.

Ms. Barber: Great.

ADM G: Over to you.

Ms. Barber: Thanks. And with that I'll open it up for questions, please.

Q: Allison, Bob Maginnis. Question on shape (?) charge that we saw General Webster over in the 3rd I.D. He showed us one that he'd recovered. Do we have a working solution in that regard.

ADM G: Let me just say one thing -- this is Ed Giambastiani -- before I put Joe Votel on here. I'm -- you're going to find that I don't like to talk about technologies that defeat anything. I am a submarine officer myself, and there's an old expression from World War II that "Loose lips sink ships," and I'm not, quite frankly, interested in reading about shape charges, non-shape charges, techniques and technologies that defeat these devices.

That's where I am. And I just don't think it's healthy for our folks, because there's too much that gets put on the Internet, there's too much that gets distributed. So I'm not going to get in to any details, and neither is General Votel, on any of these types of discussions.

Even though you read it, and somebody may show it to you, you're going to find less and less of this is going to be shared with you because too much of it gets put in the press. And I need your help fellows, because we lose people as a result of spreading some of this. This is a very reactive enemy, and they use what they read in the press and interactively on the Internet to respond, in addition to watching our tactics. So it's very important to us not to get into these details. I am sorry but we won't do it.

Ms. Barber: Next question?

Q: Well, let me ask another question then Allison. The T-72s (sp) that went into the 9th Division, I heard General Ham say that the T-55 went through successful tank gunnery, are we going to find those T-72s being used now? That's been almost two months, hasn't it?

BG Ham: This is Brigadier General Ham. The T-72s arrived last month and have been incorporated into the Iraqi Army. Those crews have not yet been fully trained and through the gunnery exercise similar to the one the T-55s have been. We fully expect that that will occur, but I don't have for you a timeline when that will occur.

Q: Admiral, Jed Babbin, going back to the issue -- I know you don't want to talk about technologies. Can you tell us how you're organizing with General Meigs to get new developments out into the field faster, get contracts done? You know, we hear about effects-based (sp) contracting and things like that but -- are you turning DARPA on full blast? How are you going to get this stuff out to the field fast?

ADM G: Well, let me give you a couple of thoughts first. I am going to let Joe go through a couple of these with you, also. First of all, I talked to you about the line-item authority that Joe has as the head of the task force and that General Meigs will have to be able to sign up to \$25 million contracts. There are also -- even though we have a continuing resolution going on right now -- we are making sure, like we do on a routine

day-to-day basis, that the coffers are always filled so that the IED task force can draw on money without having to wait for the comptrollers to fill up some bin. That's typically not normal in everything we do. So we've cut the time down substantially to about what when you process a requirement Joe?

BG Votel: Usually we can get it within about 13 days.

ADM G: So what I would tell you is that's like light speed here in the Pentagon to be able to get money out to put against almost any requirement we need. In addition to that, we have removed a number of the hurdles for this to get washed through the building once it's signed by General Votel. That's why this money gets squeezed out very rapidly. And, if anything exceeds that threshold of \$25 million, even in the short period of time -- Joe or Monty Meigs will be able to bring it in to the Deputy -- like they have been doing, and the Deputy will physically authorize the expenditure of that under his personal signature, because he has the line-item authority to do that. So there is no one in between them. So that is a really fast-track mechanism of getting these things out.

Joe, you want to talk about any other additions?

BG Votel: Yes, sir. Thank you. One of the things -- I think you raised a very good point there about engaging the other Department of Defense, and quite honestly the other national assets in this particular effort, and one of the things that we are doing, in fact, our first session here is on Thursday, is we are sponsoring a national lab conference, where we have called in all the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, the federally funded research and development centers, to come in and (in a sense?) -- what we're going to do in a classified setting is bring their scientists up to speed on where we are with the IED threat, inform them of how units are operating in Iraq -- and Afghanistan I might add -- and tell them where we need their help.

And this is the second time we've done this with the national jobs. And it was very, very fruitful last time, and so this is how we reach out to these type of organizations. And of course, we have a very good long-term effort with them. We have stood up a joint lab board. Secretary England has asked us to look at the mid- and long-term research and development science and technology efforts associated with this, recognizing this is going to be a long-term threat that we are going to deal with. So we have leveraged those organizations in that manner.

Let me just finally add that the other key partner out here with us is industry. One of the things we are doing and we will be sponsoring in January downtown Washington is an industry conference, where will bring members of industry in in both classified and unclassified settings, and again, bring them up to speed on where we are with the threat, how we are operating, and then where we need their help to help us address current and future evolving threats.

ADM G: Guys, if I could just add to the industry piece, you should not take from what Joe said that we haven't been dealing directly with industry. Let me just tell you that I