

THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WAR



BACKGROUND #2

Order of Battle for Operation Phantom Thunder **Kimberly Kagan, Executive Director and Wesley Morgan, Researcher** **June 20, 2007**

General David Petraeus, commander of Multi-National Forces-Iraq, and Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, launched a coordinated offensive operation on June 15, 2007 to clear al Qaeda strongholds outside of Baghdad. The arrival of the fifth Army “surge” brigade, the Marine Expeditionary Unit, and the combat aviation brigade enabled GEN Petraeus and LTG Odierno to begin this major offensive, named “Operation Phantom Thunder.” Three different U.S. Division Headquarters in different provinces are participating in Phantom Thunder. Multi-National Division-North (Diyala); Multi-National Division-Center (North Babil and Baghdad); and Multi-National Division-West (Anbar). In addition to reinforcing these areas with new troops, LTG Odierno and his division commanders have repositioned some brigades and battalions that were already operating in and around Baghdad.

MND-North, Diyala

Operation Arrowhead Ripper

The core unit in Diyala has been 3rd BCT (Brigade Combat Team), 1st Cavalry Division, which has four battalions plus reinforcements. One of its battalions, 1-12 CAV, has been stationed on FOB Warhorse. A second battalion from the same brigade, the 6-9 ARS, has been operating in Muqdadiya, northeast of Baquba. The 5-73 RSTA (Reconnaissance, Scouting, and Target Acquisition Squadron) has been operating in the river valley northeast of Baquba (in locations such as Zaganiyah). The 5-20 Infantry has been operating in and around southern Baquba. (In addition, MND-N has sent a company from 2-35 Infantry to 5-73 and a company from 1-505 Parachute Infantry Regiment to 6-9 in order to provide those battalions with infantry).

This past month, a second brigade was added to the effort: 4th SBCT, 2nd Infantry Division set up headquarters at Taji. Its battalions went to two important locations on the highways north of Baghdad. The 4-9 Infantry deployed to Tarmiyah, which is on the route between Taji (a major U.S. base north of Baghdad) and Baqubah. The 2-1 RSTA deployed to Khan Bani Saad, a town directly on the Baghdad-Baquba route. Consequently, the 1-12 CAB and particularly 5-20 Infantry could shift focus closer in to Baquba.

In order to launch this week’s assault on Baquba, LTG Odierno has shifted a third brigade to Diyala – COL Townsend’s 3rd SBCT, 2nd Infantry Division, from Camp Liberty, is leading the clearing operations in Baqubah. This same Stryker brigade led clearing operations in several neighborhoods of Baghdad: Shaab (northeast Baghdad, February), Ghazaliyah (western

Baghdad, March), and Dora (southern Baghdad, May). It is not entirely clear what battalions 3rd SBCT is using. Of its four organic battalions, 5-20 Infantry is (and has been) in Baquba. The 1-14 RSTA Squadron is definitely not in Baqubah. The brigade may also have either or both of 2-3 Infantry and 1-23 Infantry in Baqubah. (Michael Gordon mentioned 5-20 and 3-21 Infantry as being the main units for 3rd SBCT in Baquba in the *New York Times* on June 20, 2007, so either 3-21 a unit of 2nd SBCT, 25th ID, which is not operationally ready and is going to Iraq anyway in December has suddenly showed up, or he meant 1-23, which has been in every one of 3rd SBCT's clearing operations so far.)

MND-C, Arab Jabour

Operation Marne Torch

The Brigade operating in Arab Jabour is definitely 2nd HBCT, 3rd ID, which recently set up headquarters on FOB Kalsu. MNC-I and 3rd ID have been tight-lipped about what battalions are working in this operation. In addition, 3rd HBCT, 3rd ID is conducting simultaneous operations from FOB Hammer that seem to fall under Marne Torch (1-15 CAB did an air assault and 3-1 ARS is also active). It is not clear how 2nd HBCT's arrival in the North Babil/South Baghdad Area of Operations (AO) has affected the AOs or command structures of 2nd BCT, 10th Mountain and 4th Abn BCT, 25th ID, which previously shared the area. 4th Abn BCT is also based at Kalsu, while 2nd BCT, 10th Mtn's longtime AO lies between Kalsu and Arab Jabour. It seems that Arab Jabour had previously been on the border between the AOs of 10th Mtn and 1-40 RSTA. The latter was attached to 4th IBCT, 1st ID at FOB Falcon.

2nd HBCT, 3rd ID is leading the Arab Jabour operation. It may be using 1-40 RSTA, which was already in the area, or any of its own three organic battalions: 3-7 ARS, 3-15 CAB, and 1-64 CAB. All are in MND-C but none of the three have been mentioned in any press releases, news stories, or other media since they left Kuwait.

MND-West, Anbar

Operations North of Fallujah

One new unit has arrived in AO Raleigh: the 13th MEU, which has just this past week or so set itself up on Camp Taqaddum, along with its main ground element, BLT 3/1. COL Simcock's RCT-6 is based at Camp Fallujah. During the past rotation, more of his units have been in the Habbaniyah area and fewer have been in Fallujah: 1st Recon, 2/6 Marines, and 2/7 Marines are all based at Camp Fallujah, with outposts in and around the city, while 3/6 Marines is based in Habbaniyah and 3-509 PIR is in Karmah. (Also, 2-136 CAB, a Guard unit, is on Camp Taqaddum, within AO Raleigh, and at one point this winter a small element of 5-7 ARS from Ramadi was with RCT-6 in Fallujah).

Abbreviations Key

MNF-I : Multi-National Forces-Iraq (Commanded by General David Petraeus, this is the overall command of all coalition military forces)

MNC-I: Multi-National Corps-Iraq (Commanded by Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, this is the headquarters that controls all coalition forces operating in Iraq apart from those engaged in training Iraqi Security Forces)

MND-B: Multi-National Division-Baghdad (Commanded by Major General Joseph Fil, Jr., this is the command with responsibility for Baghdad and its northern suburbs)

MND-C: Multi-National Division-Center (Commanded by Major General Rick Lynch, this is the headquarters with responsibility for the southern belt around Baghdad)

MND-N: Multi-National Division-North (Commanded by Major General Benjamin Mixon, this is the command with responsibility for northern Iraq, including Diyala, Salah-ad-Din, and Ninewah provinces)

BCT: Brigade Combat Team (a brigade plus support elements, comprised of 3,200 to 3,700 soldiers normally organized into one RSTA Squadron, two maneuver battalions, and a number of support units, although subordinate units can be and frequently are cross-attached among BCTs)

HBCT: Heavy Brigade Combat Team (a BCT normally equipped with tanks and Bradleys)

IBCT: Infantry Brigade Combat Team (a BCT comprised of infantry mounted on Humvees)

SBCT: Stryker Brigade Combat Team (a BCT equipped with Stryker vehicles)

FOB: Forward Operating Base

MEU: Marine Expeditionary Unit (a battalion-sized deployable formation of Marines)

CAB: Combined Arms Battalion

RCT: Regimental Combat Team (a brigade-sized formation of Marines)

ID: Infantry Division

PIR: Parachute Infantry Regiment (an infantry unit that is part of one of the Army's airborne units; note that the Army does not have regiments—these designations are for historical lineage purposes, as all Army battalions are part of brigades)

ARS: Armed Reconnaissance Squadron

RSTA: Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Target-Acquisition Squadron (formerly a cavalry squadron—a formation designed to develop intelligence about the enemy in advance of the main formation of a BCT)

Abn: Airborne

Mtn: Mountain (as in 10th Mountain Division—a name used primarily for historical lineage purposes, as the 10th is a multi-purpose division without particular focus on mountain warfare)