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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

HEARING HELD
JUNE 12, 2007

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE,
Washington, DC, Tuesday, June 12, 2007.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 9:11 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Martin Meehan (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARTY MEEHAN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MASSACHUSETTS, CHAIRMAN, OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. MEEHAN. Welcome, General, Mr. Kimmitt. Welcome to the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Today we will continue our examination of the most pressing issue facing the country: the war in Iraq.

In past weeks the subcommittee has looked into a number of aspects of the complex mission to man, train and equip the Iraqi Security Forces. We have also looked at whatever plans we have been able to obtain to turn over security to them.

We know how hard and difficult this work is, that our armed services have put a lot of effort into this difficult and dangerous project.

Today's hearing will begin with a brief opening statement from Mr. Mark Kimmitt of the Office of Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. He is the deputy secretary for the Middle East and South Asian affairs.

He will be followed by testimony from General Martin Dempsey, who until recently was the commander of MNSTC–I.

I understand that you have been nominated to be the deputy commander of U.S. Central Command.

In previous hearings, we had hoped to hear from witnesses on the command relationships and the responsibility of the Multi-National Corps-Iraq, called MNC–I, and the Iraq Assistance Group, called the IAG. We would have benefited from their operational perspectives.

In today's hearing, we will hear about the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (MNSTC–I) and its Civilian Police Advisory Training Team (CPATT). These organizations are charged with training and equipping the Iraqi police service and military, as well as managing transition advisory teams for the Ministries of Defense (MOD) and Interior (MOI).

CPATT also supervises the contractors who are international police liaison officers and international police trainers working with the Iraqi local police.

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Other issues we want to address include the role that military and police unit readiness and operational effectiveness reports play in assessing the performance of Iraqi Security Forces, particularly how they help commanders adjust to conditions on the ground.

More importantly, we want to hear about the actions generated by these assessments and how the feedback is provided to Iraqi leaders.

We want to hear from our guests frank appraisals of whether these performance assessments, called TRAs, provide an accurate picture of the operational competence of the Iraqi Security Forces.

And we would like to hear your view, General Dempsey, on whether they are relevant and an adequate tool to help commanders judge whether the Iraqi forces are ready for transition.

Our sense is that the military has shown some progress, the Iraqi police are not operating effectively, and the ministries are not even close to taking over responsibility.

We are very surprised, given this impression, that the Iraqi police service responsibility has already been turned over to the MOI. I hope that you can explain your perspective on these issues.

Part of the reason for this hearing is the Department of Defense has been slow to get us relevant documents, and it has been difficult for the subcommittee to get our preferred witnesses.

The witnesses and briefers we have been offered have had to, on numerous occasions, had questions for the record. The responses to those questions have been very slow in coming to us. And I hope that we don't have the same problem today.

Our members and the public should know, without disrespect intended toward General Dempsey, it has taken a long time to get him before us.

We appreciate his appearance at our hearing today, but I would note that we have not been supported in our efforts to secure testimony from commanders of the Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF–I), the Coalition Police Advisory Training Team and the Iraqi Assistance Group or their knowledgeable deputies, even by video teleconference.

General Dempsey, we were assured that you would be able to answer questions on these other organizations, but I trust that if you can't, you will take them for the record.

While we have been able to obtain the 2006 version of the Joint Campaign Plan, there are specific questions about the contents of a critical document that we have not been able to obtain—the 2007 Joint Campaign Plan, signed by the commander of the Multi-National Forces-Iraq and the Embassy—as it pertains to developing Iraqi Security Forces.

We have been able to obtain the 2007 unclassified campaign plan for MNSTC–I for developing the ISF. But we wonder how the new joint plan may affect this strategy.

It is my understanding that Secretary Gates has not yet read that plan, and at some point it will be provided to this committee.

Thank you for coming, Mr. Kimmitt.

I understand that you were advised that you may have some questions, that we want to focus on General Dempsey's experience and observations from the theater. So I would hope that you would make your remarks brief.

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One question that I would like, if you could, in terms of addressing the committee—originally, the House Armed Services staff was to be briefed yesterday on the department's quarterly report on Iraq, the 9010 report. Now that the briefing has been rescheduled for this afternoon, and I believe the explanation that the director of J5 Strategy Division was that he was on leave and no one else could do it. I believe in the past that you and also the deputy J5 have briefed the staff.

Given the difficulty in getting the general here and the inability of other witnesses who we wanted to talk to, it seems that we would have benefited if we could have had that briefing before this session.

I point that out because we have had an ongoing difficulty with the department in terms of getting witnesses.

Today we have a lot of ground to cover, so we will run the subcommittee more formally than usual. We are going to use the gavel and the 5-minute rule.

I would like to remind everyone that this is an open hearing, so no classified information will discussed. If necessary, we have been cleared and we can move to a separate room for a classified briefing, if the questions and the witnesses lead us down that road.

Again, welcome to our witnesses. We are looking forward to your remarks. And we will take your whole text for the record, but we ask you to give us briefer comments.

Now, I would like to turn to my colleague, Mr. Todd Akin, our ranking member, for any opening remarks that he may have.[The prepared statement of Mr. Meehan can be found in the Appendix on page 49.]

STATEMENT OF HON. W. TODD AKIN, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM MISSOURI, RANKING MEMBER, OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Today is the last scheduled public hearing of our investigation of the Iraqi Security Forces. I understand the subcommittee will issue a report on this investigation in the coming weeks. And the report's release will close out the investigation.

As this may be the last public meeting of the subcommittee with Mr. Meehan as chairman, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the chairman for his exceptional leadership, to thank him for steering his subcommittee in a bipartisan and professional manner.

I wish you the very best of luck in your new position, Mr. Chairman. I only have one piece of advice for you, and that is, don't talk about why there are more men than women in technical areas of colleges. It is not politically helpful. [Laughter.]

Welcome to our witness General Dempsey. Thank you for your great service overseas. It was a pleasure to be able to come visit you. A number of us have made the trip. But we know the long hours that you worked and everything. And we are just so thankful that you came by and share some of your thoughts with us today.

As we close out the public record of this investigation, I would like to focus my comments on what I view are key issues the investigation still needs to clarify.

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Foremost, how does ISF's mission fit into the Iraqi strategy? Over the past few years, we have spent $19 billion training and equipping more than 348,000 ISF personnel, all for the purpose of transitioning security responsibility over to the Iraqis.

My sense is that this remains our strategy. The only variable that has changed is how and when we transition security responsibilities to the Iraqis.

One thing this investigation has demonstrated is that transitioning security responsibilities simply for the sake of transitioning will not stabilize Iraq. In fact, it may slow progress down.

I do, however, want to make sure that, contrary to recent press reports, our strategy continues to view ISF as the lynchpin to our plan to eventually transition U.S. forces out of Iraq.

General Dempsey, I hope you can comment on this during your testimony.

Another issue I would like our witness to clarify is how we are progressing in developing a truly national Iraqi security force. Again, there are an increasing number of press reports that elements of the ISF, particularly the Iraqi police service, suffer from sectarian infiltration. Additionally, it seems problems of sectarian influence continue to affect the ministries, particularly the Ministry of the Interior.

I would like to hear your assessment of the situation and understand what steps we are taking to resolve that problem.

I would also like to know how sectarianism is affecting the combat effectiveness of ISF. A rogue Iraqi unit that carries out sectarian reprisals is only one kind of sectarian problem. Sectarianism can manifest in other ways.

This leads me to the general concern about our knowledge of ISF.

While this subcommittee has learned a lot about how we train, transition teams and equip ISF, we have learned little about the operational competency of ISF. I am concerned that the transitional readiness assessments (TRAs) do not tell us enough about Iraqi units. Given the $19 billion the American people have spent on ISF, we have a responsibility to monitor and track how the forces we have trained and equipped are operating.

I look forward to hearing our witnesses' statement and their views on these matters.

Thank you for being here, again, General Dempsey, and welcome back.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.[The prepared statement of Mr. Akin can be found in the Appendix on page 52.]

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Akin. And thank you very much for that advice, as well.

We are honored to have the distinguished chair of the Armed Services Committee, the gentleman from Missouri, Mr. Ike Skelton, here. And I would like to ask the chairman if he would like to make some opening comments.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much. First, let me compliment you on having this hearing. It is very, very important, and overdue.

We, first, though, wish to acknowledge your tremendous work in the Congress and on this committee. And being the first chairman

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in many, many years of this subcommittee, you are off to an excellent start. And as you leave to go on to become an educator and you pass your baton on, you have done a wonderful job in getting us going. And a heartfelt thanks to you, Marty Meehan.

The Los Angeles Times reported yesterday that we were arming some of the Sunni militia. Needless to say, this is of great deal of concern to me. And as to where all this fits into the scheme of things of Iraq, I hope the witnesses can touch on that, because it is already an open tinderbox as it is, and I don't think we should be in the position of making it all the worst. I think that is very important.

Mr. Chairman, I feel like I must vent my frustration on the fact that we have not been able to obtain witnesses for proper and timely hearings in this all-important subcommittee.

We even offered to have hearings by way of videoconference and that was declined. But at the same time, we saw videoconference news conferences, news media conferences, and which, in my opinion, were lengthier than any hearing that we might have or require.

I hope that is in the past.

We in Congress have a duty and an obligation, just as those of you in uniform have a duty and obligation. And our duty is that of oversight, raising and maintaining the military. But we can't do a thorough job unless we have all the facts. And I think those in the military fully understand that.

So I have been frustrated in the past. I hope that is well behind us.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for your service. Thank you so much.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

And I would like the witnesses to make opening statements.

STATEMENT OF MARK KIMMITT, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Mr. KIMMITT. Mr. Chairman, good morning. And thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

I have a very short opening statement. And, frankly, it is simply to publicly acknowledge the contributions and the success of General Dempsey. He is finishing, now, his second tour in Iraq, having recently commanded the Multi-National Security and Transition Command in Iraq.

In his first tour, he was the brilliant commander of the 1st Armored Division in some of the most important fighting that was done in the 2003–2004 time period.

It is our fortune to have leaders such as General Dempsey commanding our troops and running our programs inside of Iraq. And we are certainly honored by his presence here today.

I look forward to answering your questions.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you.

General.

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STATEMENT OF LT. GEN. MARTIN DEMPSEY, COMMANDER, MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY TRANSITION COMMAND-IRAQ, U.S. ARMY

General DEMPSEY. Good morning, Chairman Meehan, Ranking Member Akin, honorable members of the subcommittee, especially Congressman Skelton.

It is always good to see you again, sir.

I would like to actually begin this morning by introducing my wife, Deanie, who is seated just over my left shoulder here. As you know, we have been apart most of the last 6 years, and she told me today that she wouldn't allow me to go anyplace unless she could accompany me. So I invited her. And I hope——

[Applause.]

She has been, for my entire 33-year career, a real champion for soldiers and their families and, in particular, in the last 6 years, through some very difficult times, has stood steadfast and loyal behind America's soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines. And I want to thank her for that.

Also with us today is my aide de camp, who has stayed with me for the last 16 months in Iraq, and his wife, Megan. And so, I want to introduce them as well, the next generation of senior leaders of our armed forces.

Thank you for the opportunity to come and speak with you, answer your questions and share my thoughts on the state of the Iraqi Security Forces after three years of service in Iraq.

Let me first say that I am absolutely grateful for the opportunity to spend some time on our wonderful American soil. I left the Pentagon on the 10th of September 2001, and except for a few weeks of leave here and there and two opportunities to appear before the Congress, I have not been home since.

I have spent nearly 2 years in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the senior adviser to the Saudi Arabian national guard. And I have spent almost 3 years in Iraq, the first 13 months as the commander of the 1st Armored Division, and as the first commander of MND-Baghdad, and then for the last 22 months as the commander of Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq.

I arrived back in the United States yesterday. And after a few weeks' leave, I will report to United States Central Command as deputy commander.

And thank you for those of you that had a hand in confirming me for that position.

My intent today is to speak frankly with you about my perspectives on the challenges we face in developing Iraq's Security Forces. Let me begin with a brief update on where we are now and how we got there with regard to those security forces. And following that I will, of course, be happy to take your questions.

The Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, or MNSTC–I, as you know it, in coordination with coalition forces, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the government of Iraq's Ministries of Defense and Interior, develop security forces along three lines of operations.

The first is generating units and individual replacements. The second is developing institutional systems and processes necessary

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to support the fielded forces. And finally, professionalizing that force and its leaders.

We achieved our initial target for Iraqi Security Forces generation of 134,700, what we call the objective counterinsurgency force, or military forces, and 188,300 objective civil security forces, which are police, in December of 2006. However, based on changes in the security environment in the latter half of 2006, the two security ministers, in consultation with MNSTC–I, adjusted our 2007 end-strength goals for both the army and the police.

I will discuss this in detail later in the statement and, of course, during questioning.

We are now working to develop an Iraqi military of just over 190,000 and an Iraqi police forces of approximately 195,000. We are on track to achieve these force levels by the end of this calendar year.

Currently we have trained and equipped 154,000 military forces and 194,000 police forces. It is important to note that we are simultaneously building both new units and training individual replacements. Annual attribution is approximately 15 to 18 percent in the army and 20 to 22 percent in the police.

MNSTC–I has a comprehensive four-phased plan to build, enhance, develop and transition the Iraqi Security Forces to the government of Iraq's control as soon as possible. As you know now, such phases are a useful concept in developing plans, but they are rarely cleanly separated and never entirely sequential in execution.

Planning phases such as these almost always overlap one another as progress is made and as efficiencies are exploited in any given phase. Stated another way, we work in multiple phases simultaneously.

Let me summarize the goals of each of these phases.

Phase one, the build phase, ensures that initial Iraqi Security Forces are organized, trained, equipped and based.

Phase two, or enhance, makes the generated forces better, with a focus on adding capabilities, including armor protection and increased weaponry, as well as advanced training to prepare them for full operational control.

Phase three, or the development phase, ties the tactical formations to a developed, institutional architecture, thereby setting the conditions for their transition to self-reliance.

And phase four, or transition, based on a common understanding by both sides—that is, the government of Iraq and the government of the United States—of our long-term security relationship, then transitions internal security responsibility to them, while we also assist Iraq begin to prepare to defend itself against external threat.

Now, we have learned many important lessons, and we have made many adaptations along the way.

We have learned that the development of security forces is analogous to a three-legged stool. The first leg is a standard curriculum of training so that every soldier and every unit gets the same skills. The second leg is embedding transition teams. And the third leg is partnering units with coalition forces.

And the distinction between the two—that is to say, the transition teams and the partner units—is very important. A partner unit will provide instruction and education and expertise by men-

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toring and role-modeling, but that is only one facet of that partner unit's broader mission. An embedded transition team, on the other hand, in contrast, is dedicated completely to the development of that Iraqi unit.

We have learned that transition is essentially a balancing act. On one side, you have assimilation and one the other side is dependency. Transition too soon and the system falters. Transition too late and the system becomes dependent on the coalition.

Through 2005, the United States government was paying the bills for all Iraqi life support and for all Iraqi Security Forces. Now, because we had helped them build their 2006 budget and knew that they had the necessary funding, we made it a goal in 2006 to transition responsibility for Iraqi soldiers and policemen over to Iraqi control.

It was painstaking and difficult work for reasons that could, if you like, come out in questioning. But by the middle of 2006, the MOD and the MOI had assumed control of all life support across the entire Iraqi army and police.

We learned the importance of developing both the tactical and the institutional sectors of the military and police forces simultaneously. In Iraq today, soldiers and police are being paid by the central government. Their life support is being provided by the central government.

The Ministries of Defense and Interior are functioning institutions who feel themselves accountable for the security of the Nation and for their security forces.

Challenges remain, but we should not underestimate the importance of having a coherent, accountable and responsible Iraqi chain of command from individual soldier and policeman to the ministers of defense and interior.

We have learned that the business practices of the Iraqi government are horribly inefficient and ineffective, and that there is no pool of skilled civil servants to overcome them in the near term.

Among our goals in 2007 is to transfer equipment, sustainment and infrastructure costs or expenditures to the Iraqi responsibility. To do that in an environment of unskilled bureaucrats and bad business practices, we convinced the government of Iraq to reach out to us as their acquisition and procurement agents, and to enter into foreign military sales program with the United States.

Thus far, the Iraqis have invested about $1.7 billion into foreign military sales. We anticipate they will invest another $1.6 billion this year.

Let me put that into perspective. 2007 is the first year that the government of Iraq will spend more on its security forces than the United States government. And they will outspend us at a rate of two to one. They are now spending more money on themselves than we are spending on them in the security sector.

If the government feels itself accountable to the soldier and understands its responsibility to provide him resources, then the soldier in turn is going to feel his loyalty toward the central government. We consider this an important measure of progress.

Both tactical and institutional performance are improving. They must now be tied together.

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The big challenge in 2008 will be finding an adequate number of leaders to lead this institution that is large and increasingly capable. We have been growing young second lieutenants through the military academies for about 3 years. But it is very difficult to grow majors, lieutenant colonels and brigadier generals; it simply can't be done overnight. So we have had to rely heavily on officer recalls and retraining programs.

However, the pool of qualified recalls is beginning to thin out. Several generations of Iraqi leaders, the kind of leaders we are looking for, were culled out by the Saddam regime and the Iran-Iraq War, and many fine Iraqi military and police leaders have been killed and wounded in the ongoing fight. We are working with both the minister of defense and the minister of interior to address this challenge.

The Iraqi Security Forces have improved in their capability to assume a greater share of the responsibility for security and stability in Iraq. My overall assessment is that many units, especially the Iraqi army units, have become increasingly proficient and have demonstrated both their improved capability and their resolve in battle.

They continue to be hampered, however, by a lack of depth. Iraqi army and police units do not have tactical staying power or sufficient capability to surge forces locally.

The ISF also have shortages of leaders from tactical to national level, which I have already touched upon.

In addition, their logistics infrastructure is immature, which limits their ability to function effectively against a broad array of challenges, particularly when asked to move about the country.

In October 2006, the Iraqi prime minister determined that his security forces were insufficient in size and structure to support Iraq's security needs. He requested support for a 2007 growth plan of 24 additional battalions and an increase in end strength of approximately 45,000.

Additionally, he requested assistance in procuring additional special capabilities, such as route clearance equipment and electronic countermeasures, to meet the persistent challenge of terrorist threats.

He also decided at that time that the tactical combat battalion should be manned at 110 percent strength. This was to posture them to be able to handle some of the unique aspects of this force.

For example, on average, about 25 percent of the force is on leave at any given time, and they are not going on vacation. It may sound simple, but a significant portion of this is for soldiers taking leave to physically take money home to their families in the absence of things like direct deposit and electronic banking.

Another example is that seriously wounded soldiers are not moved off unit rolls because there is no functioning retirement system in Iraq. Moving them off the rolls, therefore, would impose incredible hardships on soldiers and their families who have made enormous sacrifices.

Within the past month, the commanding general of Multi-National Force-Iraq decided that based on lessons of Operation Fardh Al-Qanoon in Baghdad, it indicated the clear need to increase man-

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ning levels of these combat battalions up to 120 percent strength, or an additional 20,000 soldiers.

The ongoing 2007 growth plan addresses many, but not all, of these structural gaps in the Iraqi Security Forces.

MNSTC–I's current assessment is that the Iraqi Security Forces will require growth in scope and scale similar to what we accomplished in 2007 in order to ensure sufficient force to protect the population throughout Iraq, overmatch the enemy, provide depth necessary to deploy forces around the country, and implement an annual training and reconstitution program.

The threats faced by the government of Iraq have proven both resilient and adaptive. We have identified key capability gaps in the Iraqi Security Forces. MNSTC–I is working to improve the quantity and the professionalism of the ISF's leaders, address the issues of logistics and sustainability, ensure combat overmatch, and provide Iraq's security leaders the ability to project power with sufficient rotational capability to meet the challenge facing them.

Coalition forces currently cover these capability gaps. Failure to address these Iraqi security capability gaps will lock U.S. forces into tactical battle space and greatly increase the risk to the Iraqi Security Forces should the coalition presence decline in the near future.

In reflecting on my time in Iraq, I think I can identify four key decisions that we have made in the effort to build effective security institutions.

The first was the formation of MNSTC–I to professionalize and standardize the growth of Iraqi Security Forces.

The second was the decision to embed advisory teams by simply partnering with them.

The third occurred on the 1st of October, 2005, when MNSTC–I assumed responsibility for developing the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Interior's capacity and capabilities.

And the fourth and most recent was the recognition in late 2006 of the inability by the Iraqi government to execute their budget and, therefore, successfully enrolling them into the United States foreign military sales program in order to assist them in growing the force and executing their budget.

I would like to close with some thoughts about the Iraqi leadership and about the Iraqi people.

The leaders of Iraq and their people are working in an incredibly challenging environment and a dangerous environment. They risk their lives every day as they carry out their nation's business. And they live with the constant fear of having their families attacked.

The people of Iraq have demonstrated both resolve and resiliency in withstanding the assaults of extremists, and seem to be committed to make a better life for themselves, their families and their nation.

The leaders and the people of Iraq have not given up on themselves. We should not give up on them.

I again thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. And I am now prepared to take your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Dempsey can be found in the Appendix on page 56.]

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Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you very much, General. And thank you very much for your service to our country.

General, would you be surprised to hear that in our interviews and surveys, younger transition team members oftentimes express frustration with either good Iraqi police service commanders who were transferred or fired without any explanation, or with bad ones who if removed were transferred or promoted by MOI?

We just heard a lot of these stories about good people that all of a sudden are gone, or bad people that are promoted.

General DEMPSEY. No, sir. I am not surprised a bit. In fact, I deal with those—or, I did deal with those questions weekly, I would say.

Mr. MEEHAN. What do you do if you are made aware of these types of frustrations as we have been? Specifically, how do you deal with that?

General DEMPSEY. Well, what we do, sir, is we make an inquiry of the system to learn about the details. In other words, sometimes we will actually—the transition teams will hear about these things before we do at the ministerial level.

Now, when we walk it backwards to determine the basis on which decisions were made to replace leaders, we find that there are just as many instances where there is a very good reason for the replacement as there is a bad reason or an insidious, let's call it, reason. There are cases where the change has been made for reasons that make us uncomfortable. I will give you example of two of them.

The commander of the 9th Division, Major General Bashar, who we considered to be one of our finest commanders—this was in my first year there—was replaced and moved into the Training and Doctrine Command.

It was done in a way that made it impossible for us to understand it before it occurred. And we do always go back and ask them for transparency before the fact, because we are making quite a significant contribution to their security and we think they should be transparent with us.

We found out that he was moved because they were trying to balance the demographics of the 10 divisions at the time, and that they felt that he could provide a better service in the Training and Doctrine Command.

Now, the reason given when the transition team identified it, the transition team was sure that he was being moved because he was a Sunni Arab. It does not appear to be the case in retrospect, or upon reflection, that that was the case.

However, there are also cases where it is very clear that certain leaders are put into place because the government believes that it needs to have someone loyal to it above all.

And so, for example, in the intelligence architecture and in the operations architecture, you will find the government of Iraq seeking to, in their view, balance the demographic to account for the fact that the population of Iraq is approximately 65 percent Shia.

Now, what becomes difficult for us is to determine whether they are doing that out of a sense of that it is their turn, if you will, or if they are trying to make absolutely sure that in the future they will never put themselves in a position of being dominated by the

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minority, or if it is being done to disadvantage the other groups, the Kurds and the Sunnis. And we are very careful to both understand the rationale and to watch the conduct after the fact.

It is a fact that there are leadership changes going on all the time. When we confront them, they will say to me—in fact, most recently, they said to me, "Well, look, General, you have been here for two years and you are going home, so we want to adopt a similar policy: Two years and you move on."

It is hard to say sometimes, sir.

Mr. MEEHAN. How are negative appraisals of Iraqi units and commanders communicated from the MTT to the Iraqi assistant group chain over the MNSTC–I chain and its links with the MOD and the MOI?

How are these, sort of, negative appraisals of these units—what is the chain like?

General DEMPSEY. The transition teams do the transition readiness assessments, we call them, on a monthly basis, against a series of metrics that I think you are familiar with.

I know you didn't get them as quickly, certainly, as you wanted to see them. But I am told that we have moved beyond that and you do have access now to the TRAs and the background data that forms them.

But in any case, the TRA itself is done by the transition team and then discussed with the Iraqi counterpart leader, passed over to Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Lieutenant General Ray Odierno, who has a cell in his headquarters that collates the data.

And then, on a monthly basis, there is a briefing that General Odierno gives to General Petraeus. I sit in on it. And at that briefing, we discuss the movement, either forward or backward, of units to battalion level.

Now, near simultaneously, I have a staff—we have approximately 100 transition team members in the MOI and in the MOD, the joint headquarters. We do exactly the same thing for the two security institutions.

And then, once a month, we brief General Petraeus on institutional progress, or the lack of progress, thereby giving him the ability to see both ends of this security enterprise, the degree of tactical progress or the degree of institutional progress.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Akin.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My impression, just from having sat in these hearings for some considerable period of time, the first thing is that it seemed like the police sector was a lot harder than just the regular security forces. Somehow the Iraqis understood a soldier, but they didn't seem to understand the concept of police as much. So that seems to have been difficult all the way along the line.

Is that, like other things in Iraq, a little spotty, depending on your geography? For instance, the way the Marines in Anbar handled it, is that a little different than the way it is by the Army in Baghdad in the way that the police are used? Is it true that the police, particularly in a place like Ramadi, now, where the sheiks are heavily involved in that, that that is better?

And so, that is just the first question, just comment on police versus the other.

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The second question I have is, if you stand way back from what we have done, what has happened over a period of years is we have put a lot of Americans in contact with a lot of Iraqi people at all different levels of government and different kinds of professional positions. To a certain degree, are some of our philosophies of a little bit more peaceful, democratic kind of society, are they rubbing off over there in the long-term sense?

If we were to withdraw over some period of time, have we left something behind where they are going to be thinking a little bit differently?

I suppose I am asking you to speculate a little bit, but you are in a better position to do that than some of us are.

Thank you, sir.

General DEMPSEY. To the first one, sir, on the police and does it vary around the country, it certainly does. We say there is no template in the development of almost anything in Iraq.

I mean, as you know, the police are actually performing remarkably well in Mosul, for example, working side by side with Iraqis. There is only one U.S. combat battalion in Mosul, which is the second or third largest city, depending on what you believe about Basra.

And so, in the second or third largest city, you have police forces in Iraq in charge of local security, who call upon the army, the Iraqi army, if they have a problem, who, in turn, calls upon that one coalition battalion if they have a problem.

And that is, of course, where we would like to be throughout the country.

But, as you say, with police, what we have learned is there is no history in Iraq, and I might even say in the region—because I have traveled extensively in the region—of police that are what you and I would describe as a force that lives to protect and serve the population.

Police forces in the region are notably corrupt. And they get that way because, as we say, they live at the point of corruption.

The difference between building an army and building a police force is that an army is built with the intent that it will move around the country and it has a national fabric and it has national loyalties.

Police forces live locally. Their families live locally. They don't really have a sense of nation. They have a sense of local community, and all of the influences that are brought to bear.

So it has been very challenging.

But I would also say, Congressman, that all local influences are not negative. And as we see now playing out in Al Anbar, the local influences are starting to become something we can leverage positively.

The second part, sir, about are some of our values rubbing off on our Iraqi counterparts, I would say absolutely.

But in a situation where there is such levels of violence—levels of violence that, frankly, sometimes it is mind-numbing to me that they accept them. They do have a tolerance for violence that exceeds our ability to understand it.

In that environment, I think they crave security to the point where they will often sometimes wax nostalgic about the Saddam

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Hussein days. You will hear people say, "You know, we were a lot more secure and safe during the Saddam regime."

Of course, when you discuss that with them they quickly come to the conclusion that they are indeed better off today. But it is not without this certain nostalgia for efficiency and security that will take time for them to overcome.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, General.

Dr. Snyder.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dempsey, I met with—there is a group of, I think it is 54, Arkansas World War II veterans that have been in D.C. for the last 3 or 4 days. PBS is going to be airing a documentary about them in conjunction with the Ken Burns series on World War II.

But they brought these 54 men and women up here, and they went to Arlington and the World War II Memorial and had meetings. And I visited with a fair number of them over the last 3 or 4 days.

But when I think about the amount of time that you have put in on this war in Iraq and that your family has served along with you in your absence, I mean, it compares with, you know, the great American fights of the past. And I appreciate your service.

And I think sometimes we Americans in civilian life forget the burdens that are being borne as the years go by in this war on terrorism in both Afghanistan and Iraq. And so we appreciate your service.

On my first trip to Iraq, I was with Congressman Thornberry on a CODEL that he led. And we met with you when you were with the 1st Armored Division. And you gave a metaphor in describing how things were going which I stole and used in an abundance of speeches back home.

And what you said was that you felt like—and this was several years ago, now—you felt like that the American military, in conjunction with our allied forces, were pushing a big boulder up the hill and that progress was being made, that the boulder was indeed going up the hill.

The open question for you at that time was, will we actually get the boulder to the top and see it roll down the other side, or will something happen and that big boulder will come rolling back on top of us?

I think clearly we are not to the top of the hill. Is the metaphor still at work? Do you have a new metaphor? Or has it been rolling back down on top of us for the last couple years?

General DEMPSEY. I am sure I have other metaphors.

Dr. SNYDER. I would like to hear them. We are always looking for wisdom here.

General DEMPSEY. But the metaphor or Sisyphus may, in fact, be the right one still. And we have seen it roll backwards on us on occasion. It rolled back on me in 1st Armored Division in April of 2004 with the uprising of the Mahdi militia. I think it certainly rolled back on the entire effort in February of 2006 when the Samarra bombing took place.

And so those are two points at which I would absolutely say that this boulder that we are trying push up the hill rolled backwards.

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I think to both our credit and to our Iraqi brothers and sisters' credit, though, that no one has given up on it. I mean, we have still got our shoulders to that boulder, you know, rolling it up the hill.

If I sound, you know, cautiously optimistic here today, it may be that I have been there too long. I don't know. But in the process of being there this long I have come to gain a certain faith in Iraq that I, frankly, didn't have traveling in the rest of the region.

You may have heard me say, Congressman, that if it is in United States' national interest—and I will promise not to step on Mr. Kimmitt's equities here in terms of policy—but if it is in United States' interest to have a strategic partner in that part of the world, which is a very dangerous part of the world, situated with Iran, Syria, the volatile Mideast conflict, and this, let's face it, existence of radical Islam that believes itself to be completely—that their way of life is completely anathema to ours—if it is important to have a strategic partner in that part of the world, Iraq should be that partner.

It has oil, of course. But more important, it has water, it has agriculture, it has human capital, it has a very fine education system, and it has a history that is as rich as any in the world, and who understand that history.

And so I think that the metaphor applies. There will be times when this boulder rolls back. It is probably rolling back a bit right now in Baghdad. But I don't think it is going to roll over us, and I think we are going to be okay.

Dr. SNYDER. The question in my mind several years ago when we met in Baghdad, I had this picture of the boulder being fairly close to the top of the hill. And now I think there are great expanses of the American people think that the top of that hill is a long, long ways to go.

And I appreciate your comment about cautious optimism. I think in terms of what the American people are looking for and the work that you have been doing on this training is what is going to get us finally there, that we can declare this done.

We are going to go around several rounds. I wanted to ask one final question this round.

How do you see the quality and numbers and experience of our U.S. trainers, our troops that are doing the training? Any comments you have about that now. And we may want to expand on that as time goes by.

General DEMPSEY. Okay.

By the way, the answer to your first question there, sir, about is it closer or further away from the top of the hill, the real key for us, I think is to convince the American people that there is a point in time where we can stop doing the tactical job for them, we can stop running patrols, we can stop manning checkpoints. I think that that part of it is closer, far closer, than when you and I spoke a couple of years ago.

The institutional side, in other words, a mature institution that has a functioning pay, promotion, logistics, contracting sector, they are going to need some help in that for a long time.

It is probably worth noting that when I was in Saudi Arabia doing this program, I was there in year 28 and 29 of that program. But it is a program that works at the national level to help the

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government of Saudi Arabia build its architecture, not necessarily running security on the streets of Riyadh.

And I think that is where, it seems to me, we can see some progress. And I think that is probably what will shape our long-term relationship. But I defer to Mr. Kimmitt on that.

As far as the second part——

Dr. SNYDER. U.S. trainers.

General DEMPSEY. Yes, about the trainers, you know, we have actually worked through this in several different ways and have evolved over time.

Initially, they were all individual augmentees, many of whom were drawn out of the reserve component. And then we migrated to a process where they were still individual augmentees, but they were pulled into Fort Riley, Kansas, into a center of excellence, so there would be a common standard for the transition teams.

And now I think we are moving toward an evolution where the transition teams are what we would describe as out of hide, which is to say, as the Iraqi Security Forces become more mature, as the—you know, and what they really need is help not necessarily in knowing how to enter and clear a house, but rather they need help in how to perform administrative and logistics functions, I think you will see that that evolution will move into the future.

So my report to you is that we continue to learn as we go, not only in how to build them but how to partner with them.

Mr. MEEHAN. The gentleman from Florida, Mr. Miller.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Continuing the metaphor of the boulder and the mountain, General, could it also be that the boulder has not rolled back, but maybe we got over whatever that peak was and found out, when we got to the other side, that there may have been a higher hill on the other side?

General DEMPSEY. Well, that is the risk of metaphors, I think, Congressman. They are never-ending.

Sure, that could very well be. You know, there certainly is reason to be concerned about the depth of what was always, probably, some historical animosity, under the surface, between the Shia and the Sunni.

But what I have been struck by is that there is just as large a body in Iraq who have, in the past, intermarried. In fact, many of my Iraqi counterparts are of one sect and married to another sect.

There is actually a history in Iraq of intermarriage among the sects that is clearly somewhat retarded now, or slowed or discouraged, perhaps, even, by families, but it is there. And I don't think it would take too much progress to give them hope that they could return to that.

But, sure, there are other hills, potentially, to navigate here, as we have discovered recently.

Mr. MILLER. As you move to your new position at CENTCOM, I would be interested in hearing from you what your recommendations may be to Admiral Fallon, in regard to the CPA's problems, I think, if you would, that they had in disbanding the army, de-Baathifying the government, and allowing so many young men to become unemployed.

Your comments?

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General DEMPSEY. Well, actually, I would really rather defer to the way you phrased it at the beginning. I probably ought to share those with my new boss before I share them with you, actually.

Mr. MILLER. Will you come back and share them with us after you share them with the admiral?

General DEMPSEY. I will. Despite what you may think, I have never been loath to come back to the Congress, because my wife lives at Fort Belvoir, so it was always an opportunity to say hello to my wife.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you, General.

Mr. Kimmitt, if you would, we talk about the United States and partnership with Iraq, and if there were a precipitous withdrawal from Iraq by United States and coalition forces, who would you think the new partner with Iraq would be if we were not there?

Mr. KIMMITT. Well, sir, I think the first question would be, if there was precipitous withdrawal and created a security vacuum inside that country, the real question is who would fill that. And it would probably be filled by both sides of the border in terms of the Sunni Arabs as well as the Shia Persians.

It is clear that taking a look at whose security is at risk from an unstable Iraq—which is exactly what would happen should there a precipitous withdrawal—there would be numerous countries in the region that would feel their security interests at risk and possibly feel the need to preemptively or positively get involved inside that country.

One could imagine that—well, I think we could, sort of, do a complete walk around the neighbors and see that each of one of those countries would have a stake in trying to, if not re-establish order, at least take a stake inside the conflict.

It would not, to my mind, be unlike what we saw in the early 1990's in Bosnia, where the Serbs were heavily involved, the Croats were heavily involved and external forces were heavily involved as well.

So that is one of the reasons that we continue to seek a conditions-based handover of security responsibilities to the people of Iraq themselves, characterized predominantly by the work that General Dempsey and General Petraeus are doing with regards to the Iraqi Security Forces. Give them the time, give them the chance, give them the opportunity to take on this responsibility so that at that time when they can take over more and more of the responsibility, our forces become redundant.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you.

The gentlewoman from California, Mrs. Davis.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you very much for being here, General Dempsey and Secretary Kimmitt.

And particularly I am delighted to welcome your wives here as well. We know that our men and women in uniform and their families have really been the sole sacrificers of this war. And I want to thank you for that.

I think that Chairman Skelton mentioned briefly in his remarks, and I wonder if you could speak to that, the situation in Al Anbar and the fighting with coalition forces of the Sunni tribesmen.

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Could you tell us a little bit more about how you see that working, actually? And, in fact, are there situations where you wonder, you know, who in fact they are actually fighting for? What are the challenges, liabilities and benefits?

General DEMPSEY. Congresswoman, this is one where I think I would be happy to speak candidly with you about what is happening and some of the challenges and some concerns. But I think that probably would be best done in closed session.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Okay. Then let me turn for a second to the metrics. You mentioned and I know were quoted in the National Journal as saying that somewhere the annual attrition rate is about 15 to 18 percent in the army and 20 to 22 percent in the police.

What do we know about that attrition? And what in fact happens to those individuals? Are we able to track them?

I was a little surprised by the numbers as well, because on this committee we have tried very hard to get a real handle on, how do you get those numbers?

I know there are some biometrics that are being put into place now. But what do we know about the folks who don't return? And, in fact, do we know that they actually are fighting with militias or against the U.S. and coalition forces?

General DEMPSEY. Yes, ma'am. I would describe accountability of people and accountability of equipment as things that have gotten better over time; that there has been an evolution of improvements—not a revolution—an evolution of improvements in personal accountability and equipment accountability over time.

In my early days in Iraq in 2003, we were quite interested just simply to get some Iraqis on the street with us and procured weapons for them or captured weapons and gave them to them. We were paying them out of CERP in those days, as you recall.

But there quite simply wasn't any accountability in those early days. No accountability, fundamentally, because there was no Iraqi Ministry of Defense, for example, to tie it to.

Over time, we have introduced automated databases that now give us the ability to, to some degree of accuracy—not yet where we need it to be—to compare payroll data, for example, to data that we get from the MTTs in the units themselves.

And by the way, in the era before MTTs, we could issue things to the division level, but as it went beyond that, we lost some visibility on it.

So, I mean, this has been, again, one of those places where we and they have gotten better and better, to the point where now the payroll generally in the MOD matches the people we believe are actually serving.

In the MOI, however, the payroll exceeds the trained and equipped number by tens of thousands. In other words, there are tens of thousands more policemen serving in Iraq than have been trained and equipped by us, and it is one of the things we are working with the MOI to get a handle on in 2008, or help him get a handle on.

Now, as for the crosschecking of data, we made an investment about six months ago to make sure that the vetting instruments we used when we brought police and army in could be cross-referenced

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with the vetting information at other places, so we could determine how many of those that we, at some point, trained and equipped ended up in custody down the road.

We are very close to being able to do that. We can do it manually now, but we want to be able to do it in a database. That doesn't exist, though, for people who might end up in an Iraqi prison.

So it is something we are aware of. I couldn't give you a number right now, but we are, with our Iraqi counterparts, working to add some granularity to that process.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. And then you are able to track individuals that have been detained or killed who, in fact, were trained by the coalition forces as far as you know?

General DEMPSEY. No, I wouldn't say that just now, if you were to give me a name of someone in a prison, I could not run it backwards to find out if he at one time had been in security—I mean, I could do it manually. At entry, they provide four names. There are some things that make it pretty difficult to track people that way. But we are very close to having a database that will allow us to do that.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you.

If I could just turn for a second to the issue of protection for the Iraqi soldiers and police, but more for the military, we have had some hearings here where we looked at the protection vests, the SAPI plates worn by our military. And I understood from that hearing that in fact that equipment is not being used by the Iraqis.

How would you characterize the equipment that they are using? And if they had better equipment, would there be fewer deaths among the Iraqis, the soldiers that are fighting?

General DEMPSEY. Yes. Yes, ma'am.

Again, this is a thing where we continue to make progress and they make progress. They are all outfitted with individual kit, we call it OCIE, that is similar to what we would issue an American soldier. They have body armor. They have helmets. As you know, they are armed with personal weapons. As you may not know, they have just taken the decision to procure U.S. personal weapons.

But their individual kit that we procure for them is of a standard consistent with ours; not quite the same, and we have the best kit in the world. I think you would actually be heartened to hear that.

Now, on their own, though, they have taken some donations from other nations that in some cases has provided lesser protection. They have also procured some things on their own before we got them into this foreign military sales program with us.

They made, frankly, some very poor decisions in procurement and got some very substandard equipment. That stuff is still out there. And it will take some time for them to replace.

I would say, though, that, for example, they have approximately 2,700 up-armored Humvees now that are of the same standard as ours. They have several thousand armored personnel carriers, all of which have armor protection similar to ours; not exactly the same in every case.

Again, we have the best equipment in the world. But they are far more protected than they have ever been.

And by the way, that means ever been ever, even before we went to Iraq in 2003.

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Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you.
Thank you, Mr. Chair.
Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Conaway.
Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
General Dempsey, you were talking a second ago about the MOI and the payroll. What I heard you say was that there are tens of thousands more serving than have been trained.
Did you say being paid than have been trained? Or is it that the payroll is inflated by folks who aren't really there?
General DEMPSEY. Well, there are certainly, we call them ghost policemen. There is a percentage that we believe—and I could give you an approximation of that.
Let me give you the background, sir. It might help you understand it.
When Minister Jabr was the MOI, we noted that the police forces, particularly in the province, had a tendency to overhire, more or less as a jobs program.
Mr. CONAWAY. Okay.
General DEMPSEY. And so we got him to essentially fix the end state of the Iraqi police forces in the provinces based on international law enforcement standards in counterinsurgency environments. And, I mean, I could drill further down in this, if you like.
But the bottom line is, that is how we came up with the number 135,000, spread across 18 provinces, based on the population in the provinces and the threat in the provinces. Higher threat area, more police: Al Anbar province, 11,330, for example; Baghdad, 25,000.
What happened, though, is because there is still in Iraq, as a relatively young government, there is still some disagreement between the powers of the center and the powers of the province. Some of the provincial governors, in particular in places of religious significance like Karbala and Najaf, grossly overhired policemen.
And it only became apparent to the minister and to us when the payroll rolled in and they put a demand on the system that we hadn't recognized before.
And, again, we are getting better at databases, automation. So we have been getting better and better visibility on what is really out there, to the point where now there is something between 60,000 and 75,000 policemen on the payroll over the authorization and untrained by us.
And so the question, now, for the Iraqi government is, what do they do about it?
Of that 60,000 to 74,000, certainly 10 to 20 percent of it will be ghosts that are just there for payroll purposes.
Mr. CONAWAY. Okay. Well, that is a better answer than 100 percent of them being ghosts. I am hoping that those 50,000 that are there, that are trained, are actually, maybe, doing something. But thank you. I appreciate that.
General DEMPSEY. Yes, sir.
Mr. CONAWAY. Given as I got here late, I really don't want to replow previous ground. Is there anything that either one of you wished you had said during your testimony this morning, that I will now give you a chance to take whatever time you want to say anything else that we didn't question you about or——
General DEMPSEY. Yes, and, sir, thank you for that.

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There was a question earlier, and I don't recall who asked it, but I think it is important to note, in the MOI, that we assist in the training and equipping, mentoring and advising of both national level police forces and local police forces.

We discussed the local police forces at length. The national police forces of Iraq—we have had some real challenges with the national police.

Literally, this is a force envisioned to be something like a gendarmerie, approximately 24 battalions of them organized into eight brigades now, that can project police power across provinces, as provinces go to this thing called provincial Iraqi control.

So, in theory, if the province is being secured by local police and they have a problem that exceeds their ability, the governor requests assistance; the MOI sends the national police. If it exceeds their capability, then they call in the army. And so there is this tiered response.

And we think the national police are making progress, though it is the single organization in Iraq with the most sectarian influence and sectarian problems.

And then the other national police force are the border, the directorate of border enforcement, approximately 28,000 of them. They oversee a 3,100-kilometer border, 14 land ports of entry, soon to be 15—we are opening one in Al Qaim—and organized with 258 border forts and approximately 143 annexes that sit between them.

So those are the national level police forces.

Thank you for that, Congressman.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Kimmitt, anything you want to say?

I yield back. Thank you.

Mr. MEEHAN. I thank the gentleman.

The gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Andrews.

Mr. ANDREWS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank both of you for your service.

And welcome home, General Dempsey. I know you have been on the road for a very long time. I had the chance to meet with you in Iraq. And please understand how profoundly grateful we are to you for your sacrifice and commitment.

And to Mrs. Dempsey, thank you for your forbearance and the struggle the entire family deals with when someone serves overseas. We appreciate you very, very much, and wish you well in your new post.

On page three of your testimony, General, you indicate that we have trained 188,300 objective civil security forces as of December 2006. Does that mean that is the total number we have trained or the total number that are deployed somewhere in Iraq?

General DEMPSEY. It is the former, Congressman. It is the total number we have trained.

Mr. ANDREWS. Okay. And I know I am re-covering some of the ground that Ms. Davis and others covered, but I wanted to do that to get my own take on this.

Do we know how many of the 188,300 are presently working as police officers in Iraq?

General DEMPSEY. In January of this year, we did what we would call in our system a personnel asset inventory. And of those

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police forces that we just cited, we estimated that we had lost over the course of the previous 18 months about 32,000 of them.

Mr. ANDREWS. Okay. So we would be down to 156,000 or so. Do we know where the 32,000 went?

General DEMPSEY. We know which ones were killed in action, because they put a demand on the system through a thing that they call martyrs pay.

Mr. ANDREWS. About how many were that?

General DEMPSEY. We believe that we had lost approximately 8,000 to 10,000 killed in action on the police side.

Mr. ANDREWS. That would leave maybe 22,000 living. Where did they go?

General DEMPSEY. We knew that another portion of them, probably another 5,000, had gone, had deserted, essentially, had failed to repair.

Mr. ANDREWS. And then of the, say, 17,000 or so, what about them?

General DEMPSEY. Probably another 6,000 to 8,000 of those were so severely wounded that they could no longer serve, but were being maintained on the rolls so they had a pay——

Mr. ANDREWS. Appropriately so.

General DEMPSEY [continuing]. Because there is no retirement system.

Mr. ANDREWS. Appropriately so. So that would leave us with maybe 7,000 or 8,000 others. Where are they?

General DEMPSEY. They are unaccounted for.

Mr. ANDREWS. Okay.

Is there any basis—and this is not an accusatory question; it is a clinical one. Because I, frankly, don't think you have been responsible for trouble or failure. I think we have, the people that made the policy.

But is there any basis to believe that some portion of those 6,000 or 7,000 are fighting our people?

General DEMPSEY. Well, because they are unaccounted for, we just don't know, Congressman.

Mr. ANDREWS. Yes. But, well, are they totally unaccounted for?

Or, let me ask you a specific question. I think you answered this a minute ago. Are we able to go into prisons and find people who have been arrested and work backwards from there and see how many, if any, of them are people we paid to train?

General DEMPSEY. We are able to attempt to do it manually. And in almost every case, we have been thwarted at some point along the way by mostly the tyranny of a manual system. And so——

Mr. ANDREWS. Why are these data not in a computerized databank?

General DEMPSEY. As I mentioned earlier, Congressman, they are actually in the database. At this point in time, the databases don't talk to each other. And I have invested some money within the last 6 months to try to make that happen.

Mr. ANDREWS. How much have we spent since 2003 on databases to deal with the training of Iraqi police?

General DEMPSEY. I would have to take that one for the record.

But, for example, in the Ministry of Defense we have a system called HRIMS, Human Resources Information Management Sys-

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tem, that is state-of-the-art and should give us the ability to do many of the things you are talking about.

Let me take that one for the record.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Kimmitt, do you know that answer?

Mr. KIMMITT. No, sir. As General Dempsey said, I think we need to take that one for the record to give you the precision that you are looking for in that answer.

Mr. ANDREWS. When we bought those systems, who designed the bid specs, and was there a competitive bidding process?

I mean, you understand, General—again, I don't accuse you. You work with the tools we gave you. But we have spent a huge amount of money. And we spent it on databases that can't tell us by computer operations whether people who are sitting in Iraqi prisons are people we paid to train. Now, I hope the answer is none of them are, but I doubt it.

And let me ask one other question. For how many of the 188,300 that we trained did we have biometric data that we collected when they went into the training process?

General DEMPSEY. All of the—100 percent. We would have some biometric data, either through AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Identification System), which is a fingerprinting system——

Mr. ANDREWS. Yes.

General DEMPSEY. Even in the early days, we had AFIS. As we have progressed, we have actually begun to use retinal scans. So, again, that has been evolutionary.

Mr. ANDREWS. My time has expired.

But, Mr. Chairman, what I would ask if the witnesses could supplement the record by telling us what data the Department of Defense has as to what happened to these 188,300 people given their biometric identity. How many are dead? How many are wounded? How many are in prison? How many are still serving on the police force?

So we can get some notion—this is not just a theoretical interest, obviously, that we are going to have some continuing national stake in the training and quality of these police officers. Irrespective of our involvement, we are going to have some stake in that.

And, General, I think you have done an extraordinarily good job with extraordinarily bad tools and policies to work with. And I thank you for doing that.

Mr. MEEHAN. The gentleman from Maryland, Mr. Bartlett.

Mr. BARTLETT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

If we were to ask the Iraqis how many trained and equipped police and how many trained and equipped security forces they needed so that we could leave, would they give you that number?

General DEMPSEY. I think, Congressman, that they would answer in a relatively unsophisticated way.

For example, we are in those discussions with them all the time. If you were to ask their chief of defense forces, he would say, "We need a brigade in every province or a division in every region." I mean, they have this former regime notion that bigger is better. And in some cases, by the way, in a counterinsurgency environment, bigger is better.

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But I would suggest to you that what MNSTC–I does as a living is try to help shape the answer to that question so that they can get what they need, but not more.

In fact, part of my mission statement is to build security forces that will be sustainable by the government of Iraq over time. So there is a degree of fiscal reality. We know what their budget is. It was $32 billion last year. We know what the International Monetary Fund will allow them to spend in the security sector. And we bumped them right up against it so that they can sustain, over time, what we are building with and for them.

Mr. BARTLETT. If we were to ask you how many of these forces they needed so that we could leave, what would you tell us?

General DEMPSEY. What I would tell you, sir, is that we had a target for the end of 2006, which I have mentioned previously. We made an adjustment because one of the assumptions we made early on, in my first tour, was we would build security forces for a short war, partnered with us, against an environment of decreasing levels of violence, because we believed we could help them drive the levels of violence down, and therefore we needed this many security forces to take over responsibility.

And the end of 2006 or the middle of 2006, we took a look, and levels of violence were not coming down. In fact, they were increasing. We also saw some of the problems with units deploying around the country, and we made adjustments. And with our Iraqi counterparts and with their funding, largely, we have got them on a path to grow an additional 45,000 military forces this year.

We just recently completed another assessment looking to 2008. The reason we did it now is both because General Petraeus is adapting his strategy, and we also did it now because the government of Iraq's budget cycle runs June through August, and we want to make sure that we inform their budget and what we think they need in 2008.

I am not yet prepared to give you a number, but I would say, as I said in my statement, that it is pretty clear to us that for them to take over responsibility in the face of declining coalition presence, at some point, they need to be slightly bigger.

Mr. BARTLETT. General, our constituents are very uneasy with terms like "stick it out" and "stay the course." They have no idea what that means. If that means we are going to be there 50 years from now, like we are in South Korea, they have got no stomach for that, sir.

Americans would like to have on their refrigerator a checklist that says how many of these forces we need and what laws need to be passed, and they want to check those off month by month so that they know when this thing will be over.

I would hope that the administration would focus on developing those numbers so that our citizens can have that assurance that there will be an end to this.

I would like to yield the remainder of my time to the ranking member. Thank you.

Mr. AKIN. Thank you.

I would just maybe "me too" what Congressman Bartlett just said a little bit. My sense from a marketing point of view as just a plain old American—and, of course, I have had a chance to get

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over to Iraq a couple of times—but our sense is the media keeps saying, "Well, somebody got killed, another couple of people got killed today." We hear that over and over again. And one of the things that we are not provided news-wise with is, "These are the to-dos, and we are checking things off the to-do list."

When we go to Iraq, we have a sense that there is progress. It is slower than we would like it to be, but relatively speaking, considering the conditions in the country, it is pretty significant progress. But we don't really know what those items are and how to check them off, so just wanted to reiterate that.

The second thought was, it has also been my sense that our difficulties over there have been less military than they were more in the nation-building kinds of things.

Like, you have some police; you are trying to get them kicked into shape, but there are no courts, there are no jails. You have problems with you can't wire transfer money, which isn't really a military thing to build the wire transfer system in banking. You have to run oil pumping facilities and oil storage and transfer and all that. You have electric and sewer and all those things, which are really, in a way, nonmilitary.

My sense has been that if there have been problems, it has been more in the nonmilitary sector almost than it was in the military. Would you want to respond to that?

General DEMPSEY. I will ask Mr. Kimmitt to assist me on this.

I will say, as it affects my job, though, I can say that one of the things we have been dealing with since we got there in April of 2003 is that the Iraqi people believed that, because we are who we are, that we would make their lives immediately better in those very sectors you are speaking: electricity and fuel and economic development.

And certainly, I think we will have to reflect on the fact that, because those sectors have languished, it has affected the security sector. In other words, I think there are certainly some parts of the population that have lashed out because they haven't realized those dreams.

You want to add anything?

Mr. KIMMITT. Well, Congressman, I think your point is exactly right, that to the extent that the military is bearing a significance on the operations, it is oftentimes important to pull back and recognize that the solution and the long-term progress inside of Iraq is really going to be less about the military consequences and more about, "Is this society prepared to move on?" to dismiss not only the past of Saddam but any longstanding differences between the major constituent groups, the Shia, the Sunni, the Kurds.

We are not pleased, at this point—and this is a subject that we will probably talk about later on, either in the closed session or later on in the 9010 discussions.

We are certainly not pleased, at this point, that the space and time that the military has bought for the Iraqis themselves to take on the hard questions of reconciliation, that they haven't yet used this opportunity, and not recognizing that there is a difference, as General Petraeus has said many times, between the Baghdad clock and the Washington clock, the American clock.

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So we continue to work with not only the Iraqis, but also with our civilian counterparts, to try to accelerate the progress being made on the ground, not simply in terms of handing over provincial security control, but also in turning the society into one that is not constantly at each other's throats, and one that does not have a zero-sum mentality between the different sects.

But in many ways, we are talking about changing attitudes. We are talking about changing suspicions that have been held for many, many years. And as we have seen in many counterinsurgencies, and as we have seen in many peacekeeping operations, those take time. Those take a significant amount of efforts, both on the parts of the outside forces that are there to help, whether they are civilian or military forces, but also internal to that nation, to be able to elicit that dialogue between the different constituent groups that can lead to the reconciliation that, at the end of the day, is going to spell success, not the military victories but the civilian victories.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you.

The gentleman from South Carolina, Mr. Spratt.

Mr. SPRATT. General Dempsey, I last saw you a week or 2 ago in Baghdad, and we welcome you back to the States. Not only that, we thank you for your dedicated service to our country.

I observed, on one of the charts you showed us in Baghdad, that all of the timelines for the completion of objectives tended to end somewhere in 2008 if not sooner.

You have 119 battalions up at some level of operational capability. Ninety-four are taking tactical leads in their areas of responsibility. As I understand it, all but four or five provinces are hopefully likely to be under local force control, indigenous force control, by the end of this calendar year.

They are still short on logistics at the command level, particularly field-grade level. You simply can't grow overnight lieutenant colonels and majors, so that will have to be accomplished over time. Probably some additional embedded American troops would help their maturation, professionalization.

But, as you look at those timelines, you have to ask, "Isn't it about time we talked about a transition?" You used that word in your testimony. You used it in an interview with the National Journal, saying, "To some extent, I am a fan of transition. After we move to protect the Iraqi people with this surge, at some point we will need to go back to transitional responsibilities."

You also make the observation in your testimony that, "This is a balancing act. There are several different values here. If you turn over responsibility too soon, you could falter and fail. But if you hold on too long and don't turn over responsibility, you will never know what the units can do and they will become over-defended."

I think that is what Abizaid and Casey and others have said about increasing our forces relative to theirs in the last year or so. They were concerned that the Iraqi troops would not be encouraged or challenged to rise to the task before them.

Do you think it is time to have a transition plan, both for our purposes? We have 20 brigades on the ground, we have long-term security issues to be concerned about.

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General DEMPSEY. Well, as I told you when you were in Baghdad, Congressman, I am the one in Iraq that had the T in his title, the T being transition. And so, everything that MNSTC–I has ever done is done with an eye on, "How do we transition it over to Iraqi control?"

I think I would respond to your question by saying I don't think it is an either/or proposition. There is ongoing transition even in the middle of this—not the middle, but even at the beginning of the surge, the institutional side of our enterprise is actively seeking to pass responsibility to Iraqi control.

I think, tactically, the surge has conceded that the population has to be protected for a period of time to give some breathing space for political progress. But at the institutional side, I can tell you there has not been any slowing of our effort to transition responsibility.

And, yes, we should constantly be looking to transition all sectors of this thing, tactical and institutional, to Iraqi control.

Mr. SPRATT. The president a couple of years ago, formulated in a very easy-to-understand way, he said, "As soon as we stand up their forces, we will stand down our forces."

Would you agree we are approaching that point in time when it is ready to stand up their forces, give them operational responsibility for the security of their own country and then we begin a gradual withdrawal ourselves or pull back while we push them forward?

General DEMPSEY. As you know, Congressman, my part of the equation is to get the Iraqi Security Forces to where we believe and I believe, and now Lieutenant General Jim Dubik believes, that they can accept that responsibility. There are parts of the country right now where that is possible. Not only that, there are parts of the country right now where it is occurring.

I think the question will be best deferred to General Petraeus's assessment that he will make before this body in the late summer. Because the question becomes, has the surge been able to get at the belts and get at the parts of Iraq that, frankly, we haven't been able to address pre-surge? And as a result, can the security forces, given what I just mentioned about their challenges, can they take over responsibility?

I think you will find that in parts of the country, the answer to that question will be yes. And I think you will find that in parts of the country, the answer will be no.

Mr. SPRATT. Just when I looked at your chart and everything sort of ended in 2008, it begged the question in my mind, what is next? And it suggested that a transition of some kind, a significant transition would be next.

There was something in the paper this weekend, in The Post about the Pentagon at least making plans for three different strategies. One is to go long. The other is to go home. The other is to go small, which I guess means more embedding, more partnering.

Would you discuss those options, to the extent you can?

General DEMPSEY. Well, sir, we had a little conversation about metaphors earlier in the testimony. And so, since these appear to be football metaphors, I will now lateral that question to Mr. Kimmitt. [Laughter.]

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Mr. KIMMITT. Congressman, I think that the article you are referring to was one from some time ago. And I believe that that was from some comments that were coming out of Baghdad as they were conducting an assessment of some of the options that they were looking at.

Earlier, the chair mentioned that General Petraeus was conducting a joint strategic review of the situation on the ground, along with Ambassador Crocker. It is working its way up. The secretary of defense has not yet been briefed on that, on that——

Mr. SPRATT. Is it originating in the Pentagon? Or does the Central Command have a central role to play in the formulation of this, given the fact that this is its command?

Mr. KIMMITT. Well, it is certainly the case that the chain of command goes from Multi-National Forces-Iraq through Central Command to the Department of Defense and the joint staff.

So certainly Admiral Fallon will be an integral part of this. It is my understanding that some discussion has already been held between Admiral Fallon and General Petraeus in terms of where the strategy is being viewed. And I think that, as any military officer would do, he would brief his boss before he briefed his boss's boss. And I think that is where we are at this point.

Mr. SPRATT. Thank you.

Mr. MEEHAN. The gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Gingrey.

Dr. GINGREY. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

General Dempsey, I am going to address this question to you. Based on current reporting, it is difficult to obtain accurate figures for the actual number of the Iraqi soldiers that are present for duty.

And the March 2007 Defense Department report advised that the actual number of present-for-duty soldiers is about one-half to two-thirds of the 153,800 total. I guess that is due to scheduled leave. But some of it is absent without leave and downright attrition.

This uncertainty, between 50 percent and 67 percent, is pretty wide, 17 percent spread, are over, if my math is correct, 20,000 soldiers in an ambiguous state. And, actually, it is tantamount to admitting that we don't have a confidence in our knowing where five brigades of the Iraqi army are at any one point in time, if you do the math, in the 20,000.

So the question is, the wide variations in DOD reporting on the actual number of Iraqi soldiers present for duty, with estimates ranging from one-half to two-thirds, why this amount of uncertainty in the number that are actually missing?

General DEMPSEY. It has to do, Congressman, with some of the things we have learned about their reluctance to report, literally. You know, the reporting process has been transitioned over to Iraqi control. So they report on their own strengths. They report on their payroll data.

And what we have found is—I will just use two examples. When we receive a report that just doesn't seem to us to be reasonable, we will confront them. And oftentimes an Iraqi commander will either under-report because he knows if he reports what he has got he may not get any more; this is, after all, a nascent chain of command. Or he will over-report so that he gets a payroll share more than he deserves, and thereby pocket it.

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The instances of the latter are way down from 2006. In 2007, we have actually been pretty pleased with the reporting process, and we think it is progressing.

The other thing we have learned is, when we started to move units around the country, which is a very positive thing—I mean, when we told the Iraqi army that we needed an extra nine battalions, three brigades in Baghdad for Fardh Al-Qanoon, the first shot at that, as I told you, Congressman, was a real problem for us. They came down at less than 50 percent strength. And many of them, 20 percent, refused to come at all.

We learned from that. Both we learned and our Iraqi counterparts learned, and have made adjustments to the point where now, when asked to move into places like Baghdad, with a system in place that trains them to do so; gives them a monetary stipend; issues an order that tells them how long they will be there; prepares the gating to welcome them and give them billeting and so forth—things that we take for granted in our Army—the last installment of that rotation was very positive.

But they still leave behind approximately 25 percent of their strength to either guard their facilities, which is a natural instinct, or to make sure that they don't leave their local communities uncovered.

This army, as a deployable army for the entire nation, is somewhat of a new concept for them. Even in the former regime, there were several units that were expected to deploy, the Republican Guard, but the rest of the army was largely territorial and fixed inside of certain regions.

So we are learning. They are learning. The accountability is getting better. But they have tactical and they have strategic vulnerabilities. Reporting is a tactical vulnerability for the Iraqi army, no question.

Dr. GINGREY. Well, General, what more can we do about that, though? This is a huge problem. And particularly, as you mentioned, some of it could be fraud on the part of the commander and over-reporting.

What, specifically, can you tell the committee that we have put in place to try to get accurate numbers and get them to show up?

General DEMPSEY. There are two things. One is rather obviously; the other is a technological application.

The rather obvious one is, we have to get their leaders, their senior leaders, as interested in this problem as we are.

The first couple of units that came to Baghdad at 50 percent, we were very upset about that. At that time, it was General Chiarelli, General Casey and myself. But, frankly, the senior military leaders of the Iraqi government were kind of pleased that they had gotten 50 percent to come, because in their mind, this was such a change in culture that they were surprised they got what they got.

So we have to get them as interested in this as we are, and we are.

The technological issue is this system I described to you as the Human Resources Information Management System. It is a personnel database that right now goes to Iraqi division level. We are going to push it to Iraqi brigade level by the end of the year. And eventually, in early 2008, we will get it to battalion level.

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And once we have them accepting of an automated database—there are some that are fighting against the automated database for obvious reasons. As soon as you automate it, it is subject to scrutiny, and they are not exactly sure they want that kind of scrutiny. But the more enlightened of them, and the ones we tend to try to empower, understand that it is going to be a powerful tool for them.

Dr. GINGREY. Thank you.

General Dempsey, in reviewing the May of 2007 unclassified Transition Readiness Assessments from the Ministry of the Interior transition team on its ministry, it evaluates the ministry at the highest tier, TRA–1, in command and control. This signifies that the ministry can provide effective command and control for police operations across Iraq.

Given the limited transition team presence in the provinces, how much confidence do you have in this particular assessment?

General DEMPSEY. Yes, I am actually quite confident, and here is why.

Although we only get into about a third to a half of the police stations, we are embedded at the provincial level—that is to say, at the Provincial Joint Coordination Centers—with the provincial directors of police, all 18 of them, on a one-for-one basis.

And so we have PTTs, police transition teams, at the provincial level who, in turn, report to the National Coordination center, the NCC, who, in turn, reports to the National Operations Center, the NOC.

And we are embedded in each of those nodes, and so we have actually seen them exercise command and control from center to province level on several occasions: problems in Diwaniya, problems in Amara, problems in Baqouba, problems in Samarra. And their reporting system and the command and control that they have exerted is actually quite efficient.

Sometimes, they will intentionally bypass it. You know, the cell phone is both the boon and bane of my existence for command and control in Iraq, because they oftentimes will call directly down and lose visibility on the process.

But quite confident based on what you just said.

Dr. GINGREY. Given the accounts of endemic problems in the Iraqi police service, and even some of the members of our committee—I led a CODEL to Iraq. We had an opportunity to get over to Jordan at the JIPTC (Jordanian International Police Training Center) police training center.

And as impressive as the facility was, what was stunning was the fact that the 50,000 or so Iraqi police service people who were trained, nobody knew how many of them were in Iraq, nobody knew whether they showed up for work, nobody really had an assessment or who we were training, frankly, because we didn't keep track of them.

And it just seems, given what we were able to see relative to the police service and all of the endemic problems that we hear about on a continual basis, that struck me in the report as—it made me ask, "How could it be accurate?"

General DEMPSEY. Yes, as you know, JIPTC is a very fine institution with great entrance requirements and so forth. I am sure

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that the perspective of INL (Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement)—INL runs JIPTC for us, and has and continues to—their perspective was, we lost complete visibility when a policeman graduated. It is just not the case.

I can tell you that we knew exactly what provinces—because they were recruited from provinces to go to JIPTC—we know what provinces they went back to. We know where the provincial director of police assigned them.

But I will concede, as I have earlier with other parts of this, that once they get to a local police station, that we are subject to the whims of the local police chief's reporting and payroll manipulations and so on and so forth.

And there is no database yet to in an automated way look down inside police stations. That is in train as well. There is a database for the MOI that is being put in place.

That also makes them uncomfortable, by the way. But——

Dr. GINGREY. But you would agree, General, given the hundreds of millions of dollars invested in that training operation, one would think that we would have a better idea, or at least they would have a better idea whether or not the police servicemembers that they trained showed up for work, whether they moved up, you would think there would be an assessment about whether the training put them in a better position to move up in rank.

General DEMPSEY. Sure.

Dr. GINGREY. It was stunning to all of us that there was no real assessment of where these police service personnel ended up and how they were doing.

General DEMPSEY. Yes, I do agree that we should and can continue to help them become better at those kind of tracking.

I would say, though, that our ability to provide trained police with the kind of skills—human rights, rule of law—to the provinces is certainly nothing to be underestimated. Again, the Iraqi police is something they have never been before, and that probably doesn't exist any place else in the region. That is why the police side of this is so extraordinarily difficult.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Akin.

Mr. AKIN. I have no further questions.

Mr. MEEHAN. Dr. Snyder.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Dempsey, I am going to take advantage of you being here and ask you somewhat broader questions. But they relate to what we have been talking about.

The first one, I wanted to hear your thoughts on one of the concluding comments you made. And, reading again from your opening statement that you delivered earlier, "The leaders and people of Iraq have not given up on themselves. We should not give up on them."

One of the issues that we have, I think that the American people have, the questions that are being asked is, "Well, what is the attitude of the Iraqi people toward America and our American troops and all our American civilians that are working there?"

There have been, what, I guess the number is approximately, a rough estimate, about 2 million Iraqis that have made a decision

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to have left Iraq and have gone to neighboring countries, discouraged with their potential future.

We certainly have seen in your time there, since you were first there, dramatic changes in some neighborhoods, as there has sectarian violence that have driven Shias out of mixed neighborhoods and Sunnis out of mixed neighborhoods. And I think General Petraeus has made public comments about some of the dramatic changes he has seen in neighborhoods since he has been there.

There certainly have been an abundance of polling data and discussions about what have been attitudes of a certain percentage of Iraqis toward American troops. And there has been an unfortunate willingness on the part of a significant percentage of Iraqis to say that it is okay to attack American troops.

So when I hear your statement that "leaders and people of Iraq have not given up on themselves, we should not give up on them." But it is certainly not a rosy scenario of everyone pulling in harness.

Would you amplify on the negative side of this and how the American people should see this over the long haul?

General DEMPSEY. I would say that my comment is more based on my personal perspective on what would be the indicators that Iraq had descended into something that was irretrievable as a national entity; for example, if the Council of Representatives stopped sitting. I mean, it may not be functioning very well, but it continues to meet.

The army sees itself as an institution of national unity, and the leaders of Iraq see the army as an institution of national unity and are not inclined to use it for sectarian purposes.

It is those kind of things where it seems to me the country still believes that it will be an integral whole and not fragmented into thirds or something less than thirds in the future. And that is really the point I wanted to make in that phrase.

There is no question, though, that—I heard General Abizaid say 3 years ago that there would undoubtedly, at some point in this mission, be a point of descending consent, where the population would either want to be completely in control of their own destinies or begin to blame us for the failures of their government.

And I think we have to be alert for that point. I don't think we are there yet. But we certainly need to keep our eye on that.

Dr. SNYDER. As all Americans listen to their daily news, if there has been a dramatic bombing, IED, suicide explosion somewhere in Iraq, that often will be in the top one or two or three stories: 30 killed with this bomb, 25 killed in this bomb.

I know that that is one of the metrics that you all follow. And I am not sure how to put that in perspective. I think there is one perspective amongst the American people that when we hear those kinds of numbers—another suicide bomb went off, killing 25 or 30 people, and that we know the ramifications that that has to those families and the resentments and tragedy that it brings, the tendency would be to say, "That is one more indication that it is not going well."

The other side of that—and as one who did not vote for the war resolution originally in October of 2002, I am looking at it, I think, the other way, which is, as I see these horrendous bombings going

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off in marketplaces, killing just indiscriminately women and children, and it seems like for those who have the perspective that there should be an immediate—you know, "Go home as quickly as possible," there really are some horrendous people doing horrendous damage to innocent people.

How do you see where these dramatic bombings fit into how we should view what is happening in Iraq and your view? As you began your statement earlier, you are cautiously optimistic.

General DEMPSEY. You know, as we try to determine who are our enemies and the enemies of the Iraqi government, we tend to see the high-profile mass-casualty suicide bombings as a tactic of the Sunni extremist. And I think that for a period of time, we maybe were more alone than in accord with the Iraqi government on, you know, what to do about that.

I would suggest that, as you see what is happening in Al Anbar province, it does seem that it has finally become apparent even to the Sunni population that those kind of attacks, which kill indiscriminately and kill not only Sunni but Shia and Kurd, and Christians for that matter as well, I think you are seeing them begin to come to the conclusion finally that their future should not be tied to the Sunni extremist element, and in particular al Qaeda in Iraq. I think that is a positive thing.

The tactic of the Shia extremist—and make no mistake about it, there is an extremist element of the Shia population as well. And their tactic seems to be the, as we describe it, extrajudicial killing or murders, where they will kidnap or move into a neighborhood and kill dozens on occasion.

And so as we have tried to describe it to the Iraqi government, it is absolutely necessary to address both sides of this spectrum of violence. Because if you address just one or the other, you tend to empower that other element.

And so I do think that the Iraqi government, Prime Minister Maliki in particular, understands that either extreme will not only undermine his government but eventually could potentially lead to the failure of Iraq.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you. My time is up.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mrs. Davis, did you have a——

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wonder if I could just go back for a second, because I understand that you wanted to speak about the challenges of working with the Sunni tribesmen separately and in closed session, but those reports have been in the media. And I wonder what you could tell us that would help us to understand, help the public to understand better what exactly is happening and what we are learning from that process.

General DEMPSEY. I can in general terms, Congresswoman. And I would be happy to do that.

First of all, I think that local initiatives in general—this particular one in Al Anbar province is certainly the high water mark for local initiatives—but local initiatives where the local populace decides to cast off this extremist element in their midst could be profoundly important.

But I say "could be profoundly important" because at some point for the government of Iraq to remain the central authority and to

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have the sole proponency on the use of force, which is what a civil society must have, the central government must be the sole proprietor of the use of force.

So what we have to do, quite simply, is we have to find a way to harness the power of these local initiatives but tie it back to the center. And that is what I will talk to you about in closed session. That absolutely has to happen.

But it could very well be, maybe already is, that this local recognition that the extremist elements on both sides have to be stopped that could be the most profound moment in this entire mission—could be.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Okay. I will leave it at that.

I think part of the confusion that people might have is that if they are able to be co-opted in working with the local tribes, what is the difficulty in trying to make that transition?

General DEMPSEY. Well, I think the difficulty, simply and in an unclassified way stated, is we have to make sure we know their motivations.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Okay. Thank you.

I think we have all tried to step back a little bit and look at the overall scene that is happening. And I see the parallel moves of training the Iraqi Security Forces alongside hopes for political reconciliation.

But I am wondering to what extent that hampers or has really stalled, in some cases, the opportunity to move as quickly as possible toward a transition.

How are even the Iraqi generals or the leadership that you are working with, how frustrating to them is the lack of movement for political reconciliation?

And in fact, I mean, we could be doing an exceptional job on one end but not working on the other. And to what extent does that affect their work?

General DEMPSEY. Well, I think I would say that they are acutely aware of our frustration at the pace of movement toward reconciliation. But that could be because I am not sure they see themselves capable of reconciliation in the near term. I think they may see themselves capable of accommodation in the near term.

And in my discussions with them, particularly those that take a very broad national and even, in some cases, regional view—men like Barham Saleh, for example, the minister for economics—I think they are looking for ways to make themselves more interdependent on each other as a first step, as a step toward accommodation, thereby setting the conditions eventually for reconciliation.

I mean, that is why this hydrocarbon law is so important. It makes the regions and the peoples of Iraq interdependent. And until they find some reason to be dependent on each other, it is going to be probably impossible to reconcile. It may not be impossible to accommodate, though.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time is up.

If we are going to go into closed session, I would appreciate that. Thank you.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Spratt.

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Mr. SPRATT. General Dempsey, it is my understanding that the Iraqi units that have shown up for duty in the surge initiative have typically shown up a battalion or two short than an ordinary brigade.

You said for justifiable reasons they felt it necessary to leave behind a battalion to defend the homefront. But in addition to that, it is my understanding they have been serving short tours like 90 days, a fairly short period of time before they rotate out.

Have these factors hampered the success of the surge initiative thus far?

General DEMPSEY. Not thus far, sir.

But General Odierno and I, who meet on a regular basis—he has expressed his concerns that the turbulence created by short deployment cycles for Iraqi units could begin to impact on his ability to accomplish what he needs to on the surge.

It is one of those cases—there are cases in this mission where the tactical necessity rubs uncomfortably against what to me is the strategic desire to, in this case, have deployability be a core competency of the Iraqi army.

In other words, for me as the transition commander, I like to think that this Iraqi army will see itself as a national entity and therefore be willing to move where it is needed, not just stay in one place.

And I also think we learn an enormous number of lessons when you move units around. You actually get a look at their strength, you get a look at their equipment, you get a look at their ability to lead as you move them around.

So there is a strategic transition objective in making deployability a core competency of this army that is rubbing uncomfortably against a tactical desire to keep them in place for stability. We are going to work that out, and he and I now—Lieutenant General Jim Dubik.

And it may be extending the period for some length or time, or it may eventually mean that we will build additional forces to remain in Baghdad permanently, but not lose the deployability piece. We can pull them out of the fight and send them to training in Basmaya Range, which is a very state-of-the-art training center we have built for them.

We have to make sure we keep them thinking about deployability, but we may be able to do so in a way that doesn't impact the surge. We are aware of that.

Mr. SPRATT. General Petraeus told us up in Mosul several years ago that one of the frustrations or dilemmas he confronted was for every bad guy or troublemaker he took off the streets, he risked antagonizing three or four, five others.

Wouldn't it be better to have an Iraqi face on the surge? And I take it that was part of the architecture of it, with one brigade matched by one partnered battalion of ours. And can you achieve this affect if you have the Iraqi troops rotating in and out on a fairly short-term basis?

General DEMPSEY. I don't know that I have heard that proposal, Congressman.

But, again, as long as the two of us accept that we have to make sure we have both things—the surge has to work, but we have to

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keep developing this army as a long-term institution—then I think we will be able to figure it out, or General Dubik and General Odierno and General Petraeus will.

Mr. SPRATT. Well, assuming we do achieve some success in Baghdad with this surge initiative, I would assume that some troops will have to stay behind for some time to come in order to stabilize that success and keep it riveted in place. And I would assume that we would prefer to have Iraqi troops do that as opposed to our occupation troops.

How do we achieve that? Are there sufficient Iraqi forces to come and take on this longer-term duty?

General DEMPSEY. As I have mentioned—I think I even mentioned it when you were with me in Baghdad—we have done an assessment and come to the conclusion that they do lack depth.

And I will define depth as the ability to maintain control of their battlespace in one part of Iraq, and move sufficient forces elsewhere to what we would describe as weight domain effort.

Baghdad is clearly the main effort right now. And we are trying to get Iraqi units to move to it, but they lack the depth to be able to keep hold of what they had and move.

And so that is why I have said that I think they will need to grow a few more forces—and I am not prepared to put a number on it yet—so that they can do that, exactly what you say.

In other words, everyone understands there will be a decline in U.S. presence at some point; and to include the Iraqis understand that. And they are beginning to ask me how much bigger should they grow in order to offset the declining U.S. presence. And the answer to that question is the pace at which we eventually decline.

And that part of what, I think, Admiral Fallon, General Petraeus, and our Iraqi counterparts have to sort through.

Mr. SPRATT. Thank you again, sir.

Mr. MEEHAN. Dr. Snyder.

Dr. SNYDER. General Dempsey, following up on what Mr. Spratt was talking about, as you look ahead to the future, and at a point when there will be changes in the role of U.S. troops, what is the number—I am trying to arrive at some kind of a number of U.S. troops that would need to be available to protect U.S. trainers.

Would we not foresee that, even 1 or 2 or 3 years down the line, that we will have U.S. trainers, still, perhaps, in an embedded role or a partnered role with Iraqi units, but would have to have U.S. troops in fairly substantial numbers, would they not, to be prepared to bail out those troops or support those troops and provide close air support?

I mean, it would have to be a significant number of U.S. troops, would it not?

General DEMPSEY. Well, I have not been involved in any—intuitively, what you just said——

Dr. SNYDER. But you are aware of how many Iraqi units you currently have——

General DEMPSEY. I am.

Dr. SNYDER [continuing]. In which U.S. troops are currently embedded.

General DEMPSEY. Correct.

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Dr. SNYDER. I assume you are still trying to get the trajectory up, in terms of number of U.S. trainers. And if we have trainers, I assume, sprinkled all over the country, providing this role everywhere, you couldn't just have some kind of rapid reaction force sitting outside of Baghdad. We would have to have substantial numbers of U.S. forces available at multiple places throughout the country, would we not?

General DEMPSEY. I think the answer to that question will be determined once we decide whether the current transition team concept will be the one that prevails, or if it adapts.

I mean, for example, when a unit reaches what you have seen described as level one, the question will be, does it still need a transition team? If the answer to that question is yes, then the commander on the ground will make that decision. Well, then you will have transition teams spread all over the country.

If, on the other hand, as they reach level one, those transition teams move to the next higher level—in other words, it, sort of, uncoils from bottom up, and that the transition team concept is more like a circuit rider program where a transition team rolls in and rolls out as necessary—then I think it changes the dynamic and it helps the commander answer that very concern.

Your point about sovereign airspace is a very good one, though. I mean, Iraq's air force will not be capable of protecting their sovereign airspace for probably the next 5 years. So the question that will be negotiated with the Iraqi government—and, again, I would ask if Mr. Kimmitt wants to comment—but that is all part of determining what is this long-term security relationship.

Dr. SNYDER. I am running out of time. I think the chairman has been very patient here.

Two final questions. The first one, if you could just comment real briefly: From the time you entered the Army and we were in the midst of a cold war, all your training was toward, how do you have massive ground forces and nuclear forces and all that kind of thing? We are in a different concept of what we think war is going to look like in the future.

And I continue to be concerned that those of us who are supportive of the military in this role and the military that we are not appreciating—that we really need to dramatically change the role of foreign language training in our military forces, that the business of sending a trainer over there with 1 month of somehow some part-time language training and some cultural sensitivity makes up for the fact that we really need to be people sending over there that, as part of their career, they had had several years of Arabic or several years of Farsi or several years of whatever the languages are, and that we are not working that at all into our training the way we ought to, in our promotion and—what are your thoughts about that, as somebody who looks ahead at the——

General DEMPSEY. Well, I think your point is correct.

I have been out of the country so long, I can't speak definitively for this, but I do believe that even when General Petraeus was at Fort Leavenworth and in conversations with the superintendent of our military academy on the Army side, there is in fact some emerging changes to our professional development model that would in fact require an officer from the time he was commissioned

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to begin that course of study into cultures, into languages and actually make them eventually gates that have to be navigated to be promoted.

I think you will see that, sir.

Dr. SNYDER. I am not so sure that it shouldn't be beginning in boot camp with our basic enlisted folks, that this is just going to be part of your life as a military soldier.

May I ask one final question, Mr. Chairman?

Would you respond to the soundbite that we hear again in the great American debate going on about America's role in the war in Iraq? When you hear the phrase, "America should not be refereeing a civil war," how do you respond to that? And how do you see the role with regard to the sectarian violence——

General DEMPSEY. You know, without getting into the semantics of whether it is or is not, the way I would respond is, I think we do what we have to do in parts of the world that are important to us.

And I hearken back, Congressman, to the fact that, at least from my personal perspective, Iraq is very important. A stable Iraq as a strategic partner in that part of the world, which is undoubtedly the most dangerous part of the world for our nation for at least the next 25 years—again, in my personal opinion—whatever is there, I think we deal with it, because the Nation is important to us.

Dr. SNYDER. Thank you for your time today and your testimony and your service and the service of Mrs. Dempsey.

Secretary Kimmitt, thank you.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you, Dr. Snyder.

I would like to continue our practice of allowing our subcommittee staff members here an opportunity to ask questions. So I would first like to turn to Mr. John Kruse of our subcommittee staff.

Mr. KRUSE. Thank you, sir.

General, my question is concerning the 2006 Joint Campaign Plan and the April Assigned Campaign Plan by Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus. Which one were you operating under when you left? And at the unclassified level, can you tell us any significant differences between the two?

General DEMPSEY. I can, sir.

And we were operating under the interim, let's describe it, campaign plan signed by Ambassador Crocker and General Petraeus.

And I would not say it is a sea change or a significant change in strategy. I think you know that General Petraeus's assessment correctly was that there was a period of time here where we had to protect the population. I think in his view, the effort to transition had probably put the population at risk that was unacceptable risk.

And so, there is always a balance between transition and security. And in his view, the balance had tipped a bit too precipitously to transition and that it didn't have to be either/or, but certainly that in the near term, this period that he describes as the surge, we had to ensure that the population was secured.

As he has described it to me, if it comes to a jump ball between transition and security, security must prevail in the near term here to give the Iraqi government time to move ahead.

So that is the way I would describe that change.

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Mr. KRUSE. General, will your successor have to revise the MNSTC–I 2007 Campaign Action Plan to reflect the new Crocker-Petraeus joint campaign plan?

General DEMPSEY. Almost surely. I mean, it is a tenet of our profession that as the senior commander adapts his campaign plan, we have to adapt ours to nest in it.

Mr. KRUSE. General, if I can just focus for a moment on the IPS (Iraqi Police Service), our investigation has demonstrated that the development of the IPS lags behind the national police and certainly Iraq armed forces. After speaking to a number of transition teams, our police transition teams' constant theme is, "It is a good day if Iraqi police are able to go out and patrol." That seems to be the measure of success.

Could you comment on MNSTC–I or MNF–I, what their goal is for the development of the IPS? Where do we want to take them to? And if you can comment on how the transition teams, the advisory mission, will leverage that goal.

General DEMPSEY. Okay. I go back to what I mentioned a bit earlier: that we are actually trying to build a police force to do something that it has never done before in that part of the world.

And so, as you know—and I am sure as you know—that in the past, police forces typically, if they were traffic police, they stood in the traffic circle, but if they were patrol or station police, they pretty much stayed in the station. And then as someone wandered in with a problem, they would either choose to deal with it or not, and sometimes they chose to deal with it if the price was right. I mean, that is just what we encounter.

One of the things that the Baghdad Security Plan, Fardh Al-Qanoon, has done is established these joint security stations. And a big part of the motivation for that was to get the police to feel confident that they could leave the station and go out on patrol and survive the experience.

Now, recall that policeman in Iraq are armed with individual protection but they don't have armored vehicles. They have some crew-served weapons to protect police stations, but patrolling in the back of a Suburban or in the back of a pickup truck in that environment is a very dangerous experience.

So the joint security stations were conceived and are operating so that you have all four components working together: local police, national police, Iraqi army and coalition. And part of the motivation, as I mentioned, was to get the local police out of the stations.

It is working in some places, and in some places it is not working.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jones just arrived.

And thought you might want to take this opportunity to ask a question, if you would like.

Mr. JONES. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I apologize for not being here most of this session.

And, General, I want to thank you for your service. I have heard so many good things about you.

And, again, I apologize for—I actually don't mind telling you, I was on T.V. today about the Duke lacrosse players down in North

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Carolina, which has been a huge issue, as you well know, and that was the main reason I wasn't here on time, Mr. Chairman.

And, General, I am going to go a little bit off, but because you are such an expert, the reason that—I was at a subcommittee hearing a couple of weeks ago, and we had Air Force, Marines, Army to testify—most of them were colonels, I think, and one lieutenant—about the training of the police in Iraq.

And I have heard you today—a couple questions, in brief, Mr. Chairman.

I took from their testimony—and I did not hear yours, but I heard parts of your answers to some of my colleagues—it seems like the best anybody can tell me, that it is slow and it is probably moving forward instead of backward.

But you can't, and they couldn't, tell me that in two years or three years the police force will be at a position where they can pretty much do the police work themselves. And I am not talking about investigative work. I am just talking about taking care of a block, a neighborhood.

What would you say to a Member of Congress if the same report that those colonels gave—and they were still giving that same report three years from now?

You know, I learned yesterday that we are now going to arm the Sunnis. I know that has nothing to do with the police work, I would assume. The American people are just terribly frustrated with what seems to be an impossible situation that you and others have been put into.

Now I will go back to what—I am rambling, but I will go back to what I am trying to say. You cannot, in your position—I guess you have been very honest and up-front. You always have. That is your reputation. And God bless you for being that type of person.

But we are grappling with a nation that the budget is about to explode from overspending. The figure in Iraq now is $9.2 billion a month. We are careful about assigning weapons to many of these Iraqis in the police force because we don't know if they are on our side or not.

How do you say to the American people that it is going—how would you, if you were in my position, how would you answer the people back home that are saying, "Are we in a black hole?"

General DEMPSEY. Actually, Congressman, thanks for the opportunity to answer that question, because not only does Mrs. Dempsey ask me that question on occasion, but, as some of you know, I have had two children serve with me in Iraq as well. One is a captain, and one is a—my daughter is a second lieutenant.

And they are asking the question, and they are also asking, how many times do we have to go back? And those are questions that are fair questions. And so here is what I would say, though, in answer to them or in answer to you.

First of all, please don't forget that Iraq is an important part of our future, and that it may be that we have to continue to sacrifice there for some time in order to achieve our objectives, unless the objectives change. And that is not a military decision; that is a political decision. But while the objectives remain what they are, we need to stay committed to it.

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Second, the Iraqi people are very eager to take over responsibility for their own security. We would be in far worse shape if they didn't express that eagerness. And so that is a positive thing, in my view.

And they have started to demonstrate their willingness to do it, at least financially, as I mentioned in my opening statement. There is every reason to believe that, this year, they will outspend us two to one, and next year it should be three to one, in my view, if the budget process goes as I anticipate it may.

And in terms of local police in particular, I don't think local police will reach a level that you and I would recognize as local police until political progress is achieved.

In other words, I think we can and will make their army and their national police forces capable of taking over security in Iraq soon. I won't put a date on it, because I am not there anymore, and that really is the responsibility of those there to make that decision.

And that the national forces, once they are able to take over the security portfolio, the local police will only become effective once the security situation stabilizes and political process is realized.

Stated another way, local police are tied to political process in a way that isn't true for national forces, so we are very focused in the national forces and getting them in a position to take control. We are working with the local police, because, at some point, they are going to need them. But they are not going to be able to step up while the situation is as elevated as it is.

In seven of the provinces, however, today, local police are, in fact, in the lead in security. But those are the parts of Iraq where political process has moved sufficiently forward and tend to be in those parts of Iraq that are homogeneous.

So the Kurdish region is stable, the deep Shia south is stable. Al Anbar is looking promising, but Baghdad, Diyala, Salahuddin and At-Ta amim, which is the faultline, they are not stable and the local police are not effective there.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much.

Mr. MEEHAN. Thank you.

Mrs. Davis.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We are looking at numbers, I believe, of increasing the Iraqi army to about 50,000 additional soldiers. I think you mentioned that by the end of the year that was the hope——

General DEMPSEY. It is about 45,000—well, it is not just the army. It is military forces, because the air force and navy are coming along.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Could you speak then to the capacity to do that? I mean, we have talked about the immature logistics system and any other areas of government. How do you anticipate that that capacity is going to be there?

And then, just to follow up very quickly, General—we really appreciate your hanging in for the length of this hearing—if you could comment on the Iraqi navy. And are we developing the Iraqi navy with the ability to actually protect their interests in the Gulf as well as the U.S. interests too?

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General DEMPSEY. Yes, ma'am. Thanks. And by the way, I see this more as an opportunity than a liability for me, because I have invested 3 years of my personal life into this, and has my family, and this is a chance for me to help you understand what I think exists and, just as important, what doesn't exist in Iraq. So I don't mind a bit, to tell you the truth.

Capacity is there, or going to be there. You are really interested though, ma'am, in capability.

There is an Iraqi logistics architecture. They helped design it. They are helping fund it, but it is not demonstrating its full capability for probably a number of reasons.

One is unfamiliarity for a few reasons. The second one is that they are in a very tough fight, and developing the capability to do things other than survive in the middle of a fight is pretty challenging.

And the third thing gets at the issue of leadership that I mentioned before. I mean, I hope I leave you with the understanding that the scarcest resources we have is not time, it is not money; it is leaders in Iraq.

As you know, the Baath Party consciously culled out for 40 years the kind of leaders we are looking for. They culled them out. Innovation, creativity and accepting responsibility were the three things that could get you killed during the Saddam regime.

Then they went to war with Iran for several years, and most of their bravest soldiers, not surprisingly, and their bravest leaders were killed.

And then they fought two wars against us, and now they are fighting a war against al Qaeda and others.

And so we are running into a challenge of getting leaders in place that can turn the capacity we have provided into a capability. That is really the challenge.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. And absent their doing that, I guess, does that training fall on the U.S. then, if, in fact, those leaders are not there?

General DEMPSEY. Well, in some things I think the answer will be yes, but we have found ways to help them. I mean, the foreign military sales program was a huge moment for us when we were able to convince them that they can't enter into reasonable, honest and productive contracts where they were right now in their development. They are incapable of it. And so we convinced them that we can help with that, if they just allow us to do so. And they are beginning to do that.

I wish they had the same capability to do that for the other—there are 27 ministries, 12 key ministries. And we overwatch two. And two of them are enrolled in foreign military sales and are beginning to produce things for them, equipment and goods and services.

To your other point about the navy, ma'am, the Iraqi navy is actually progressing. It is rather small. But it doesn't need to be big. It has 36 miles of coast. They have two offshore oil platforms. Of course, one of those oil platforms, ABOT, is responsible for transiting 83 percent of their economy, one oil platform. And the other one pulls in about 4 or 5 percent. So almost 90 percent of

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their economy runs through their offshore oil platforms in the south.

They are closely partnered with CTF 158, which is the coalition navy and NAVCENT in the Gulf, who provide them not only the transition teams and the trainers, but also provides them additional combat power that they can call upon when it exceeds their capability.

For example, they don't have yet an offshore support vessel. And so the small Iraqi patrol boats have to go back and forth in and out of the port of Umm Qasr to be refueled and rearmed and refit. The CTF 158 recently put the HMS Belvedere there, which is a British offshore support vessel. And they intend to leave it there for a couple years, which now allows this little nascent navy to stay at sea.

They also have two squadrons of marines that have been trained to take responsibility for point defense of the offshore oil platforms. The smaller platform, the northernmost—ABOT, the one that is very close to the Iranian line—they will actually take responsibility for securing it this year, probably in the fall. And then we anticipate maybe a year later they will be responsible for the KAOT, which is the bigger one.

But we will see how they do with ABOT before we decide whether to hand over KAOT to them.

Ms. DAVIS OF CALIFORNIA. Okay. Thank you very much.

Mr. MEEHAN. General, thank you very much for your testimony.

There was one question that I think Mrs. Davis had that either we could go to a secure room or maybe we could go in the back room and you could whisper to her. It is up to you.

But I want to thank you for your appearance. You have always been accessible to Members of Congress, both here in Washington but also in various trips to Iraq that members have taken.

We have on this subcommittee, as the chairman and I indicated, had some disagreements or have had some disagreements with the DOD relative to witnesses and relative to materials being available to the committee. But we appreciate your accessibility.

We appreciate even more your service to this country. And we hope we have you out of here in time to take Mrs. Dempsey to lunch.

Thank you.

General DEMPSEY. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 11:28 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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APPENDIX

JUNE 12, 2007

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PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JUNE 12, 2007

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Opening Statement of
Chairman Martin Meehan
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Hearing on Development and Operational Capability of Iraqi Security Forces: Perspective from the Field.

June 12, 2007

Good morning, and welcome to this hearing of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations.

Today, we continue our examination of the most pressing issue facing the country: the war in Iraq. In past weeks, the subcommittee has looked into a number of aspects of the complex mission to man, train, and equip the Iraqi Security Forces. We have also looked at whatever plans we have been able to obtain to turn security over to them. We know how much hard work our armed forces have put into this difficult and dangerous project.

Today's hearing will begin with a brief opening statement from Mr. Mark Kimmitt from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs. He is the Deputy Secretary for the Middle East and South Asian Affairs. He will be followed by testimony from General Martin Dempsey who until recently was the commander of MNSTC-I. I understand that you have been nominated to be the Deputy Commander of U.S. Central Command.

In previous hearings we had hoped to hear from witnesses on the command relationships and responsibilities of the Multi-National Corps-Iraq – called MNC-I – and the Iraq Assistance Group – called the IAG. We would have benefited from their operational perspectives. In today's hearing we will hear about the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq (called MNSTC-I) and its Civilian Police Advisory Training Team (called CPATT). These organizations are charged with training and equipping the Iraqi Police Service and military, as well as managing transition advisory teams for the Ministries of Defense and Interior. CPATT also supervises the contractors who are International Police Liaison Officers and International Police Trainers working with the Iraqi local police.

Other issues we want to address include the role that military and police unit readiness and operational effectiveness reports play in assessing the performance of Iraqi Security Forces, particularly how they help commanders adjust to conditions on the ground. More importantly, we want to hear about the actions generated by these assessments, and how feedback is provided to Iraqi leaders. We want to hear our guests' frank appraisals of whether these performance assessments, called TRAs, provide an accurate picture of the operational competence of the Iraqi Security Forces. And, we would like to hear your view, General Dempsey, on whether they are a relevant and adequate tool to help commanders judge whether the Iraqi forces are

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ready for transition. Our sense is that the military has shown some progress, the Iraqi police are not operating effectively, and the Ministries are not close to taking over responsibility. We're very surprised, given this impression, the Iraqi Police Service responsibility has already been turned over to the MOI. I hope you can explain your perspectives on these issues.

Part of the reason for this hearing is that the Department has been slow to get us relevant documents and it has been difficult for the subcommittee to get our preferred witnesses. The witnesses and briefers we have been offered have had to take numerous committee questions for the record. The responses to those questions have also been very slow in coming. I hope we do not have the same problem today.

Our Members and the public should know, without disrespect intended towards General Dempsey that it has taken a long time to get him before us today. We appreciate his appearance at our hearing, but I would note that we have been not been supported in our efforts to secure testimony from the commanders of Multi-National Force – Iraq, the Coalition Police Advisory Training Team and the Iraq Assistance Group, or their knowledgeable deputies, even by video-teleconference. General Dempsey, we were assured that you would be able to answer questions on these other organizations, but trust that if you can't, that you will take them for the record.

While we have been able to obtain the 2006 version of the Joint Campaign Plan, there will be specific questions about the contents of a critical document that we have not been able to obtain, the 2007 Joint Campaign Plan signed by the Commander of the Multinational Forces Iraq and the Embassy as it pertains to developing the Iraqi Security Forces. We have been able to obtain the 2007 unclassified Campaign Plan for MNSTC-I for developing the ISF, but wonder how the new Joint Campaign Plan may affect it.

Thank you for coming, Mr. Kimmitt. I understand you were warned that you may be neglected in our questions because the subcommittee is more focused on General Dempsey's experiences and observations from the theater. I hope your remarks will be brief. I do have one question which I'd like you to address in your opening. Originally the HASC staff was to be briefed yesterday on the Department's quarterly report on Iraq (the 9010 report). Now that briefing will take place this afternoon. I believe the explanation was that the Director of J5, Strategy Division was on leave and no one else could do it. I believe in the past you and also the Deputy J5 have briefed the staff. Given the difficulty in getting General Dempsey and the inability to get the other witnesses we wanted, don't you think it would have benefited these members and the General both to have had that briefing before this session? I continued to be appalled at the Department's lack of situational awareness on these issues.

Today, because we have a lot of ground to cover we will be more formal than usual. We will use at the gavel and the 5 minute rule.

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I would like to remind everyone that this is an open hearing so no classified information will be discussed. However, if necessary, when we are finished here members and cleared staff will move to a separate room for a classified briefing.

Welcome again to our witnesses. We're looking forward to your remarks. We will take your whole text for the record, but I ask that you keep your prepared remarks brief so we can get to our questions.

Now, I would like to turn to my colleague, Mr. Akin, our ranking member, for any opening remarks he might have.

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Statement of Ranking Member Todd Akin
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
House Armed Services Committee

Subcommittee Hearing on Development and Operational Capability of the Iraqi Security Forces

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June 12, 2007

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Today is our last scheduled public hearing in our investigation of the Iraqi Security Forces. I understand that the subcommittee will issue a report on this investigation in the coming weeks, and the report's release will close out this investigation.

As this may be the last public meeting of the subcommittee with Mr. Meehan as Chairman, I'd like to take this opportunity to commend the Chairman for his exceptional leadership, and thank him for steering this subcommittee in a bipartisan and professional manner. I wish you the best of luck in your new position, and I think my colleagues will agree that the Congress will miss your energy and leadership.

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Welcome to our witnesses. General Dempsey, welcome back from Iraq. Thank you for your extraordinary and dedicated service to our country. I understand this is one of your first stops since returning from Iraq – thank you for appearing before the subcommittee today.

As we close out the public record of this investigation, I'd like to focus my comments on, what I view, are key issues this investigation still needs to clarify.

Foremost, how does the ISF mission fit into our Iraq strategy? Over the past few years, we have spent $19 billion training and equipping more than 348,000 ISF personnel all for the purpose of transitioning security responsibility over to the Iraqis. My sense is that this remains our strategy. The only variable that has changed is how and when we "transition" security responsibilities to the Iraqis. One thing this investigation has demonstrated is that transitioning security responsibilities simply for the sake of transitioning will not stabilize Iraq – it may actually slow down progress. I do, however, want to make sure that contrary to recent press reports, our strategy continues to view the ISF as the linchpin to our plan to eventually transition

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U.S. forces out of Iraq. General Dempsey, I hope you can comment on this during your testimony.

Another issue I'd like our witnesses to clarify is how we're progressing in developing a truly national, Iraqi Security Force. Again, there are an increasing number of press reports that elements of the ISF – particularly the Iraqi Police Service– suffer from sectarian infiltration. Additionally, it seems problems of sectarian influence continue to affect the ministries – particularly the Ministry of Interior. I'd like to hear your assessment of the situation, and understand what steps we are taking to resolve this problem.

I'd also like to know how sectarianism is affecting the combat effectiveness of the ISF. A rogue Iraqi unit that carries out sectarian reprisals is only one kind of sectarian problem; sectarianism can manifest in other ways.

This leads me to a general concern about our knowledge of the ISF. While this subcommittee has learned a lot about how we train transition teams and equip the ISF, we have learned little about the operational

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competency of the ISF. I'm concerned that the Transition Readiness Assessments (TRAs) do not tell us enough about Iraqi units. Given the $19 billion the American people have spent on the ISF, we have a responsibility to monitor and track how the forces we've trained and equipped are operating.

I look forward to hearing our witnesses' statement, and there views on these matters.

Thank you for being here today, and once again, General Dempsey, welcome back.

[Yield Back to Chairman Meehan]

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STATEMENT

For

Lieutenant General Martin Dempsey, USA

Former COMMANDING GENERAL

Of

MULTI-NATIONAL SECURITY TRANSITION COMMAND – IRAQ

BEFORE THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

On

IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

JUNE 12, 2007

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Good Morning Chairman Meehan, Ranking Member Akin, and Honorable Members of the Subcommittee.

Thank you for the opportunity to come and speak with you, answer your questions, and share my thoughts on the state of the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) after three years of service in Iraq. Let me first say that I'm absolutely grateful for the opportunity to spend some time on our wonderful American soil. I left the Pentagon on the 10th of Sept 2001 and except for a few weeks of leave here and there and two opportunities to testify in front of this body, I have not been home since. I have spent nearly two years in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as the senior advisor to the Saudi Arabian National Guard, and I have spent almost three years in Iraq, first for 13 months as the Division Commander of 1st Armored Division in control of Baghdad, and most recently for 22 months as Commander of the Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq. I arrived back in the United States yesterday and after a few weeks leave, I will report to US Central Command as Deputy Commanding General.

My intent today is to speak frankly with you about my perspective on the challenges we face in developing Iraq's security forces. Let me begin with a brief update on where we are now and how we got here with regard to the Iraqi Security Forces. Following that, I will be glad to take your questions.

The Multi-National Security Transition Command-Iraq, or MNSTC-I, in coordination with Coalition Forces, NATO, and the Government of Iraq's Ministries of Defense and

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Interior, develops security forces along three lines of operation: generating units and individual replacements, developing institutional systems and processes to support the fielded forces, and professionalizing the force and its leaders. We achieved our initial target for Iraqi Security Forces generation of 134,700 Objective Counter-Insurgency Forces (Military) and 188,300 Objective Civil Security Forces (Police) in December 2006. However, based on changes in the security environment in the latter half of 2006, the two security ministers in consultation with MNSTC-I adjusted 2007 end-strength goals for both the Iraqi Army and Police. I will discuss this in detail later in this statement. We are now working to develop an Iraqi Military of just over 190,000 and Iraqi Police Forces of approximately 195,000. We are on track to achieve these force levels by the end of this year. Currently, we have trained and equipped 154,000 Military Forces and 194,000 Police Forces. It's important to note that we are simultaneously building both new units and training individual replacements. Annual attrition is approximately 15-18% in the Army and 20-22% in the Police. MNSTC-I has a comprehensive four-phase plan to Build, Enhance, Develop, and Transition the Iraqi Security Forces to the Government of Iraq's control as soon as possible. As you know, such phases are useful concepts in developing plans, but they are rarely cleanly separated and never entirely sequential in execution. Planning phases such as these almost always overlap one another as progress is made and efficiencies are exploited in any given phase. Stated another way, we work in multiple phases simultaneously.

Let me summarize the goals of each phase. Phase I (BUILD), ensures the initial Iraqi Security Forces are organized, trained, equipped and based. Phase II (ENHANCE) makes the generated forces better with a focus on added capabilities including armor

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protection and increased weaponry and advanced training to prepare them for full operational control. Phase III (DEVELOP), ties the tactical formations to a developed institutional architecture and sets the conditions for their transition to self-reliance. Phase IV (TRANSITION), based on a common understanding by both sides—Government of Iraq and Government of the United States—of our long-term security relationship, transition of internal security responsibility occurs while we also assist Iraq begin to prepare to defend itself against external threats.

We've learned many important lessons and made the necessary adaptations along the way.

We've learned that the development of security forces is analogous to a three-legged stool, if you will. The first leg is a standard curriculum of training, so that every soldier and every unit gets the same skill sets. The second leg is embedded transition teams. The third leg is partnered units. And the distinction between the two is very important. A partnered unit will provide instruction and education and expertise by mentoring and role-modeling, but that is only one facet of the partnered unit's broader mission. An embedded transition team, in contrast, is dedicated completely to the development of that Iraqi unit.

We've learned that transition is essentially a balancing act. On one side you have assimilation, and on the other side is dependency. Pass responsibility too soon and the system falters. Pass responsibility too late and the system becomes dependent on coalition support. Through 2005, the U.S. government was paying the bills for all Iraqi

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life support for all of the Iraqi security forces. Because we had helped them build their budget and knew they had the necessary funding, we made it a goal in 2006 to transition responsibility for Iraqi soldiers and policemen over to Iraqi control, It was painstaking and difficult work, but by the middle of 2006, the MoD and MoI had assumed control of all life support across the entire Iraqi army and police forces.

We learned the importance of developing both the tactical and institutional sectors of the military and police forces simultaneously. In Iraq today, soldiers and policemen are being paid by the central government. Their life support is being provided by the central government. The ministries of defense and interior are functioning institutions who feel themselves accountable for the security of the nation and for their security forces. Challenges remain, but we should not underestimate the importance of having a coherent, accountable, and responsible Iraqi chain of command from individual soldier and policeman to the Ministers of Defense and Interior.

We've learned that the business practices of the Iraqi Government are horribly inefficient and ineffective and that there is no pool of skilled civil servants to overcome them in the near term. Among our goals in 2007 is to transition equipment, sustainment, and infrastructure expenditures to Iraqi responsibility. To do that in an environment of unskilled bureaucrats and bad business practices, we've convinced the Government of Iraq to reach out to us as their acquisition and procurement agents and to enter into our Foreign Military Sales program with the United States. Thus far, Iraqis have invested about $1.7 billion into Foreign Military Sales. We anticipate that they will invest another **$1.6 billion this year.**

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Let me put that in perspective. 2007 is the first year that the government of Iraq will spend more on its security forces than the United States government, and they will out-spend us at a rate of 2 to 1. They are now spending more money on themselves than we're spending on them in the security sector. If the government feels itself accountable to the soldier and understands its responsibility to provide him resources, then the soldier, in turn, is going to feel his loyalty toward the central government. We consider this an important measure of progress.

Both tactical and institutional performance is improving. They must now be tied together. The big challenge in 2008 will be finding an adequate number of leaders to lead this institution that is large and increasingly capable. We've been growing young second lieutenants through the military academies for about three years, but it's really difficult to grow majors, lieutenant colonels and brigadier generals. It simply can't be done overnight. So we've had to rely heavily on officer recalls and retraining programs. However, the pool of qualified recalls is beginning to thin out. Several generations of Iraqi leaders were culled out by the Saddam regime and the Iran-Iraq war, and many fine Iraqi military and police leaders have been killed and wounded in the on-going fight. We're working with both the Minister of Defense and the Minister of Interior to address this challenge.

The Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have improved in their capability to assume a greater share of the responsibility for the security and stability of Iraq. My overall assessment is

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that many units, especially the Iraqi Army units, have become increasingly proficient and have demonstrated both their improved capability and resolve in battle. They continue to be hampered, however, by a lack of depth. Iraqi Army and Police units do not have tactical staying power or sufficient capability to surge forces locally. The ISF also have shortages of leaders from the tactical to the national level which I've already touched upon. In addition, their logistics infrastructure is immature which limits their ability to function effectively against a broad array of challenges, particularly when asked to deploy around the country.

In October 2006 the Iraqi Prime Minister determined that his security forces were insufficient in size and structure to support Iraq's security needs. He requested support for a 2007 growth plan of 24 battalions and an increase in endstrength of approximately 45,000. Additionally, he requested assistance in procuring additional specialized capabilities such as route clearance equipment and electronic countermeasures to meet the persistent challenges of terrorist threats.

He also decided at that time that the tactical combat battalions should be manned at 110%. This was to posture them to be able to handle some of the unique aspects of the force. For example, on average about of 25% of the force is on leave at any one time—and they're not going on vacation. It may sound simple, but a significant portion of this is soldiers taking leave to physically take money home to their families in the absence of things like direct deposit and electronic banking. Another example is that seriously wounded soldiers are not moved off the unit rolls because there is no functioning

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retirement system in Iraq. Moving them off the rolls would impose incredible hardship on soldiers and families who have already made enormous sacrifices.

Within the past month, the Commanding General of MNF-I decided that the lessons of Operation Fardh Al Qanoon in Baghdad indicated the clear need to increase the manning levels of these combat battalions up to 120%-- or an additional 20,000 endstrength. The ongoing 2007 growth plan addresses many but not all of the structural gaps in the Iraqi Security Forces. MNSTC-I's current assessment is that the Iraqi Security Forces will require growth in 2008 similar in scope to that of 2007 in order to ensure sufficient force to protect the population throughout Iraq; overmatch the enemy; provide depth necessary to deploy forces around the country as the security situation dictates; and implement an annual retraining and reconstitution program.

The threats faced by the Government of Iraq have proven both resilient and adaptive. We have identified key capability gaps in the Iraqi Security Forces. MNSTC-I is working to improve the quantity and professionalism of ISF leaders, address the issues of logistics and sustainability, ensure combat overmatch, and provide Iraq's security leaders the ability to project power with sufficient rotational capability to meet the challenges facing them. Coalition forces currently cover these capability gaps. Failure to address these Iraqi security capability gaps will lock U.S. forces into tactical battlespace and greatly increase the risk to the ISF should the Coalition presence decline in the near future.

In reflecting on my time in Iraq, I think I can identify four key decisions that we made in the effort to build effective security institutions in Iraq. The first was the formation of

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MNSTC-I to professionalize and standardize the growth of Iraqi Security Forces. The second was the decision to go to embedded advisory teams vice just partnering units. The third occurred on the 1st of October 2005 when MNSTC-I assumed responsibility for developing Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Interior capacity and capability. The fourth and most recent was the recognition in late 2006 of an inability by the Iraqis to execute their budget and then successfully enrolling them into the United States Foreign Military Sales Program in order to assist them in growing the force and executing budgets.

I would like to close with some thoughts about the Iraqi leadership and the Iraqi people. The leaders of Iraq and their people are working in an incredibly challenging and dangerous environment. They risk their lives each day as they carry out the nation's business, and they live with the constant fear of having their families attacked. The people of Iraq demonstrate both the resolve and the resiliency to withstand the assaults of extremists and are committed to make a better life for themselves, their families and the nation of Iraq. The leaders and people of Iraq have not given up on themselves. We should not give up on them.

I again thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. Now I am prepared to take your questions.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

JUNE 12, 2007

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QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. ANDREWS

Mr. ANDREWS. Account (by category) for the 188,300 MOI Civil Security ISF that have been trained and equipped. Account for them by category (KIA, deserted, wounded and on payroll, active service, unaccounted for, etc.) to supplement the record. (CM Andrews HASC O&I Hearing)

General DEMPSEY. (U) The specific information requested is not accessible given the way the Ministry of Interior tracks personnel accountability. Simply put, when policemen are KIA, wounded, unaccounted for, deserted, etc. there is no distinction made as to whether they are trained or untrained.

(U) There is currently no reliable data on how many of the trained and equipped police from the Objective COIN Security Force are still serving with the MoI due to a number of factors. The estimates of this number range from 40% to 70% of the total trained by coalition.

(U) The MOI has hired a significant number of police beyond those trained by MNSTC–I.

(U) To cross-match WIA and KIA against the list of policemen who have or have not received training is problematic for the Ministry of Interior's current human resource management system since it is a manual paper system for personnel accounting. To gather the requested information would require a manual review of each individual personnel file assuming the correct information is annotated in every file.

(U) There are two database systems currently in development to automate human resource management for the MoI. First, E-Ministry is designed to be the MoI's centralized database for the approximately 24,000 employees in the Ministry of Interior headquarters. E-Ministry is currently in Phase I, testing and evaluation. Phase-II data entry is anticipated to begin in December 2007, and be fully populated by December 2008 (conservative estimate). If the project is embraced by key personnel in the MOI, the data entry phase could be complete as early as mid 2008.

(U) To automate the management of Iraqi police in the provinces, an additional personnel system is being developed. The Iraq Police Data Management System (IPDMS) is a US Department of State-sponsored initiative currently in the development stage. IPDMS is scheduled for test deployment in August 2007, pending the formation of an MOI committee. It is not possible at this state to estimate when IPDMS will be fully operational. This committee, which has been approved by the Minister, will provide direction, deployment plans, standard operating procedures, and training candidates that will allow IPDMS to be implemented. IPDMS is designed to link with e-Ministry.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE IRAQI SECURITY FORCES

HEARING

BEFORE THE

OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE

OF THE

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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