

UNCLASSIFIED

(b) (3)

DOCUMENT ID: 196375746  
 DOCCLASS: OTHER  
 DOCPREC: R  
 PRODUCER: CPA BAGHDAD  
 ORIGDATE: 200403151946  
 INPUT\_ID: 04 7544315  
 DOR: 20040318  
 TOR: 090638  
 CLASS: UNCLASSIFIED

## HEADER

RR RUBAIIA  
 DE RUEHGB #0088/01 0751946  
 ZNR UUUUU ZH  
 R 151946Z MAR 04 ZDK CCY CITE RUEHSD 3709 0781121  
 FM CPA BAGHDAD  
 TO TO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC 0168  
 RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0176  
 RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC WASHDC 0161  
 RUEATRS/US DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

BT

## CONTROLS

UNCLAS BAGHDAD 000088

CORRECTED COPY (CLASSIFIED BY LINE REMOVED)

SENSITIVE

STATE PLEASE ALSO PASS IRAQ COLLECTIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

## TEXT

TAGS: KDEM, PREL, PGOV, PTER, IZ  
 COMBINE: COMPLETE

SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATOR MEETS WITH SAMARRA COMMUNITY LEADERS

1. (U) SUMMARY. CPA ADMINISTRATOR L. PAUL BREMER III MET MARCH 6 WITH 60 SHAYKHS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS FROM SAMARRA TO HEAR THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT THE NEED FOR IMPROVED SECURITY, JOBS FOR IRAQIS, LACK OF PROGRESS ON INFRASTRUCTURE REPAIR, AND NEPOTISM AND POLITICAL FAVORITISM IN MINISTRIES' HIRING PRACTICES. CPA POLICIES TOWARDS DETAINEES WERE CRITICIZED, BUT AMBASSADOR BREMER'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT A GROUP WITHIN THE OFFICE OF PROVINCIAL OUTREACH WOULD BE HELPING TO WORK THIS ISSUE FULL-TIME WAS WARMLY RECEIVED. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) CPA ADMINISTRATOR BREMER MET MARCH 6 AT THE BAGHDAD FORUM WITH A DELEGATION OF APPROXIMATELY 60 SHAYKHS, LOCAL AND REGIONAL POLITICAL LEADERS, BUSINESSMEN, AND OTHER

UNCLASSIFIED

Page 1

UNCLASSIFIED

PROMINENT INDIVIDUALS FROM SAMARRA IN SALAH AD-DIN PROVINCE. THE MEETING WAS ARRANGED BY [REDACTED] HIMSELF ORIGINALLY FROM A SAMARRA-BASED TRIBE.

(b) (6)

3. (U) FOLLOWING INTRODUCTORY COURTESIES, AMBASSADOR BREMER BEGAN WITH AN OVERVIEW. THE COALITION'S NUMBER ONE CONCERN WAS SECURITY, PARTICULARLY DEALING WITH FOREIGN TERRORISTS. TO ADDRESS THIS NEED, THE COALITION WAS WORKING WITH IRAQIS TO ESTABLISH, ENLARGE, AND STRENGTHEN A PROFESSIONAL POLICE FORCE, THE IRAQI CIVIL DEFENSE CORPS, AND THE NEW IRAQI ARMY.

4. (U) THE SECOND PRIORITY, AMBASSADOR BREMER SAID, WAS JOB CREATION. ONCE AGAIN, NEW JOBS WERE BEING CREATED IN IRAQ. ON THE POLITICAL FRONT, THE TRANSITIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE LAW (TAL) WAS ONE OF THE MOST PROGRESSIVE CONSTITUTIONS IN THE REGION IN THE PROTECTIONS IT AFFORDED THE IRAQI PEOPLE. OVER THE NEXT YEAR AND A HALF, IRAQIS WOULD EXPAND THEIR POLITICAL LIFE TO DEVELOP THE INSTITUTIONS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT.

5. (U) AMBASSADOR BREMER THEN OPENED UP THE FLOOR TO HEAR THE VIEWS OF THE COMMUNITY LEADERS FROM SAMARRA. [REDACTED] SAID THE MOST URGENT PROBLEM FACING IRAQ WAS SECURITY. THIS WAS IN TURN CAUSED BY, OR EXACERBATED BY, EIGHT SUBSIDIARY PROBLEMS:

-- UNEMPLOYMENT. SAMARRA FORMERLY WAS AN AREA OF AGRICULTURE, TOURISM, AND INDUSTRY. IT USED TO IMPORT WORKERS, BUT NOW A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF SAMARRANS WERE UNEMPLOYED.

-- DETAINEES. [REDACTED] SAID THAT THE PROBLEM WAS "HAPHAZARD DETENTION" (MEANING THAT IRAQIS DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE REASONS FOR THE ARREST OF MANY OF THOSE DETAINED), THE UNKNOWN FATE OF MANY OF THOSE DETAINED, AND THE CRUEL TREATMENT REPORTED BY DETAINEES WHO HAD BEEN RELEASED.

-- MATERIAL DAMAGE. PROPERTY WAS DAMAGED BY COALITION ACTIVITIES, AND PEOPLE WERE NOT BEING COMPENSATED FOR THE DAMAGE.

-- DISSOLUTION OF THE ARMED FORCES. SAMARRA WAS USED BY ANTI-COALITION FORCES, WHOSE ATTACKS HAD THE EFFECT OF DEPRIVING THE CITY AND ITS RESIDENTS OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES. AS [REDACTED] PUT IT, "THE LAW OF POWER, NOT THE POWER OF THE LAW, IS WHAT IS PREVAILING IN THE CITY."

-- TERRORISTS WERE ABLE TO ENTER THE CITY FREELY.

-- THE JUDICIAL AUTHORITIES WERE NOT ABLE TO ENSURE THAT CRIMINALS WOULD BE PUNISHED FOR THEIR CRIMES.

-- FORMER REGIME LOYALISTS WHO HAD SPIED ON CITIZENS FOR THE PREVIOUS REGIME WERE CONTINUING TO DO SO.

UNCLASSIFIED

Page 2

UNCLASSIFIED

-- SADDAM'S RELEASE OF CRIMINALS FROM PRISON JUST BEFORE THE LIBERATION OF IRAQ HAD LED TO THEFTS AND "CRIMES OF HONOR."

6. (U) [REDACTED] ALSO SAID THAT SAMARRA WAS VERY MUCH IN NEED OF FUNDS FOR RECONSTRUCTION. THUS FAR, THE CITY SEEMED TO HAVE RECEIVED ONLY A LIMITED ALLOCATION OF FUNDS. SAMARRA IS BOTH A TOURIST CITY AND A HOLY CITY, BEING THE SITE OF THREE SHRINES AND 23 RELIGIOUS EVENTS DURING THE YEAR -- "MORE THAN NAJAF," THE SHAYKH SAID PROUDLY. THE NEGLECT OF THE CITY WAS HURTING ITS ECONOMY, CONTRIBUTING TO THE INSTABILITY IN THE AREA.

(b)(6)

7. (U) [REDACTED] SPOKE OF THE NEED FOR FUNDING TO REBUILD SAMARRA'S COLLAPSED INFRASTRUCTURE. THE CITY'S INHABITANTS WERE GRATEFUL FOR WHAT THE COALITION HAD PROVIDED, BUT THEY NEED MORE -- THEY NEED JOBS, THEY NEED A TELEPHONE NETWORK, THEY WANT A WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM SO THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY CAN HAVE POTABLE WATER. TECHNICAL CREWS FROM CPA AND FROM THE FORMER IRAQI ARMY WOULD BE ESPECIALLY USEFUL. AMBASSADOR BREMER REPLIED THAT THE PREVIOUS REGIME LEFT THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN IRAQ IN DEPLORABLE CONDITION. THE UNITED STATES WAS SPENDING BILLIONS OF DOLLARS FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN IRAQ, INCLUDING \$54 MILLION IN SAMARRA ALONE. THIS WOULD INCLUDE WATER AND SEWER PROJECTS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE. OTHER PROJECTS INCLUDED ROAD BUILDING, CONSTRUCTION OF FIREHOUSES, AND EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE. AMBASSADOR BREMER ENCOURAGED ALL CONTRACTORS TO SUBCONTRACT LOCALLY. WORK ON MOST PROJECTS WOULD START IN THE SPRING.

8. (U) [REDACTED] MADE A SPECIAL PLEA FOR FERTILIZERS FOR AGRICULTURE. OTHER SPEAKERS SAID THAT SAMARRA'S IRRIGATION PROJECTS HAD BEEN BADLY NEGLECTED AND THAT AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY WAS FALLING.

9. (U) [REDACTED] RAISED THE ISSUE OF DETAINEES. THE PEOPLE WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE DETAINED, THEIR STATUS, AND WHEN AND HOW THEY WILL BE RELEASED. ANOTHER SPEAKER SAID THAT THE ACCUSED IN THE UNITED STATES HAVE A RIGHT TO A LAWYER; WHEN WILL IRAQIS HAVE THIS RIGHT FROM THE UNITED STATES? A THIRD SAID THAT IRAQIS NEED TO KNOW THE REASONS FOR ARRESTS. AMBASSADOR BREMER REPLIED THAT THE COALITION WAS AWARE OF THESE CONCERNS AND THAT THE COALITION WOULD ABIDE BY ALL INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS. ALMOST THREE THOUSAND DETAINEES HAD ALREADY BEEN TURNED OVER TO THE IRAQI CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM. A SYSTEM HAD BEEN DEVELOPED WHEREBY PROMINENT, RESPECTED CITIZENS COULD VOUCH FOR DETAINEES TO ACCELERATE THEIR RELEASE. HE ANNOUNCED THAT THE OFFICE OF PROVISIONAL OUTREACH NOW HAD STAFF MEMBERS DEVOTED FULL-TIME TO ISSUES SURROUNDING DETAINEES.

10. (U) OTHER POINTS MADE BY OTHER SPEAKERS:

UNCLASSIFIED

Page 3

## UNCLASSIFIED

-- A CITY PLANNER FROM SAMARRA SAID THAT THOSE WHO HAD BEEN DISMISSED FROM THEIR JOBS BY THE FORMER REGIME SHOULD BE RETURNED TO THEM. PROGRAMS LIKE THIS EXISTED IN OTHER PARTS OF IRAQ BUT NOT IN SALAH AD-DIN.

-- SIMILARLY, ANOTHER SPEAKER CALLED FOR THE RESTORATION OF AGRICULTURAL LANDS CONFISCATED BY THE PREVIOUS REGIME. AMBASSADOR BREMER REPLIED THAT THE IRAQ PROPERTY CLAIMS COMMISSION HAD BEEN SET UP TO HEAR SUCH CLAIMS AND TO MAKE PAYMENTS WHERE APPROPRIATE.

-- ONE SPEAKER SAID THAT THE MINISTRIES IN BAGHDAD WERE PUTTING LIMITS ON THE POWERS OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS TO SOLVE PROBLEMS IN THEIR GOVERNORATES. THE GOVERNOR SHOULD HAVE AUTHORITY OVER THE MINISTRIES' ACTIVITIES IN HIS PROVINCE. THIS WOULD BETTER ASSURE LOCAL ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS THAN RELYING ON THE MINISTRY IN BAGHDAD. AMBASSADOR BREMER RESTATED THAT IN THE NEW IRAQ, AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY SHOULD BE AT THE LOWEST EFFECTIVE LEVELS. HE SAID THE IRAQI GOVERNING COUNCIL (IGC) HAS HAD BEFORE IT A PROPOSED LAW TO CLARIFY THE POWERS OF THE GOVERNORS. IF THE IGC DID NOT ACT SOON, HE SAID, HE WOULD GO AHEAD AND SIGN IT.

-- [REDACTED] THEN SAID THAT THERE WAS A PROBLEM THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY WITH NEPOTISM AND FAVORITISM IN THE MINISTRIES. ONLY MEMBERS OF THE PARTY THAT CONTROL THE MINISTRY CAN GET HIRED THERE. A NUMBER OF SPEAKERS THEN ECHOED THIS THEME, MENTIONING THE MINISTRY OF OIL, WHERE PEOPLE ARE BEING "RETIRED" FROM THEIR JOBS FOR NO REASON, THEN THEIR JOBS ARE BEING FILLED BY SHI'IS, SOME OF WHOM ARE UNQUALIFIED. THE HEAD OF A FINANCE DEPARTMENT IN ONE OFFICE IN THE OIL MINISTRY WAS A FORMER CASHIER WHO HAD BEEN CONVICTED OF MISAPPROPRIATING ASSETS. ANOTHER PARTICIPANT SAID THAT SHI'I PROFESSORS IN SOME UNIVERSITIES WERE TAKING ONLY SHI'I STUDENTS. AMBASSADOR BREMER SAID THAT CPA WAS CONCERNED ABOUT SECTARIANISM. PEOPLE SHOULD NEITHER GET NOR LOSE THEIR JOBS ON THE BASIS OF RELIGION.

(b) (6)

-- ONE SPEAKER URGED THAT SAMARRA BE SET UP AS A SEPARATE GOVERNORATE FROM THE REST OF SALAH AD-DIN. AMBASSADOR BREMER EXPLAINED THAT THE TAL WOULD NOT PERMIT REALIGNMENT OF GOVERNORATE BOUNDARIES UNTIL A PERMANENT CONSTITUTION WAS ESTABLISHED.

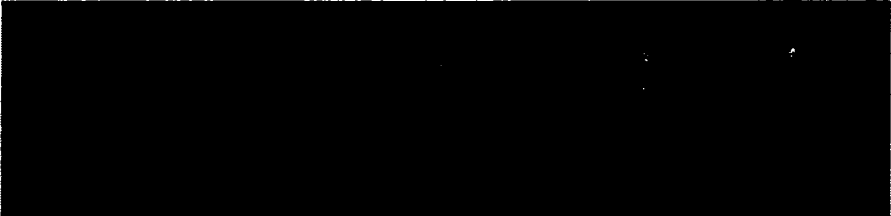
-- SAMARRA SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN UNIVERSITY TO SPECIALIZE IN THE SCIENCES AND LIBERAL ARTS, WITH A DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE TO SPREAD KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY IN THE PROVINCE. THE SPEAKER RECOGNIZED THAT A FACULTY WITH EXPERTISE IN THIS AREA COULD SERVE AS AN ENGINE TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY AMONG STUDENTS AND THE PUBLIC AT LARGE.

11. (SBU) ON THE POLITICAL PROCESS LEADING TO SOVEREIGNTY, AMBASSADOR BREMER EXPLAINED THAT CPA WOULD BE CONSULTING WITH PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY AS THE PROCESS DEVELOPED. HE SAW THIS AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BROADEN

UNCLASSIFIED

INVOLVEMENT IN THE COUNTRY'S POLITICAL PROCESS. HE URGED THOSE PRESENT TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES DEMOCRATICALLY FOR ELECTIONS THAT WOULD BE HELD NO LATER THAN JANUARY 2005.

12. (SBU) FOLLOWING THE MEETING WITH AMB. BREMER, THE OPO OFFICER ASSIGNED TO THE DETAINEE ISSUE OFFERED TO STAY BEHIND TO ADDRESS ANYONE WITH SPECIFIC CONCERNS. IT WAS A SIGN OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DETAINEE ISSUE TO THE PARTICIPANTS THAT ABOUT 50 OF THE 60 COMMUNITY LEADERS STAYED BEHIND AND CONTINUED THE DISCUSSION FOR AN ADDITIONAL THREE-QUARTERS OF AN HOUR. THE GROUP GAVE OPO OFFICIALS A LIST OF APPROXIMATELY 300 IRAQIS THAT THE COMMUNITY LEADERS WANTED TO SEE RELEASED OR THAT THE REASONS FOR CONTINUED DETENTION BE GIVEN.



(b) (5)

BREMER  
END OF MESSAGE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

Page 5