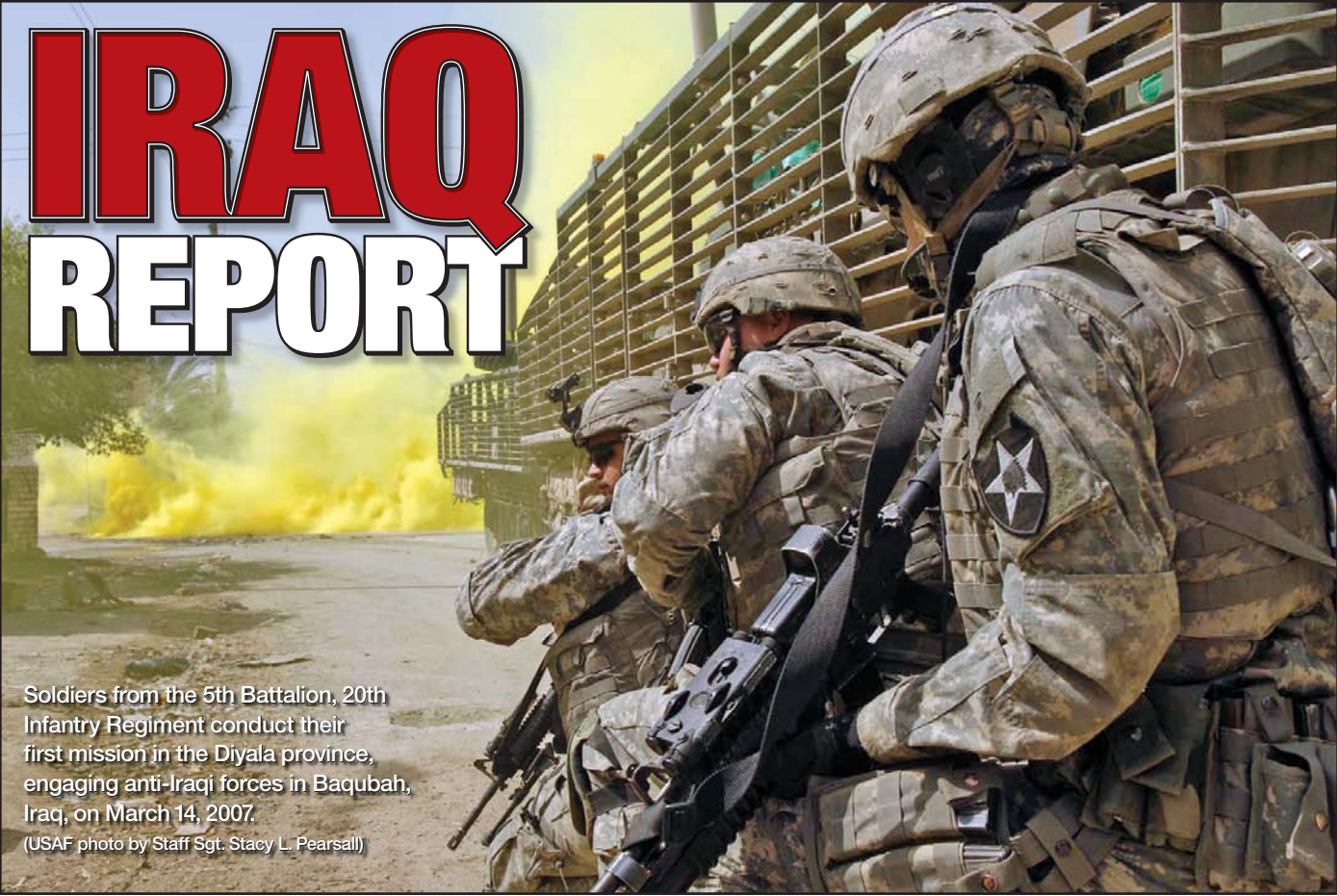


IRAQ REPORT



Soldiers from the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment conduct their first mission in the Diyala province, engaging anti-Iraqi forces in Baqubah, Iraq, on March 14, 2007.

(USAF photo by Staff Sgt. Stacy L. Pearsall)

February 11, 2007 – April 25, 2007

The Battle for Diyala

by **KIMBERLY KAGAN**

Summary

Diyala province has become one of the central battlegrounds between the Coalition and al Qaeda. Its capital, Baqubah, is just a short drive from Baghdad, and the province has suffered from and contributed to the ongoing violence in the Iraqi capital. In the months before the full complement of additional U.S. forces arrive in Iraq, U.S. commanders have reinforced their troops in Diyala in an effort to get this area under control before beginning major clear-and-hold operations in Baghdad. Al Qaeda has responded to this effort with a significant surge of its own in the province, increasing attacks on coalition forces, local government officials, and civilians. Coalition attacks have been met with al Qaeda counterattacks against U.S. and Iraqi forces. Sectarian violence fell dramatically in Diyala in February 2007, as al Qaeda and other extremist groups fought coalition and Iraqi forces. But the terrorists are gradually losing control, local government is beginning to function once again, and the local population is turning against al Qaeda and toward cooperation with coalition forces in a manner similar to what has occurred in Anbar. Still, Establishing security in Diyala will be extremely difficult. Al Qaeda remains determined to reestablish its position in the province, and Iranian support for all sides in the ongoing struggle there fans the flames of violence as rogue Shiite militias challenge radical Sunni extremists.

Mission

The current objective of U.S. military operations in Iraq is to establish security in and around Baghdad. However, much of the fighting since the beginning of Operation Enforcing the Law has been focused outside of the capital. General David Petraeus, commander of Multi-National Forces-Iraq (MNF-I, the overall coalition command in the country) and Lieutenant General Raymond Odierno, commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I, the organization tasked with conducting counter-insurgent and security operations throughout the country), have even sent newly-arriving units to reinforce U.S. troops in the northern and southern “belts” of small villages and towns around Baghdad, and into Diyala province to the northeast as well. This allocation of resources reflects the reality that operations in Baghdad do not occur in a vacuum. Insurgents have long been based in the Baghdad belts and in Anbar province to the west, and both sectarian and al Qaeda violence has plagued Diyala province from 2006 to the present. Although struggles in Anbar, Diyala, Salah-ad-Din, and Ninewah provinces have their own dynamics and react to changing local circumstances, they are also connected to the violence in Baghdad and are inseparably linked with efforts

Kimberly Kagan is a military historian who has taught at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Yale University, Georgetown University, and American University. She is a Senior Fellow and Adjunct Assistant Professor at the Center for Peace and Security Studies at Georgetown University, where she teaches the History of Military Operations; an affiliate of the Olin Institute for Strategic Studies at Harvard University; and a visiting fellow at Yale International Security Studies. She is the author of The Eye of Command (University of Michigan Press, 2006), and the founder and executive director of the new Institute for the Study of War, www.understandingwar.org.

■ The previous Iraq Report described the changing situation in Anbar province. This report addresses developments in Diyala resulting from al Qaeda's efforts to reignite sectarian violence there and from General Odierno's decision to reinforce American troops in that province.

to pacify the capital. Since the full complement of additional U.S. forces will not arrive in Iraq until June, Generals Petraeus and Odierno chose initially to reinforce critical areas beyond Baghdad in an effort to create the preconditions for the major clearing operations in the capital that are set to begin later this summer.

This method of addressing the problem reflects the fact that Baghdad is a partially functioning city. Food comes in from outlying agricultural areas to city markets, as does fuel and electricity. Efforts to restart economic activity in the capital, underway for some time and now showing signs of progress, require the movement of goods to the rest of the country. Many Iraqis move into and through the capital on a daily basis. Cutting the lines of communication into the city in an effort to prevent insurgent attacks would destroy this progress, alienate the population of the capital, and meet with insuperable resistance from the Iraqi government. The military operations designed to prepare the way for clearing operations in the capital have therefore focused on attacking insurgent and terrorist strongholds outside of the city and on bringing order to the two most chaotic provinces, Anbar and Diyala, which are feeding the violence in Baghdad. The previous *Iraq Report* described the changing situation in Anbar province. This report addresses developments in Diyala resulting from al Qaeda's efforts to reignite sectarian violence there and from General Odierno's decision to reinforce American troops in that province in response.

Enemy

Simultaneous U.S. and Iraqi operations in Baghdad and its surrounding areas over the past few months have driven al Qaeda and its affiliates from some of the organization's strongholds inside and outside of Baghdad province. In 2006, al Qa-

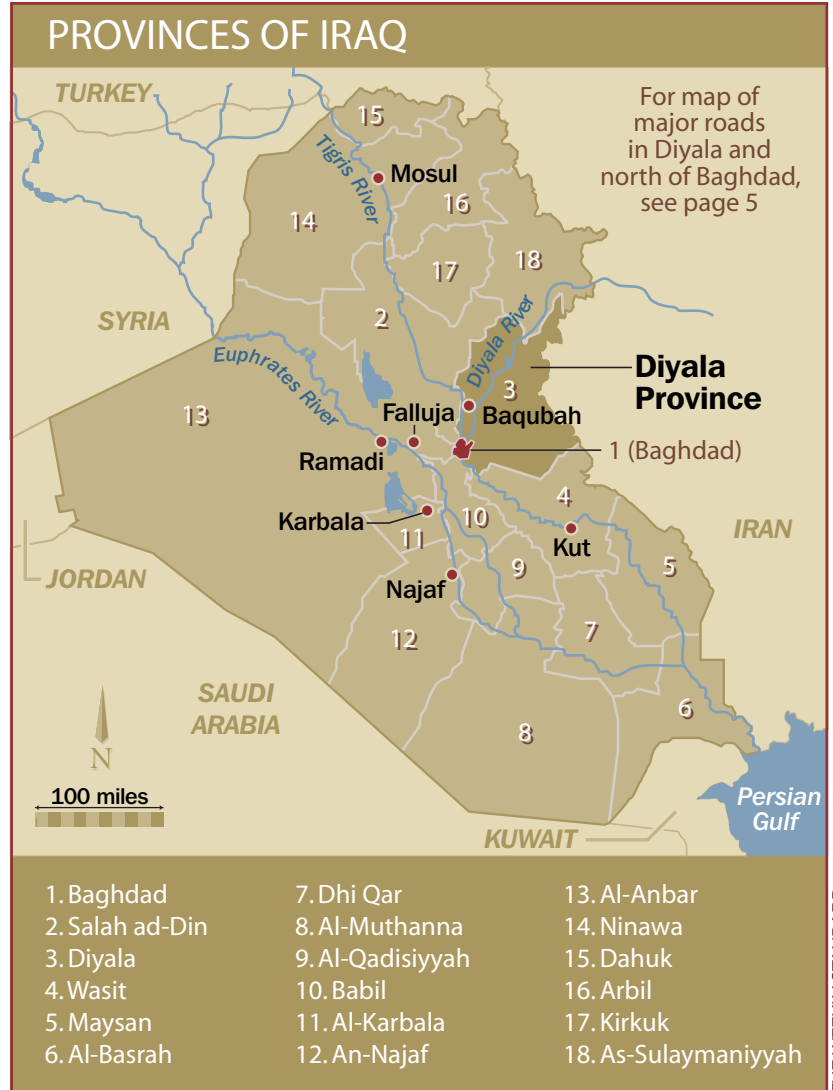
eda and its affiliates maintained safe havens just beyond the Baghdad belts, in Anbar and Diyala provinces, as well as in the belts. Since November, the clearing of Ramadi and the arrival of the Anbar Awakening have combined to reduce popular support for al Qaeda in the Sunni province of Anbar. January's clearing operations in Diyala Province drove numerous al Qaeda and Islamic State of Iraq fighters from their stronghold in Turki Village, south of Balad Ruz. Operations south of Baghdad resulted in killed and captured al Qaeda insurgents, seized weapons caches, and destroyed car bomb factories from Yusifiyah (on the Euphrates River, south and east of Ramadi) to Mahmudiyah (south of Baghdad). Previous editions of *The Iraq Report* have described these operations. The surge of U.S. and Iraqi forces into Baghdad disrupted al Qaeda's patterns of activity within the capital in February. Targeted raids elsewhere in Baghdad province were aimed at al Qaeda and affiliated extremists.

As U.S. forces surged into Baghdad and its environs, al Qaeda and Sunni insurgents generally moved north, while the Jaysh al Mahdi generally moved south.¹ U.S. forces set conditions to meet al Qaeda and other insurgents outside of Baghdad before Operation Enforcing the Law began, focusing on the northern roads and the southern belt in the Baghdad governorate. U.S. troops, indeed, met them in the provinces. General Odierno, commander of Multi-National Corps-Iraq, sent reinforcements to Diyala to follow up on the opportunities presented by Operation Turki Bowl outside of Balad Ruz, described in the first *Iraq Report*, and to handle the influx of enemies into that province.

After Operation Turki Bowl, enemy groups concentrated in a few areas in Diyala Province. Al Qaeda and affiliated Sunni extremists operated from the Diyala River Valley (particularly, villages such as Zaganiyah and Qubbah); Buhriz (which

similar enemies terrorized); and the terrain north and south of Lake Hamrin (the vicinity of Muqadadiyah).²

Al Qaeda fought U.S. forces in Diyala and attempted to terrorize the local population of that



province. Al Qaeda also conducted spectacular, mass-casualty and high-visibility attacks in Baghdad and in other provinces using suicide vests and car bombs. The organization attempted to cause sectarian violence in Baghdad and elsewhere in an effort to derail the Baghdad Security Plan and break the will of the Iraqi and American people. Al Qaeda and other Sunni insurgent groups attacked U.S. and Iraqi forces in Diyala province directly.

At the end of April, General David Petraeus, commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, stated that “Iraq is, in fact, the central front of al Qaeda’s global campaign and we devote considerable resources to the fight against al Qaeda Iraq.”³ He added, “We do definitely see links to the greater al Qaeda network [from Iraq]. I think you know that we have at various times intercepted messages to and from. There is no question but that there is a network that supports the movement of foreign fighters through Syria into Iraq.”⁴ General Petraeus concluded of al Qaeda, “I think it is probably public enemy number one. It is the enemy whose actions sparked the enormous increase in sectarian violence that did so much damage to Iraq in 2006, the bombing of the Al Askari mosque in Samarra, the gold-domed mosque there, the third holiest Shi’a shrine. And it is the organization that continues to try to reignite not just sectarian violence but ethnic violence, as well, going after Iraqi Kurds in Nineveh province and Kirkuk and areas such as that, as well. So again, I think a very, very significant enemy in that regard.”⁵

General Petraeus also confirmed that “the spectacular car-bomb attacks . . . are generally al Qaeda and elements sort of connected to al Qaeda. Typically, in fact, still we believe that . . . 80 to 90 percent of the suicide attacks are carried out by foreigners. . . . A network . . . typically brings them in through Syria . . .”⁶ Some of these fighters enter Syria through the airport.⁷ So presumably these fighters also originate from beyond that state’s borders. Manufacturing vehicle bombs and conducting suicide attacks on highly visible targets requires financial resources, supplies, planning, and training that seem to be available only to international terrorist networks in Iraq, rather than local insurgents.

In addition to al Qaeda, some of Moqtada al Sadr’s Jaysh al Mahdi operated in Diyala Province. U.S. and Iraqi forces captured or killed some of the rogue militia leaders in and around Baqubah in the opening days of Operation Enforcing the Law. Nevertheless, rogue elements of Shiite militias continued to function in Diyala, particularly as al Qaeda extremists concentrated north of Baghdad. The Jaysh al Mahdi apparently relied upon weapons supplied from Iran through Diyala Province.

POPULATION, TERRAIN, AND COMMUNICATIONS IN DIYALA

Diyala offers fertile ground for al Qaeda to operate, and presents great challenges to coalition forces. It is overwhelmingly Sunni, but has a Shi’ite minority that creates the sort of mixed areas in which al Qaeda often works to spread terror as a way of establishing bases. It borders both Iran and Kurdistan, serving as a conduit for Iranian weapons and advisors moving east and for attackers moving to and from Kurdistan. It is also a target of the foreign fighter network that stretches from the Syrian border through northern and central Iraq. It encapsulates in one area many of the most serious security challenges Iraq faces, and it is currently the site of one of the most dramatic in a series of battles that have unfolded between the Coalition and al Qaeda.

During and immediately after the collapse of Saddam Hussein’s regime, Baathists and ex-army officers effectively controlled Diyala, making the area a hotbed of Sunni resistance.⁸ In April 2006, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi designated a location in Diyala as the capital of the caliphate he was trying to establish.⁹ He was killed in Hib Hib, near Baqubah, in June 2006. The area had already become a magnet for al Qaeda and other Islamic extremists by that time.

Diyala, though close to Baghdad, was not effectively controlled by the government of Iraq or U.S. forces for most of 2006 and the first quarter of 2007. Al Qaeda, then the Islamic State of Iraq, controlled the province for a portion of that time. The central government ceased to supply the province with food and fuel by September 2006, and the provincial government recessed in October of last year.¹⁰ No central or provincial government control existed in the province from October 2006, through late January 2007. Few U.S. forces were present in the region.

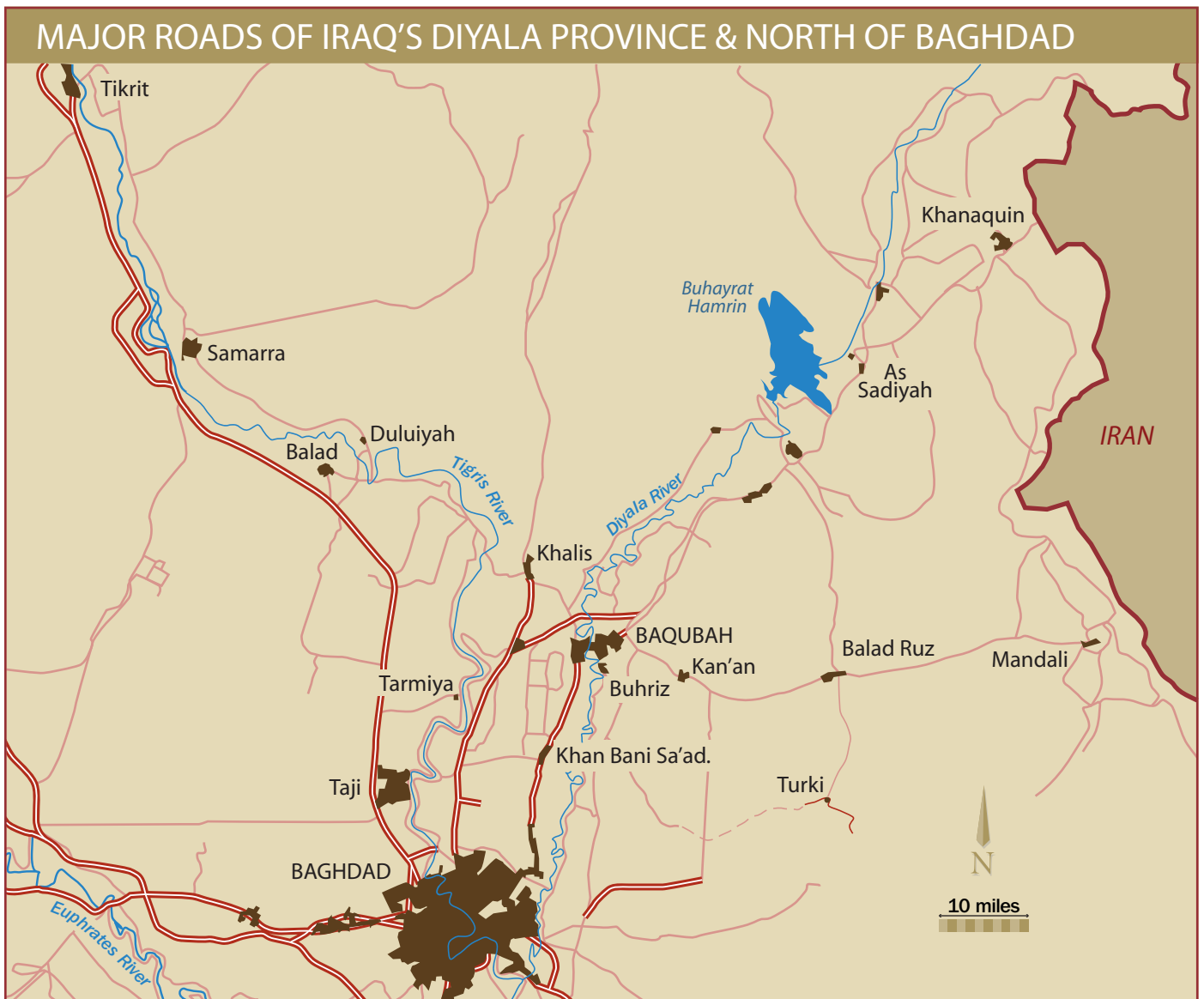
As the sectarian violence in Iraq spread in Fall 2006, extremist elements of different ethno-sectarian groups contested the area. Shiite militias and Iraqi Security Forces moved into the area from Baghdad to contest the presence of Sunni terrorists, arresting and killing hundreds upon

hundreds of Sunni civilians, while Kurds migrated southward toward Khanaqin, on the province's northeastern fringe, bordering on Iran. Some of the Kurds in Khanaqin are Shiite; Sunni Kurds also live nearby.¹¹

The province's proximity to Baghdad has enabled violent groups to travel from one area to the other with ease. Several north/south routes pass through or near Baqubah and connect that city with Baghdad. A highway from the eastern part of Baghdad runs to Baqubah, 35 miles north of Baghdad, through the town of Khan Bani Sa'ad. Another primary road from northeastern Baghdad runs just west of Baqubah, through the

nearby town of Khalis, and then north to Kirkuk. A secondary road from Khalis branches north-west along the Tigris and connects that city to Duluiyah, Samarra, and the villages across the Tigris from Tikrit. A third highway runs from the northwest of Baghdad, along the west bank of the Tigris, through the major U.S. base and airfield at Taji. That highway and its peripheral roads lead to the population centers at Tarmiya, Balad, and Tikrit.

From Baqubah, a primary road runs northeast to Muqdadia, a substantial city. At the town of As Sadiyah, northeast of Muqdadiah, this main road forks. One branch extends generally north



THE WEEKLY STANDARD

toward Sulamaniya; another branch runs northeast toward Khanaqin, near the Iranian border. A secondary road stretches east from Baqubah to Kan'an, Balad Ruz, and Mandali near the Iranian border. A highway connects Khalis and Kirkuk. Secondary roads fan out of Muqdadiyah and As Sadiyah and around Lake Hamrin, on which As Sadiyah is situated. These secondary roads eventually hit the main highways connecting the Kurdish region to Kirkuk.

The ethno-sectarian fault lines, the province's proximity to Baghdad, and Baqubah's position on the road network left the area exposed to fighters and refugees during the early months of the Baghdad Security Plan. Baqubah and Khalis in Diyala Province, and the cities of Tarmiya and Taji on the northern border of Baghdad Province, funneled the north/south and east/west movements of people entering and leaving Baghdad to the north.

*Setting Preconditions in Diyala
for the Baghdad Security Plan*

Colonel David Sutherland, commander of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, which operates in Diyala Province, explained in January that he had traced the extremists in Turki Village to violence in Baqubah, Khalis, Balad Ruz, and Muqdadiyah.¹² After Operation Turki Bowl, he established a combat outpost between Balad Ruz and Turki Village. U.S. and Iraqi forces worked with the government and leaders of Balad Ruz and surrounding areas to establish municipal control over rural terrain, to link the villages with the provincial government, and to establish a connection between the provincial and central governments.

Following Operation Turki Bowl, al Qaeda or an affiliated extremist group retaliated against the local population. Suicide bombers attacked processions during the Ashura holiday in Balad Ruz and Mandali. Another attacker placed a bomb in a garbage can in downtown Khanaqin, where Shiite Kurdish residents and pilgrims gathered for the procession.¹³ The suicide bombings are a hallmark of Sunni Islamic extremist groups. It is less clear that al Qaeda was responsible for the bombing at Khanaqin. Another Sunni extremist group might have planted that bomb.

U.S. and Iraqi forces, meanwhile, exploited intelligence given by residents and gleaned from their operations around Turki Village. Because U.S. forces controlled the rural terrain around Balad Ruz after the operation, they were able to move more freely into nearby areas where al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq operated: toward Baqubah, Buhriz (a village to its south), and Muqdadiyah.

OPERATIONS IN DIYALA PROVINCE

As the Baghdad Security Plan began, U.S. and Iraqi forces conducted shaping operations in Diyala province. Combat missions prioritized clearing the lines of communication through Diyala province, denying the enemy sanctuaries in towns and rural areas, and preparing to clear the cities and large towns in order to secure the population.

Units prioritized achieving freedom of maneuver along the roads outside Baqubah. Insurgents challenged Coalition control over the road network by emplacing improvised explosive devices (IEDs). By January 31, U.S. units were scouring the road through Muqdadiyah toward the Iranian border for weapons caches.¹⁴ On February 15, the 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, attached to the 3-1 Cavalry, conducted targeted raids in Muqdadiyah itself. There they captured an al Qaeda cell leader, who had kidnapped locals and emplaced IEDs, as well as other suspected terrorists. They also found 12 weapons caches, including two with IEDs ready for emplacement.¹⁵ This evidence suggests that the road through Muqdadiyah functioned as a supply-line for al Qaeda or for rogue Jaysh al Mahdi forces.

At the same time, U.S. and Iraqi forces conducted combat patrols east of Baqubah. On February 16, they found and detonated a large cache of weapons. Iraqi forces received evidence of insurgent activity and detained suspects nearby in Kan'an. Also in the second week of February, residents identified major weapons caches at Khan Bani Saad. Coalition forces removed the weapons and conducted searches and raids on other suspected caches in the province.¹⁶

The initial operations demonstrate the variety of enemy forces in Diyala province. On February 20, U.S. forces began to move into Buhriz, then an insurgent-controlled village, south of Baqubah. They conducted targeted raids against terrorist cells accused of murder, kidnapping, and emplacing IEDs.¹⁷ Operations on that date also targeted a foreign fighter facilitator network in coordinated raids in Ramadi, Falluja, and south of Baqubah (possibly Buhriz). It is not clear whether these raids targeted members of a coordinated network, or whether they were separate operations. South of Baqubah, coalition forces discovered terrorists, body armor, and a suicide vest, the hallmark of al Qaeda fighters. If these operations pursued a related network, it is possible to surmise that foreign fighters from the Syrian border were in Buhriz by February 21.¹⁸

By that time Iranian arms had also entered the province: a cache discovered at Mandali on that day contained 190 anti-personnel mines, five mortar rounds, a rocket-propelled grenade, and 133 millimeter rounds.¹⁹ Shiite militias were also operating in the province by then. On the same day, U.S. forces captured a senior Iraqi police official whom they suspected of using his position to organize sectarian violence, including kidnapping, torturing, murder.²⁰ Because police officials in Diyala were generally Shia at this time, this arrest suggests that rogue members of a militia operated in Diyala before Operation Enforcing the Law began.

Also on February 21, 3rd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, and 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 3rd BCT, 1st Cavalry Division, conducted targeted cordon and search operations against specific insurgent cells in Balour, a town in the vicinity of Muqdadiyah. One of these terrorists had emplaced an IED at a cellphone shop in November 2006, killing twelve people. Such attacks against civilians are generally the work of

Sunni insurgent groups, rather than rogue Jaysh al-Mahdi, and suggest that al Qaeda or other Sunni insurgents were already present and contesting Muqdadiyah at this time.²¹ Muqdadiyah is significant because it controls movement from Baqubah to the Iranian border; Sunni insurgents present might have been attempting to prevent the facilitation of weapons from Iran to Baqubah.

■ Taken together, U.S. operations indicate the beginnings of intelligence preparation of the battlefield, the phase when a unit reconnoiters an area, conducts raids and strikes, and engages in cordon and search operations in order to understand the nature of the enemy in an area and permit subsequent operations in territory that friendly forces do not yet hold.

Taken together, U.S. operations indicate the beginnings of intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB), the phase when a unit reconnoiters an area, conducts raids and strikes, and engages in cordon and search operations in order to understand the nature of the enemy in an area and permit subsequent operations in territory that friendly forces do not yet hold. This pattern characterized the movement of U.S. forces into neighborhoods in Baghdad, including Sadr City, throughout the month of February, as described in the second *Iraq Report*. As enemy forces occupied positions in Buhriz by this time in February, preparing the battlefield was a necessary condition for subsequent clearing operations. Follow-on operations targeted IED and ambush cells in Titten, near Baqubah.²²

Al Qaeda Counterattacks in Diyala

By the first week of March, the Islamic State of Iraq, the primary al Qaeda organization in Iraq, again attempted to disrupt Diyala. As in Anbar, some of its early attacks were apparently reprisals against locals affiliated with the Iraqi government, as well as civilians, in areas where Jaysh al Mahdi operated. For example, on March 2, the Islamic State of Iraq kidnapped and killed 15 Iraqi Police officers in southern Diyala.²³ Three days later, a suicide bomber killed 28 civilians at a coffee shop in Dor Mandali, a few kilometers south of Balad Ruz.²⁴

The U.S. Prepares for an Offensive in Diyala

U.S. and Iraqi forces continued to challenge terrorist groups straddling the lines of communication between Iran and Baghdad. Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 505th Infantry Regiment, attached to the 6-9 Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 3rd BCT, and Iraqi soldiers from the 3rd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army Division, were patrolling Muqdadiah routinely by March 8. On that day, they discovered caches of IED making supplies and IEDs. They also apprehended three people riding a motorcycle, carrying a mortar round prepared to detonate.²⁵ These motorcycles were the hallmark of al Qaeda-linked fighters operating in the irrigation canals around Turki Village during the January offensive into that area, and so it seems reasonable to conclude that these suspects were linked to the remainder of that portion of the al Qaeda network. COL David Sutherland reported that tribes near Muqdadiah were fighting al Qaeda.²⁶

On March 10, the Iraqi Army, with its Military Transition Team (MiTT) advisors, conducted targeted raids against terrorist cells in As Sadiyah, a town halfway between Muqdadiah and the border crossing at Khanaqin.²⁷ On the same day, criminals burned fifteen houses and killed livestock in the rural town of Towakel, six kilometers northeast of Muqdadiah. They used IEDs to bomb homes and farm structures. Such an attack suggests that their goal was displacing residents from the area or terrorizing them into cooperating. The local population fled when it no longer had ammunition to fight. When they left the area, the terrorists destroyed their abandoned homes and cars. COL Sutherland stated that al Qaeda in Iraq was responsible for the attack.²⁸ It is not clear whether the enemy operating in Towakel was displaced from As Sadiyah, or a separate group pushing into areas northeast of Muqdadiah in order to gain control over rural terrain for training camps or weapons caches—or to oppose the flow of settlers from Kurdish regions into the area.

To retain control of Muqdadiah and its environs, U.S. forces began a neighborhood watch program that hires local residents to protect their own village. The former governor of Diyala, Dr.

Abdulla al Jubouri, runs the program, which he believes has helped end fighting between competing villages, provided security to reopen schools, and allow travel along area roads.²⁹ Mayor Najim of Muqdadiah stated that the program gave poor residents an incentive to work against the terrorists, rather than accepting their funding to emplace improvised explosive devices.³⁰

The program also generated recruits from the province for the Iraqi police force. As a reprisal, a female suicide bomber, most likely al Qaeda, targeted Iraqi police in front of the Muqdadiah police station on April 10, 2007.³¹

On March 14, U.S. and Iraqi forces advanced into the village of Shakarat, three kilometers north of Muqdadiah. The village contains the only bridge across the Marrouk Canal. As a result, several roads intersect in the village. It became a hub on the lines of communication used by Sunni insurgents.³² Before U.S. forces arrived, the school in Shakarat flew the al Qaeda flag. In the first week of operations, U.S. and Iraqi soldiers closed the bridge to traffic, established combat outposts in the town, and patrolled the area.³³ On March 17, Iraqi forces shot and killed a suicide bomber running toward a checkpoint south of Shakarat.³⁴ The U.S. and Iraqi operations in Shakarat preceded their larger, coordinated offensive in Diyala.

U.S. REINFORCES DIYALA

Major General Benjamin Mixon, the commander of Multi-National Division-North (MND-N, the command responsibly for Diyala, Ninewah, and much of Salah-ad-Din provinces) requested additional forces for Diyala Province to assist forces already in the province with securing the cities and roads in the area. LTG Odierno reinforced Diyala with the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, a Stryker Battalion (the Stryker is a mobile, armored vehicle with significant firepower capabilities) from Taji.³⁵ They had previously operated in Mosul and Baghdad. The Strykers arrived in Diyala on March 13.³⁶ The reinforcements increased the troop density and mobility in the province. Prior to their arrival, only “a few dozen

foot soldiers and a few tanks from Company B of the 1-12 Battalion” patrolled “the area from eastern Baquba to Zaganiya—an insurgent-dominated region of hundreds of thousands of people.”³⁷

As the reinforcement arrived, COL Sutherland explained that in Diyala, “attacks against coalition forces and Iraqi security forces” increased “over the past several months. These attacks are in part due to the Iraqi army—their growing capabilities and effectiveness. However,

due to our increased operations, partnered with the Iraqi army and Iraqi police, the enemy is increasing relying on surface-laid, hastily emplaced IEDs. On the other hand, we have also seen a drop in the overall sectarian violence in the province. Attacks against the local population are becoming more spectacular to induce fear with the people. This is the enemy we are facing right now, an enemy that targets innocent civilians, that destroys their homes and even their mosques. Even though they have changed their names to the Islamic State of Iraq to portray themselves as an Iraqi resistance group, this is the same foreign-led group dedicated to death and destruction. The deployment of the 5th Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment Strykers will support our current counterinsurgency strategy. They will be used to build upon recent successes in the area of Buhriz, Tahrir, Mufrek and in the Baqubah area.”³⁸

COL Sutherland assigned the Stryker battalion to the area around Buhriz, just south of Baqubah. The date palm groves around Buhriz, and the underbrush beneath them, provided good cover for insurgents. Within 48 hours of beginning offensive operations, the Stryker battalion found and destroyed a large weapons cache, including 300 blasting caps (used to make IEDs), and terrorist documents.³⁹

Members of Sunni Islamic extremist groups counterattacked with a suicide bombing. On March 16, Iraqi forces killed a suicide bomber as he attempted to assassinate the police chief of Balad Ruz, who was visited the local Hospital.

■ Attacks against the local population are becoming more spectacular to induce fear with the people. This is the enemy we are facing right now, an enemy that targets innocent civilians, that destroys their homes and even their mosques.

The combat patrols near Buhriz preceded a major, multi-week clearing operation that lasted from March 24 through April 8. This operation targeted “an Islamic State of Iraq power base at the Diyala River Valley,” in Zaganiyah and Qubah, villages halfway between Baqubah and Muqadiyah along the Tigris (rather than the main road).⁴⁰ During these operations, elements of the 5th Iraqi Army Division and U.S. Army 5th

Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, attached to the 3rd BCT, 1st Cavalry Division, captured and killed terrorists and discovered eight weapons caches.⁴¹ On March 29, these same units discovered a fortified defensive position and al-Qaeda training camp in the palm groves at Zaganiyah.⁴² They subsequently discovered seven more large weapons caches, for a total of 15, killed 30 terrorists, and detained 28 suspects.⁴³ So approximately 60 al-Qaeda terrorists, with over 17,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition, 130 mortar rounds,

175 rocket propelled grenades, 80 grenades, 20 IEDs, and IED making material had been operating from these bases, training camps, and fortified positions.⁴⁴ The enemy in Zaganiyah, like the enemy in Turki Village, was well-trained, well organized, well-supplied, and capable of conducting complex attacks and from well-established defenses.

The following day, and perhaps in response, al Qaeda effectively detonated three suicide car and truck bombs in Khalis, Iraq, to the west of Zaganiyah on the far side of the Tigris. The first two bombs targeted civilians, and a subsequent bomb targeted first-responders from the Iraqi Security Forces.⁴⁵ Unlike the previous suicide bombings in Diyala, which were conducted by individuals, this attack used vehicles and required more sophisticated timing and coordination. (The next spectacular vehicle borne bombs incidents in Diyala occurred nearly three weeks later, on April 23 and 24, in Baqubah and As Sadah, respectively.) In March, U.S. and Iraqi forces arrested Khalis’s

police chief for inciting sectarian violence, indicating that rogue Shiite militias likely operated in the city.⁴⁶ So the al Qaeda attack on Khalis presumably targeted that city because Shiite militias operated there.

U.S. forces thus encircled Baqubah and attempted to cut the insurgents' supply lines into the city. They then moved into the city itself.⁴⁷

U.S. forces cleared Old Baqubah and Buhriz (south of Baqubah), shortly after completing the major operation to push the Islamic State of Iraq and al Qaeda from Zaganiyah. The Baqubah City Council advised the U.S. and Iraqi forces that they wished to reopen the Old Baqubah market to safe commerce. Elements of the 5th Stryker Battalion, 20th Infantry Regiment, cleared the market of Old Baqubah during a multi-day operation that began on April 2. That unit maintained a 24 hour presence in the area, hunted for terrorists, identified weapons caches, and established checkpoints to search vehicles moving into the area.⁴⁸ They "hardened" the neighborhood, replacing concrete barriers throughout it to prevent vehicle bombs and to protect the Iraqi Security Forces there. Subsequently, the Stryker Battalion, along with several Iraqi Army and Police units, entered Buhriz.⁴⁹ They conducted house to house searches for terrorists and weapons on April 10.⁵⁰ They discovered five weapons caches there on April 12, including one vehicle bomb. These caches were sufficiently important that terrorists set up an observation post to guard at least one of them.⁵¹ Many of the terrorists left Buhriz before the Strykers arrived.⁵² The U.S. and Iraqi forces planned to open an Iraqi Police station in Buhriz.

By April 15, U.S. soldiers had established seven combat outposts in and around Baqubah, and residents were returning to Buhriz. Tribal leaders from Buhriz met in the government center and distributed food to their people. Some insurgents—mounted on the scooters typical of Sunni extremist groups—fought in the vicinity of these combat outposts.⁵³ A week later, U.S. forces reported that local residents of Zaganiyah were volunteering information about the location of weapons caches.⁵⁴ Sunni tribal leaders in As Sadah, just north of Baqubah along the road to Muqdadiyah, and Had Maskar, near Zaganiyah

(north of Baqubah along the Diyala), then began to cooperate with residents, Iraqi Security Forces, and U.S. forces after al Qaeda had been cleared from the area.⁵⁵

Al Qaeda responded with a coordinated attack on one of the seven new U.S. combat outposts—the one in As Sadah, which had been open since March. But the vehicle borne explosive did not destroy the combat outpost; rather, the shockwave of the blast toppled a wall of the building and several homes and a mosque nearby. Al Qaeda achieved this effect by coordinating small arms and two vehicle bombs.⁵⁶ As Sadah controls communications between Khalis and Lake Hamrin. Presumably, al Qaeda also sought to destroy that outpost because the local Sunni tribal leaders cooperated with Americans, a pattern that a previous *Iraq Report* found in Anbar province.

Yet, even as al Qaeda targeted the local Sunni population, provincial government in Diyala resumed with the assistance of U.S. forces and Iraqi officials. The fuel shortage in Diyala was one of the province's most urgent problems. On March 18, the governor of Diyala province met with the director general of Diyala's oil ministry in an attempt to restore fuel services to the province. The director general agreed to relocate from Khanaqin, on the Iranian border, to offices in Baqubah. Border enforcement officials were also present at that meeting.⁵⁷ The governor and the Diyala Provincial Council met on April 23 to discuss the province's budget.⁵⁸ A vehicle-borne bomb exploded outside, near the council's headquarters, at a checkpoint through which a Coalition convoy had previously passed through safely, indicating that the local government, rather than Coalition forces, was the target of the attack.⁵⁹

IRANIAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR NORTH OF BAGHDAD

Iranian weapons were smuggled into and through Diyala Province in the first quarter of 2007. U.S. and Iraqi forces worked to discover the pattern by which they were smuggled, to interdict the flow of weapons, and to identify the

smugglers who were responsible for this activity.

Furthermore, facilitators from Iran and northern Iraq supplied weapons and men to the province from February through April 2007. When the Baghdad Security Plan began on February 14, U.S. and Iraqi forces closed certain ports of entry (border crossings) into the country for seventy-two hours.⁶⁰ On February 17, Iraqi border enforcement officials discovered a cache near the Iranian border, where a donkey stood unaccompanied by a person.⁶¹ Presumably, smugglers had used the animal to carry weapons to that location, or else were intending to use the animal to carry weapons from that location. A previous *Iraq Report* has documented the discovery on February 21 of one such cache, probably supplied from Iran, in Mandali, a city on the Iranian border, south of Khanaqin along the road network to Baghdad and Kut. At the time, the *Iraq Report* surmised that the weapons were intended for al Qaeda operatives, who had recently been the primary enemy in the area.

On February 24, Iraqi Police and Coalition forces discovered a major cache of the sophisticated disks used to make explosively formed projectiles (EFPs), the lethal improvised explosive devices imported from Iran, near al Jedidah. This town is conveniently located on the east bank of the Tigris River, along the highway from northeastern Baghdad to Khalis, convenient to both lines of supply.⁶² In addition to the 130 EFP disks, the cache contained improvised mines in various states of production, containers for making IEDs, five anti-aircraft rounds, six rocket launchers, IED making materials, 24 mortar rounds, and 15 rockets.⁶³ It is not possible to discern whether fighters had located these weapons there in order to import them into Baghdad, to concentrate them in Diyala for fighting there and in neighboring provinces, or to export them from

Baghdad to Diyala or Salah ad-Din provinces. Though these weapons originated in Iran, it is not clear whether the cache belonged to rogue elements of the Jaysh al Mahdi, to al Qaeda, or to other insurgent groups. Yet rogue elements of the Jaysh al Mahdi are located in both Khalis and northeastern Baghdad.

Iraqi forces, supported by U.S. forces, discovered another cache near Mandali on April 4.⁶⁴ In the early morning hours of April 4, Iraqi forces, with U.S. support, conducted a sweep of a site in Imam al-Hajj Yusuf Village, a town five miles southwest of Mandali, on the eastern edge of the well-irrigated, Diyala plain. The village is not far from the mountains near the Iranian border. A small road connects the village with Mandali, and another route leads back toward the main east-west road toward Balad Ruz. This operation resulted in the detention of four suspects and the seizure of a large ammunitions cache.⁶⁵ These types of operations generally signal the presence of U.S. Special Forces. The topography, arrest, and cache suggest that this operation aimed to interdict weapons smuggling across the Iranian border.

In March, U.S. forces detained important figures in the Qazali network. General Petraeus described the network and the detainees as “the head of the secret cell network, the extremist secret cells. They were provided substantial funding, training on Iranian soil, advanced explosive munitions and technologies as well as run of the mill arms and ammunition, in some cases advice and in some cases even a degree of direction. . . . There’s no question, again, that Iranian financing is taking place through the Quds force of the Iranian Republican Guards Corps.”⁶⁶ Open-source information has not yet revealed specifically where in Iraq the Qazali network operated, but, presumably, it was based in

■ In March, U.S. forces detained important figures in the Qazali network. General Petraeus described the network and the detainees as “the head of the secret cell network, the extremist secret cells. They were provided substantial funding, training on Iranian soil, advanced explosive munitions and technologies as well as run of the mill arms and ammunition, in some cases advice and in some cases even a degree of direction....”

Shia areas. Diyala province is only one possibility. The southern provinces of Iraq and Baghdad's Sadr City also seem plausible. Again, this is speculation only.

Iranian arms have also reached Sunni insurgents. For example, U.S. and Iraqi forces found a cache containing 250 81mm mortar rounds north of Abu Ghraib (west of Baghdad) on February 3.⁶⁷ Iran exports 81mm mortars, whereas other states in the region use and export 82mm tubes and shells.⁶⁸ Sunni insurgents held the area west of Baghdad. So it is reasonable to assume that Sunni insurgents had acquired Iranian arms no later than early February.

U.S. and Iraqi forces detained seven members of the Quds force (an elite Iranian military organization) in Iraq in 2007. A weapons smuggler named Sheibani provided the information that led to the detention of the Quds operatives. His network smuggled explosively formed projectiles (EFPs) from Iran into Iraq. The detainee's brother operated mainly from Iran, presumably acquiring and exporting the weapons. The detainee himself operated primarily in Iraq, distributing the weapons to purchasers, who were generally "extremist elements . . . of these secret cells" of the Qazali network.⁶⁹

Iran or Iranians provided some services to the general population of Diyala province at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007. In January 2007, Baqubah had, on average, 12 hours of electricity per day, and other areas in Diyala Province had 11 hours.⁷⁰ Iran exported electricity to the province.⁷¹ According to U.S. forces, Iranians and insurgents broadcast radio stations to the people of Balad Ruz until the town opened a new radio station in December.⁷² By the end of March, an independent radio and television station began to broadcast in Diyala province (and to a total audience of 11 million people in Tikrit, Hillah, Baghdad, and Falluja, as well as all of Diyala).⁷³

Two insurgent supply lines traversed Diyala in February, March, and April 2007. One ran from Iran through Muqdadiah into northern Baqubah (a predominantly Shiite area), and another through Mandali to southern Baqubah or Buhriz (which Sunni insurgents have controlled). Rogue Jaysh al Mahdi or other Shiite extremists

might have controlled both supply lines. Alternatively, one sectarian group (perhaps the Jaysh al Mahdi) controlled the supply line from Muqdadiah to northern Baqubah, and another controlled the supply line from Mandali to Buhriz. Sunni extremists established bases and training camps about half-way along both of these supply routes, suggesting that they aimed either to cut them or facilitate the movement of weapons along them.

Terrorism along the Roads to the Kurdish Region

The road beyond Muqdadiah extends to As Sadiyah. Beyond that town, the road forks. One branch extends northeast toward Khanaqin, a town where Shiite Kurds reside, and from there to the Iranian border. The other branch of the road extends north to Jalula, and from there, northeast along the rough, riverine terrain to Kalar, Darband i Khan, and Sulamaniyah—one of the major cities in the Kurdish Region of Iraq. Violence in As Sadiyah, Jalula, and Khanaqin in the spring 2007, might well pertain to the conflict between Kurdish extremists and local inhabitants, as well as to the supply of weapons from Iran.

Eight insurgents, in two different vehicles, conducted an organized attack against a health clinic in Jalula on April 12. The clinic had not yet received patients. The insurgents evacuated the hospital staff and then destroyed the building with explosives.⁷⁴

AL QAEDA VIOLENCE BEYOND DIYALA

Al Qaeda, the Islamic State of Iraq, and their foreign fighter facilitator network extended beyond Diyala province to the nearby towns of Tarmiyah, Balad, and Samara. Roads link Baqubah and Khalis with Samarra via Duluyiah, all of which are east of the Tigris. On the west bank of the Tigris, a road links Baghdad, Taji, Tarmiyah, and Balad. The population east of the river is more heavily Shia, and west of the river, Sunni, especially in the proximity of Baghdad.⁷⁵

A Sunni insurgent group established itself in

the Jabouri Peninsula, ten miles east of Balad but on the north and east side of the Tigris, some time before mid-October 2006. At that time, they kidnapped and murdered 14 Shia, causing four days of sectarian violence in nearby Balad. At the start of the Baghdad Security Plan, U.S. forces cleared the Jabouri Peninsula in order to prevent insurgents fleeing Baghdad from establishing themselves in the area and in order to deny the area to insurgents moving into Baghdad from the north. Some insurgent leaders escaped.⁷⁶ Less than ten days later, coalition forces captured three men suspected of foreign fighter facilitation northeast of Samarra.⁷⁷ A subsequent operation in Samarra apprehended suspects who were part of a network that allegedly acquired passports and sold weapons.⁷⁸ And on March 8, U.S. and Iraqi forces captured other terrorists in Duluyiah, a town at the top of the Jabouri Peninsula, on the road between Samarra and Khalis. Local residents informed Iraqi Security Forces about these terrorists, and the Iraqi Army, reinforced from Tikrit and accompanied by a U.S. force, apprehended the suspects.⁷⁹

Duluyiah might then have been a significant hub for the foreign fighter network. A bridge from Duluyiah connects both banks of the Tigris. The road over the bridge leads quickly from the peninsula to the town of Balad. Taken together, this evidence suggests that foreign fighters (usually part of the al Qaeda network) moved along the east bank of the Tigris south to Samarra in February and March. If so, their route began north of Mosul and proceeded through that city, and from there, south toward Tikrit along the roads or open countryside. In late February, U.S. and Iraqi forces apprehended al Qaeda operatives and vehicles rigged with explosives in both Mosul and Tikrit.⁸⁰

Less than a month after the Baghdad Security Plan began, rogue Jaysh al-Mahdi cells operated in Balad, west of the Tigris. From that location,

they supplied weapons to rogue Shiite militias in order to facilitate sectarian killing.⁸¹ Their location suggests that rogue Jaysh al-Mahdi elements used the Tigris roads as their supply line. Rogue

Jaysh al-Mahdi also operated in Taji, where many al Qaeda elements concentrated on their way into or out of Baghdad in February and March. JAM might have moved weapons toward Baghdad from Samarra, or supplied weapons to Samarra from Baghdad. It is reasonable to conclude that in Salah ad-Din, as in Diyala, rogue Jaysh al Mahdi cells and al Qaeda contested one another along the main and secondary supply routes.

Tarmiyah, likewise, has been contested and used by al Qaeda and the Islamic State of Iraq since January. Most significantly, insurgents staged a coordinated, complex attack using a vehicle bomb and other weapons to attack a U.S. outpost there on February 19.⁸² U.S. forces detained a senior al Qaeda leader in Tarmiyah on April 20, 2007, reacting to information provided by residents of the area.⁸³

■ At the start of the year, al Qaeda controlled sizable areas of the province and its capital, Baqubah, and the Islamic State of Iraq had established its own “capital” in Turki Village. Coalition operations destroyed the “emirate” south of Balad Ruz, cleared many areas the terrorists had held, and helped to turn the population against al Qaeda.

CONCLUSIONS

The cycle of attacks and counter-attacks by Coalition forces and al Qaeda has not produced a stalemate in Diyala province. In general terms, al Qaeda has lost significant ground. At the start of the year, al Qaeda controlled sizable areas of the province and its capital, Baqubah, and the Islamic State of Iraq had established its own “capital” in Turki Village. Coalition clearing operations destroyed the “emirate” south of Balad Ruz, cleared many areas the terrorists had held, and helped to turn the population against al Qaeda.

This report has focused on al Qaeda because illegal killings by Jaysh al Mahdi fighters dropped significantly in the province, as they have in

Baghdad. Sectarian violence fell in Diyala by 70 percent between July 2006 and February 2007, indicating that JAM fighters in the province are largely obeying the dictates of Moqtada al Sadr to refrain from killing Sunnis, even in the face of continued al Qaeda provocations.

Violence in the province overall remains high, however, as attacks against Coalition forces and Iraqi security forces increased. According to COL Sutherland, “This is an indication . . . that . . . the terrorists are trying to disrupt the operations by Coalition forces working with the Iraqi security forces and taking the fight, instead of the innocent people of Diyala . . . , to the security forces.”⁸⁴

Securing Baghdad is essential for securing Diyala. When security permits the central government to function better, “increased services” could flow into “the province, [namely] increased fuel distribution and increased food distribution,”

according to COL Sutherland. “[T]he ministry of oil and the ministry of trade” subsidize such distributions. “And the governor [of Diyala] has been working very hard with the national government to increase those opportunities for the people.”⁸⁵ The local government has taken a number of positive steps to regain effective control of the province, although much remains to be done. The central government in Baghdad has also reached out, albeit in a limited way, to establish contact with the embattled people of Diyala. Violence in Diyala is likely to last for a long time, and will probably outlast the beginning of major operations in Baghdad. But coalition and Iraqi operations in the province have reversed the trend of increasing al Qaeda control and are allowing and encouraging the local people to take up the fight against terrorists as the people of Anbar have done. Amidst the violence of war in Diyala, this is a hopeful sign.

Endnotes

- 1 “The Jim Lehrer Show,” Interview with General David Petraeus, U.S. Army, Commanding General, Multinational Force-Iraq; Subject: The Situation in Iraq; Interviewer: Jim Lehrer; Wednesday, April 3, 2007.
- 2 Operational update briefing by Colonel David W. Sutherland, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Commander, and Major General Shakir Halail Husain, 5th Iraqi Division Commander. Location: Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq, by video-conference to the Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq. Time: 8:30 a.m. EDT Date: Friday, March 16, 2007.
- 3 Defense Department Special Briefing with General David Petraeus, Commander, Multinational Force Iraq, “Update on Security Operations in Iraq,” Pentagon Briefing Room, Arlington, Virginia, April 26, 2007.
- 4 Defense Department Special Briefing with General David Petraeus, Commander, Multinational Force Iraq, “Update on Security Operations in Iraq,” Pentagon Briefing Room, Arlington, Virginia, April 26, 2007.
- 5 Defense Department Special Briefing with General David Petraeus, Commander, Multinational Force Iraq, “Update on Security Operations in Iraq,” Pentagon Briefing Room, Arlington, Virginia, April 26, 2007.
- 6 Defense Department Special Briefing with General David Petraeus, Commander, Multinational Force Iraq, “Update on Security Operations in Iraq,” Pentagon Briefing Room, Arlington, Virginia, April 26, 2007.
- 7 Defense Department Special Briefing with General David Petraeus, Commander, Multinational Force Iraq, “Update on Security Operations in Iraq,” Pentagon Briefing Room, Arlington, Virginia, April 26, 2007.
- 8 Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, “U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply,” *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
- 9 Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, “U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply,” *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
- 10 Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, “U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply,” *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
- 11 Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, “U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply,” *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
- 12 Continuing Operations in Turki Village Net Huge Weapons Caches,” American Forces Press Service, January 11, 2007 (web).
- 13 Kim Gamel, “Bomb strikes in Iraq kills at least 29 during Ashoura ceremonies,” Associated Press, January 30, 2007, 11:59 a.m. EST; Deutsche Presse-Agentur, “At least 12 Iraqis killed, 23 wounded in a blast in Khanaqin,” January 30, 2007, 12:51 PM EST.
- 14 “Soldiers from Troop C, 6th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment search for weapons caches near the Iranian border in Muqdadiyah, Iraq,” www.army.mil/-images/2007/01/31/2208; photo by SPC. Elisha Dawkins, January 31, 2007.
- 15 Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Release No. 20070216-19, Feb. 16, 2007, “IA, CF target terrorist cells in Muqdadiyah,” Multi-National Division – North PAO.
- 16 Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Release No. 20070210-19, Feb. 10, 2007, “Local citizen leads IA, CF to weapons caches in factory,” Multi-National Division – North PAO; Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Release No. 20070210-08, Feb. 10, 2007, “Building explodes in Diyala,” Multi-National Division – North PAO.
- 17 MNC-I Release No. 20070221-18, “Iraqi Army, Coalition Forces Clear Buhriz,” Multi-National Division-North PAO, February 21, 2007; Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, “U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply,” *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
- 18 MNF-I Release A070221b, “Seven terrorists killed, 13 detained in VBIED, foreign fighter raids,” February 21, 2007.
- 19 MNC-I Release 20070222-09, “Border element discovers cache,” MND-North PAO, February 22, 2007.
- 20 MNF-I, Release 20070222b, “IA and CF detain Iraqi Police Official in Baqubah,” February 22, 2007.
- 21 MNC-I Release No. 20070221-16, “Joint Operation leads to detention of AIF,” Multi-National Division-North PAO, February 21, 2007.
- 22 MNC-I Release No. 20070226-12, “Iraqi Army, Coalition Forces disrupt terrorist cells in Titten,” MND-North PAO, February 26, 2007.
- 23 MNC-I Release No. 20070304-06, “Leaders must condemn IP murders,” MND-North PAO, March 4, 2007.
- 24 MNC-I Release No. 20070308-09, “Suicide bomber kills 28, wounds 31 in Balad Ruz coffee shop,” MND-North PAO, March 8, 2007.
- 25 “Patrol leads to discovery of caches,” Sgt. Serena

- Hayden, 3rd BCT, 1st Cav. Div., March 14, 2007, MNF-Iraq.
- 26 Operational update briefing by Colonel David W. Sutherland, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Commander, and Major General Shakir Halail Husain, 5th Iraqi Division Commander. Location: Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq, by videoconference to the Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq. Time: 8:30 a.m. EDT Date: Friday, March 16, 2007..
 - 27 MNC-I Release No. 20070313-03, "Iraqi Army stops 27 terrorist cel members in As Sadiyah," MND-North PAO, March 11, 2007.
 - 28 MNC-I Release 20070313-18, "Criminals victimize innocent Iraqis," MND-North PAO, March 13, 2007; Operational update briefing by Colonel David W. Sutherland, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Commander, and Major General Shakir Halail Husain, 5th Iraqi Division Commander. Location: Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq, by videoconference to the Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq. Time: 8:30 a.m. EDT Date: Friday, March 16, 2007.
 - 29 MNF-I, "Neighborhood watch program shows success in Muqdadiyah district," April 8, 2007.
 - 30 MNF-I, "Neighborhood watch program shows success in Muqdadiyah district," April 8, 2007.
 - 31 MNC-I Release 20070411-12, "Coalition forces discover sizable cache," MND-North PAO, April 13, 2007; Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, "U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply," *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
 - 32 "U.S., Iraqi Forces Target Diyala Insurgents," Jamie Tarabay, National Public Radio, Morning Edition, March 21, 2007.
 - 33 "U.S., Iraqi Forces Target Diyala Insurgents," Jamie Tarabay, National Public Radio, Morning Edition, March 21, 2007.
 - 34 MNC-I Release 20070318-14, "Iraqi Security Forces stop suicide bombers," MNF-North PAO, March 18, 2007.
 - 35 Richard A. Oppel Jr. and an Iraqi reporter for the New York Times, "Attacks Surge as Iraq Militants Overshadow City," *New York Times*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A1.
 - 36 MNC-I Release 20070313-09, "Stryker Battalion arrives in Diyala Province," MND-North PAO, March 13, 2007.
 - 37 Richard A. Oppel Jr. and an Iraqi reporter for the New York Times, "Attacks Surge as Iraq Militants Overshadow City," *New York Times*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A1.
 - 38 Operational update briefing by Colonel David W. Sutherland, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Commander, and Major General Shakir Halail Husain, 5th Iraqi Division Commander. Location: Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq, by videoconference to the Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq. Time: 8:30 a.m. EDT Date: Friday, March 16, 2007..
 - 39 MNC-I Release No. 20070320-05, "Strykers discover cache in Diyala palm groves," MND-North PAO, March 20, 2007.
 - 40 MNF-I "Joint operation disrupts anti-Iraqi forces," Sgt. Armando Monroig, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, March 30, 2007; MNC-I Release No. 20070402-11, "Iraqi Security Forces, Cavalry discover extremist training camp," MND-North PAO, April 2, 2007; MNC-I Release No. 20070408-02, "Joint operation clears terrorists from Diyala River Valley," April 8, 2007.
 - 41 MNF-I "Joint operation disrupts anti-Iraqi forces," Sgt. Armando Monroig, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, March 30, 2007.
 - 42 MNC-I Release No. 20070402-11, "Iraqi Security Forces, Cavalry discover extremist training camp," MND-North PAO, April 2, 2007.
 - 43 MNC-I Release No. 20070408-02, "Joint operation clears terrorists from Diyala River Valley," April 8, 2007.
 - 44 MNC-I Release No. 20070408-02, "Joint operation clears terrorists from Diyala River Valley," April 8, 2007.
 - 45 MNC-I Release No. 20070330-17, "Three suicide VBIEDs target Khalis population," MND-North PAO, March 30, 2007.
 - 46 Richard A. Oppel Jr. and an Iraqi reporter for the New York Times, "Attacks Surge as Iraq Militants Overshadow City," *New York Times*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A1.
 - 47 Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, "U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply," *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
 - 48 Staff Sgt. Antonieta Rico, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, "Stryker Battalion restores market security," MNF-I, April 16, 2007.
 - 49 Staff Sgt. Antonieta Rico, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, "Effort under way to clear market," *Northwest Guardian*, April 19th, 2007.
 - 50 Staff Sgt. Antonieta Rico, 5th Mobile Public Affairs

- Detachment, "Soldiers in Baqouba keep pressure on Al-Qaida in Iraq, Monday, 23 April 2007.
- 51 MNC-I Release No. 20070412-03, "Iraqi Army, Iraqi Police, Coalition force members deny enemy territory in Buhriz," MND-North PAO, April 12, 2007.
- 52 Staff Sgt. Antonietta Rico, 5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, "Soldiers in Baqouba keep pressure on Al-Qaida in Iraq, Monday, 23 April 2007.
- 53 Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, "U.S. Bolstering Force in Deadly Diyala; Violence Against Troops Has Risen Sharply," *Washington Post*, Monday, April 16, 2007, A11.
- 54 MNC-I Release No. 20070423-02, "Coalition Forces see progress in Diyala River Valley," Multi-National Division – North PAO, April 23, 2007.
- 55 MNC-I Release No. 20070423-02, "Coalition Forces see progress in Diyala River Valley," Multi-National Division – North PAO, April 23, 2007.
- 56 Multi-National Corps-Iraq, Release No. 20070425-01, "SVBIEDs target Coalition patrol base in Diyala province," Multi-National Division – North PAO, April 25, 2007.
- 57 CENTCOM Release No. 07-01-03, "Diyala leadership to fix fuel shortage in province," March 21, 2007.
- 58 MNC-I Release No. 20070423-13, "VBIED detonates near Diyala's provincial council headquarters," Multi-National Division – North PAO, April 23, 2007.
- 59 MNC-I Release No. 20070423-13, "VBIED detonates near Diyala's provincial council headquarters," Multi-National Division – North PAO, April 23, 2007.
- 60 Borzou Daragahi, Times Staff Writer, "Iraq unveils Baghdad security moves; Some border crossings are to close temporarily, and residents will lose more freedoms. The killings continue." *Los Angeles Times*, February 14, 2007, Home Edition, A3.
- 61 MNC-I Release 200702017-03, "Donkey leads border patrol to cache, suspect," MND-North PAO, February 17, 2007.
- 62 MNC-I Release No. 20070226-05, "EFP Cache footage available on DVIDS," February 26, 2007.
- 63 MNC-I Release No. 20070226-01, "Iraqi Police, Coalition Forces Discover Large EFP Cache," MND-North PAO, February 26, 2007.
- 64 MNC-I Release No. 20070404-16, "Iraqi Security Forces discover weapons cache," April 4, 2007.
- 65 MNC-I Release No. 20070404-16, "Iraqi Security Forces discover weapons cache," April 4, 2007.
- 66 Defense Department Special Briefing with General David Petraeus, Commander, Multinational Force Iraq, "Update on Security Operations in Iraq," Pentagon Briefing Room, Arlington, Virginia, April 26, 2007.
- 67 MNC-I Release No. 20070207-10, "Iraqi Soldiers, U.S. troops find weapons cache near Abu Ghraib," February 7, 2007.
- 68 Media roundtable with Maj. Gen. William Caldwell IV, MNF-I spokesman, and Maj. Marty Weber, 79th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit, Baghdad, April 11, 2007.
- 69 Defense Department Special Briefing with General David Petraeus, Commander, Multinational Force Iraq, "Update on Security Operations in Iraq," Pentagon Briefing Room, Arlington, Virginia, April 26, 2007.
- 70 Joint Press Conference with Colonel David Sutherland, Commander of 3rd BCT, 1st Calvary Division; Sergeant Steve Lynne (Sp), Bravo Troop 5th Squadron, 73rd Calvary Regiment; Staff Sergeant Glenn Bennett (Sp), Alpha Troop 573; Major Brett Sylvia, Operations Officer, 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment; Captain Stephen Dobbins, Company Commander, 3-505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division; Major General Shakur, Commander, 5th Iraqi Army Division; And Major General Ghanam, Iraqi National Police Moderator: Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Garver, Director, Cpic; Location: The Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq, January 22, 2007.
- 71 Joshua Partlow, Washington Post Foreign Service, "Tehran's Influence Grows As Iraqis See Advantages," *Washington Post*, January 26, 2007, A1.
- 72 Spc. Ryan Stroud, 3rd BCT Public Affairs, "Radio Station Opens Doors, Provides Freedom of Speech," *Armed Forces News*, December 28, 2006; Joint Press Conference with Colonel David Sutherland, Commander Of 3rd BCT, 1st Calvary Division; Sergeant Steve Lynne (Sp), Bravo Troop 5th Squadron, 73rd Calvary Regiment; Staff Sergeant Glenn Bennett (Sp), Alpha Troop 573; Major Brett Sylvia, Operations Officer, 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment; Captain Stephen Dobbins, Company Commander, 3-505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division; Major General Shakur, Commander, 5th Iraqi Army Division; and Major General Ghanam, Iraqi National Police Moderator: Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Garver, Director, CPIC; Location: the Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq, January 22, 2007.
- 73 MNF-I, "Iraqi independent TV, radio launches," March 28, 2007, compiled by Spc. Stephen P. Kretsinger, Sr..
- 74 MNC-I Release No. 20070415-15, "Terrorists destroy

- local clinic in Diyala,” MND-North PAO, April 15, 2007.
- 75 Department of Defense, News Briefing with COL Paul Funk from Iraq, April 6, 2007.
- 76 MNC-I Release No. 20070217-12, “IA, CF units clear Jabouri Peninsula of terrorists,” MND-North PAO, February 17, 2007.
- 77 MNF-I Release No. A070226a, “Suspected al-Qaeda Emir, 14 Others Captured,” February 26, 2007.
- 78 MNF-I Release A070307a, “24 suspected terrorists captured throughout Iraq,” March 7, 2007.
- 79 “33 Detained in Iraq; Suicide Bombing Kills 28,” *Financial Times*, March 8, 2007.
- 80 MNC-I Release No. 20070220-01, “Al Qaeda in Iraq operations interdicted by IA, 2-7 Cavalry in Ninewa Province,” February 20, 2007.
- 81 MNC-I Release No. 20070311-08, “Iraqi Army captures four suspects during operations against rogue elements of JAM,” MNC-I PAO, March 11, 2007.
- 82 Headquarters United States Central Command, “Update on Tarmiyah Attack: MND-B Troops Fight Off Insurgents, Detain Seven in Wake of Onslaught,” 2/20/2007, Release number: 07-01-03p.
- 83 MNC-I Release No. 20070420-14, “Ironhorse troops take down suspected al-Qaeda leader,” Multi-National Division—Baghdad PAO, April 20, 2007.
- 84 Operational update briefing by Colonel David W. Sutherland, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Commander, and Major General Shakir Halail Husain, 5th Iraqi Division Commander. Location: Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq, by videoconference to the Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq. Time: 8:30 a.m. EDT Date: Friday, March 16, 2007.
- 85 Operational update briefing by Colonel David W. Sutherland, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Commander, and Major General Shakir Halail Husain, 5th Iraqi Division Commander. Location: Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Baqubah, Iraq, by videoconference to the Combined Press Information Center, Baghdad, Iraq. Time: 8:30 a.m. EDT Date: Friday, March 16, 2007.