

8/20/2003 Moran Releases Iraq Congressional Delegation Report

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Intelligence Report Outlines Lessons and Experiences of Congressional Oversight Mission in Iraq

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today released a congressional delegation report on his week-long oversight mission to Iraq, earlier this month.

"The ability to meet with Kansas troops and bring them support from home was a very meaningful part of this trip," Moran said. "The trip also allowed me to witness, firsthand, the ongoing security and rebuilding efforts in Iraq which is also important. My hope now is to provide Kansans and other Members of Congress with answers to questions about the status of the reconstruction efforts and the search for weapons of mass destruction."

In addition to meeting with many Kansas soldiers, Moran met with Coalition Provisional Authority Administrator, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer; Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez, Commander of Coalition Forces in Iraq; Dr. David Kay and Major General Keith Dayton of the Iraq Survey Group; Major General David Petraeus, Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division; Major General Raymond Odierno, Commanding General of the 4th Infantry Division; and hundreds of other military men and women.

Congressmen John Shadegg, (R-AZ), Peter Hoekstra (R-MI) and Earl Pomeroy, (D-N.D), joined Moran on the trip.

The complete executive summary and delegation report follows:

Executive Summary

The conventional war is over in Iraq. The country is under U.S. military control and is beginning to show signs of resuming post-war function. An unconventional war is now taking place in Iraq.

Ambassador L. Paul Bremer and Coalition Military Commanders have sound plans in place and are making progress in the face of challenging conditions, including unforgiving weather, a deteriorated infrastructure and a devastated economy. Successful implementation of the plans is possible, but will require long-term funding and monitoring. The consequences of failure would be very harmful to the region and to America's ability to provide constructive leadership around the world.

Successful conclusion of the conventional military campaign and the end of Saddam Hussein's rule has made an important contribution to the security of the region, the United States, and the world community. Future efforts in Iraq will require the participation of other nations, including military and financial support. The pace of obtaining broader commitment from other nations needs to be accelerated.

Congressional Delegation (CODEL) Report on Iraq

Security Situation

- Iraq remains a very dangerous place. Although the conventional war is over, an unconventional war is now taking place. There is absolutely no doubt that our soldiers remain in a combat situation. Sporadic attacks and guerilla-like tactics are being employed against our troops, Iraqi citizens and Iraqi infrastructure. It appears that the problems are coming from elements of Saddam's loyalists, criminals and long-established bootleggers aided by an undetermined number of foreign infiltrators. Dozens of combat operations, although of a greatly smaller scale than those conducted prior to May 1, are performed daily by U.S. Armed Forces.

- Sadly, during the time the CODEL was in Iraq, six U.S. soldiers lost their lives there. In addition, the CODEL had the somber honor of escorting the remains of one of those brave, fallen soldiers back to Kuwait.

- Civilian looting continues to be a problem for U.S. troops and poses a great challenge to the CPA in its attempt to establish reliable electrical power throughout the country

The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA)

- The CPA, headed by Ambassador Bremer, has the monumental task of reconstructing Iraq, a country which has had its infrastructure crippled by decades of political barbarism and neglect. Ambassador Bremer is focusing on political reconstruction and is making inroads into establishing a self-reliant, internationally recognized representative government of Iraq.

- Ambassador Bremer outlined clear, aggressive plans to re-establish security, revive Iraq's economy, stem violence and rebuild the country, but the challenges to meet success in all these areas are great.

- Some members believe that Ambassador Bremer presented at times an overly optimistic perspective regarding the immediate and short-term developments of reconstructing Iraq. Although the members of the CODEL appreciated the Ambassador's optimism, they would caution the CPA to set reasonable benchmarks and brief "reasonable expectations."

- Despite the Ambassador's positive attitude, progress in this area might be justifiably slow given that the long-repressed populace has a clear lack of understanding as to how democratic systems should work.

- The CPA has already witnessed some notable success:

o After nationwide consultations, the CPA appointed a 25-member Governing Council. The Council members were drawn from a broad range of Iraq's ethnic and sectarian divisions, including Shia, Sunni, and Christian; and Arabs, Kurds, and an Assyrian; as well as professionals, civic leaders, formerly exiled political activists and religious notables. Three of the Council members are women.

o There has been marked progress in rehabilitating and professionalizing Iraq's civil police force. The CPA is in the process of recruiting, screening, training and paying local police. More than 30,000 police are back to work throughout Iraq.

- Ambassador Bremer appears to be an ideal selection for the job at hand and the CODEL expressed its support to him and for his goals.

- As the CPA is exercising the powers of government temporarily, the cost is large and is covered currently by money recovered from fleeing former regime officials and resource revenues. However, in time, additional funding will be needed. We hope that Donor conferences go well, but if funding will be requested from Congress, we would expect that such a request would be made with as much advance notice as possible.

Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)

- Due to the sensitivity of the information we cannot repeat much of the information Dr. David Kay, General Dayton and the Iraqi Survey Group presented to us, but the CODEL was very impressed by the skill, dedication and frankness of Dr. Kay, he is eminently qualified for the job. The CODEL departed Iraq with great confidence that Dr. Kay would complete the mission to which he is assigned.

- According to Dr. Kay, the Iraqi Survey Group is making solid progress in unraveling Iraq's WMD program. They are, however, not yet at a point where they can deliver final judgments and provide compelling evidence about the full extent of Iraq's WMD programs, including the exact status of any weapons at the time of the onset of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

- The fact that it is taking more time than originally anticipated is due to:

o The extent to which Iraq's WMD programs were shielded,

o the conditions that prevailed at the time that Coalition Forces entered Iraq,

o the Group's desire to ensure that they have fully collected and assessed all possible evidence before reaching a conclusion.

- Dr. Kay cautioned the CODEL to be patient, stating that Hussein spent more than two decades, billions of dollars and involved more than 10,000 troops in pursuing his WMD ambitions. It is reasonable to expect that more time is needed to fully understand the depths of these programs.

- Dr. Kay explained that he is concentrating during his initial phase on the Biological Weapons program and the role of security and intelligence services in shielding and advancing all of Iraq's WMD activities. He expects that the Survey Group is a couple of months away from fully understanding these two areas and having a full range of compelling evidence to support his conclusions. Regardless, he believes that he knows where the evidence is and is hard at work on collecting it and analyzing it.

- The Iraqis have begun to cooperate more fully with efforts to penetrate Iraqi WMD programs.

- The CODEL traveled to the infamous al-Tuwaita Camp, site of Iraq's past efforts to develop a nuclear program.

- At this juncture, the evidence points toward weapons programs and does not necessarily point to the existence of large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. Dr. Kay did not appear surprised by this fact, claiming that the intelligence community's previous assumptions about Iraq's WMD programs were based largely on fragmentary information collected from a closed society.

Our Soldiers

- The morale of our soldiers is remarkably high. The most impressive part of the CODEL was watching our soldiers conduct daily missions in temperatures exceeding 130 degrees Fahrenheit, covered in sweltering body armor and carrying heavy gear, all without complaint. We have the finest military force known to mankind, a force that is not only tactically proficient and fiercely cohesive, but also remarkably compassionate.

- In addition to rooting out remnants of the remains of the former Iraqi regime, suppressing the operations of foreign operatives, quelling the occasional civil unrest and dismantling terrorist elements, Coalition military units are directly involved in providing humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq. Military commanders are working to ensure that every school is rebuilt and the hospitals are repaired. These buildings were not damaged during the war, but were ruined by decades of government neglect.

- Although immeasurably saddened by not being with their families, practically every soldier with whom the CODEL met expressed pride at being there, securing the freedom of people incapable of securing it for themselves. Of course they want to come home, but not until they are replaced by other units capable of following through with the mission at hand.

- The CODEL was most notably impressed by Major General David Petraeus, Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division and Major General Raymond Odierno, Commanding General of the 4th Infantry Division. These men represent the finest our military has to offer. They are brilliant and stalwart and focused tirelessly on the mission and their troops. The CODEL departed knowing that the welfare of our troops is in very fine hands.

Military Strikes

- The CODEL participated in more than a dozen flights inside Iraq, many times flying over extensive portions of a few of Iraq' major cities. The CODEL personally viewed the effects of highly specific and remarkably accurate military strikes aimed at buildings used by senior regime officials responsible for waging the war. Most of the damage in the city was clearly due to looting and decades of neglect.

Terrorism

- Terrorism continues to be a problem in Iraq. With the influx of foreign operatives before and during the war, our soldiers continue to be at risk from Improvised Explosive Devices, car bombs and suicide bombers.

- Ansar al-Islam, a terrorism group with some links to al-Qaeda that had taken control of several villages in Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq prior to the onset of the war, has not yet been completely defeated or driven out of Iraq.

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