

09-F-0444

Secretary of Defense Day Book

for
4/07/08
(Fill in date)

09-F-0444

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SecDef Control #

OSD 76277-08



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7 APR 08

Meeting with General John M.
Keane, USA (ret.),
Re: Iraq Trip Debrief
April 7, 1:45 - 2:30 p.m.

(2)

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DepSec Action

USD(P)

APR 04 2008

READ AHEAD FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Meeting with General John M. Keane, USA (ret.)

Addressed as: "Jack"

Monday, April 7, 2008, 1:45 P.M. - 2:30 P.M.

Michael W. Coulter Per 4 APR 2008
FROM: Mary Beth Long, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA)

Host: (U) You are hosting this meeting.

Issues: (U) General Keane plans to de-brief you on his 12-23 Mar 08 trip to Iraq.

- (S) During his trip to Iraq, General Keane met with General Petraeus, Commander, Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNF-I); Ambassador Ryan Crocker; LTG Lloyd Austin, Commander, Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I); LTG James Dubik, Commander, Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I); and numerous other U.S. and Iraqi Division Commanders.
- (S) He visited the headquarters of Multi-National Division-Baghdad (MND-B); MND-Central; MND-North; MND-Southeast; and a number of facilities in Basrah.

Desired Outcome:

- (U) To discuss the current security situation in Iraq and solicit General Keane for his thoughts and recommendations.

Attendees:

- (U) DoD: SecDef, CJCS and USD(P).
- (U) General John M. Keane, USA (ret.) (bio at Tab C).

Recommendations:

- (U) Use the Talking Points at Tab A.

Prepared by: (b)(6) ISA/ME/Iraq, (b)(6)

Classified by: Multiple Sources
Declassify: 2 April 2018

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Background:

- ~~(FOUO)~~ General Keane, a member of the Defense Policy Board, co-authored the influential policy paper "Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq," and played a contributing role in the policy discussions prior to the President's decision to pursue the surge strategy.
 - ~~(FOUO)~~ He has been an advocate of the current U.S. security strategy in Iraq.
- ~~(FOUO)~~ Since a previous trip to Iraq in Aug 07, General Keane has repeatedly urged an increased British presence in the southern province of Basrah and expressed concern about the potential for future violence in the region.
- ~~(FOUO)~~ Last week, General Keane urged Britain to forego its withdrawal plan and suggested the British should instead consider offering Iraqi leaders the option of a U.S.-style troop surge in Basrah.
 - ~~(FOUO)~~ He urged, action was necessary to curb fighting between rival militias and to head off a growing Iranian influence in the region.
- ~~(FOUO)~~ General Keane criticized Prime Minister (PM) Maliki's decision to travel to Basrah to oversee the Iraqi Security Forces' (ISF) operations and characterized the PM as being "impulsive" and "ahead of the military realities on the ground." (PM Maliki traveled to Basrah one day after General Keane's departure from Iraq.)
 - ~~(FOUO)~~ General Keane also questioned the preparedness of the ISF to engage the violent actors in the south (article attached at Tab B).
- ~~(FOUO)~~ General Keane has acknowledged that the ISF have made both qualitative and quantitative improvements and developed a strong class of leaders, both of which have collectively resulted in a downturn in violence.
 - ~~(FOUO)~~ He recognizes that our forces must stay connected to the ISF as we help generate and develop their capabilities, rather than trying to separate security and transition functions.

Basrah Update

- ~~(S)~~ On 24 Mar 08, PM Maliki traveled with his Ministers of Defense and Interior to Basrah and launched Operation Charge of the Knights.
 - ~~(S)~~ The Operation sought to remove Jaish al-Mahdi (JAM) Special Groups (SG) from their strongholds in Basrah.
 - ~~(S)~~ The Operation was met with strong resistance not only in Basrah, where JAM-SG fought the ISF to a standstill, but elsewhere in the South (particularly Maysan and Wasit) where mainstream JAM began to ignore Muqtada al-Sadr's "freeze."
 - ~~(S)~~ Across the south there were reports of ISF units, particularly police, surrendering to JAM.
- ~~(FOUO)~~ On 30 Mar 08, Muqtada al-Sadr declared a ceasefire.
- ~~(S)~~ PM Maliki has announced a seven-point economic development plan for Basrah. This plan will include adding 10,000 "security volunteers," many from the tribes, to augment the local ISF.
 - ~~(S)~~ This effort is a replication of the Sons of Iraq (formerly known as Concerned Local Citizens) concept that emerged over a year ago in Anbar and Baghdad.

COORDINATION: Tab D

Attachments:
As stated.

TAB A

TALKING POINTS FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Meeting with General John M. Keane, USA (ret.)

Addressed as: "Jack"

Monday, April 7, 2008, 1:45 P.M. – 2:30 P.M.

- What opportunities currently exist in Iraq?
- Even though the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) received assistance from Coalition Close Air Support (CAS) and Special Forces, this was the first Iraqi-led operation of strategic importance.
 - The Iraqis are already showing signs of accepting the lessons learned from the operation.
- Looking at the performance of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in Basrah, what capabilities do you think need to be further developed?
 - How can our training efforts be augmented to improve these competencies?
- Based on your recent visit, what recommendations do you have to bring security in Basrah closer to the standard set in areas under U.S. overwatch?
- The British have recently committed to embedding their forces with Iraqi units, similar to our Military and Embedded Training Teams. This should improve their ability to develop and mentor ISF units in the south.
- How would you suggest we leverage the pause in the drawdown of British forces?
- What are your thoughts on the Sons of Iraq groups?
 - Is it your impression that the Government of Iraq is pro-actively facilitating the transition of these group members into joint educational, vocational and technical training programs?

Prepared by: (b)(6) ISA/ME/Iraq, (b)(6)

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- Prime Minister Maliki declared 10,000 "security volunteers" would be added, many from tribes, to augment the ISF. Do you think this will positively affect the security situation?
 - Can this also be considered a means to effectively tie local tribes to the provincial and central governments?
- How would you describe the current health of the force?

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