

United States Institute of Peace
Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Iraq Experience Project

**TERRENCE KELLY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Interviewed by: Larry Plotkin
Initial interview date: July 30, 2004
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Dr. Kelly is 49 years old, a graduate of West Point with twenty years of experience prior to retiring from the military. He has a Ph.D. in mathematics, an M.A. in strategic studies. He served as Senior National Security Officer in the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy in both the Clinton and Bush Administration. He has taught at both RPI and West Point. He is now a Senior Researcher at the Rand Corporation.

In Iraq, Dr. Kelly served as the official in charge of directing the Transition and Reintegration Programs for Iraqi militias. Specifically, he worked with nine Iraqi militia groups that actively opposed the Hussein regime and who were willing to be part of the new political process. Later, smaller groups would also "sign on". He was in Iraq for the final four months of the CPA.

Of the militia groups Dr. Kelly worked with, three are of special note due to their size and power. There are two major Kurdish organizations, the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). These organizations functioned more like trained armies/governments than militias, and were largely autonomous. Most of Dr. Kelly's work was therefore with the Shia militias. The major Shia militia of note is the Badr Corps, a 15,000 member militia/political organization which operated from Iran during the Hussein regime. Dr. Kelly focused most of his efforts at incorporating these three groups.

Dr. Kelly found many of the groups he worked with were initially hesitant, but ultimately cooperative. Dr. Kelly adapted a three-track program aimed at the demobilization of the militias and the integration of their personnel into the broader Iraqi society: Recruitment of qualified (and interested) militia into internal Iraqi security forces; Retirement and pensions for older and disabled militia (many of whom were declared veterans); Reintegration into civilian society, mostly through job training. The chief problem Dr. Kelly noted with the reintegration process was the failure of the CPA to pass on information (regarding the size and make-up of the various security forces) to Iraqi political and militia groups.

He found the Kurdish militias unwilling to surrender their control over Kurdish areas but willing to reduce their forces and accept, in principal, that they were to operate under the overall authority of the central government. They remain, in fact, semi-autonomous.

Qualified members of the Badr Corps, placed largely in the areas of central/southern Iraq they call home, are being integrated into the general police force, the border police, the army, and the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC). The ICDC is now the Iraqi National Guard (ING), and is basically the domestic component of the Iraqi armed forces. Other, smaller militias like those associated with prominent Iraqi opposition leaders, have for the most part been voluntarily disbanded, save for those few kept on by politicians as bodyguards and facility guards.

Dr. Kelly was well-suited to his assignment, but found many in the CPA to be committed to service in Iraq for too short a tenure, insufficiently familiar with Arab culture, and often working in areas outside their expertise. He also found that the lack of appropriate planning by the USG prior to the occupation of Iraq forced major delays, principally incurred while the CPA reinvented itself in order to function effectively. In brief, he praised the extraordinary volunteers with whom he worked, but was highly critical of the pre-invasion planning. Nevertheless, he is optimistic about the outcome of our efforts to create a democratic Iraq.

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Q: Today is Friday, July 30th. This is an interview with Terrence Kelly being done on behalf of the U.S. Institute of Peace and the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training as part of the Iraq Experience Project. I am Larry Plotkin.

Good morning, Terry. Let me ask you to start with just basic information: your name, area of specialty, and whatever background you want to give us.

KELLY: By "area of specialty," I assume you mean in Iraq.

Q: Yes.

KELLY: Terrance Kelly. My position there was the direction of Transition and Reintegration Programs for the militias. Specifically, we worked with the militias who had fought in the resistance against Saddam and who were willing to be part of the political process.

Q: Thank you. I'm going to ask you a series of questions that are pretty much standard, but obviously feel free to branch out wherever you want to in terms of what you feel is pertinent to get on the record for this project. In the area where you worked, describe the local and regional infrastructure during Saddam's regime.

KELLY: I worked in Baghdad in the Republican Palace. I don't pretend that I'm an expert on the security that Saddam had in different places. Clearly, the Republican Palace was the center of government for the Baathists and so the security was very tight. I also traveled to the Kurdish areas and to the center-south areas - Hillah, Najaf primarily – where there was a different situation. But I don't want to pretend I'm an expert on how Saddam dealt with security in any of those areas.

Q: Can you comment at all on the relations between the local security and central authority and the relationships between the security system and the judicial system?

KELLY: In Saddam's regime?

Q: Yes.

KELLY: No.

Q: Okay.

KELLY: Certainly not as an expert.

Q: Yes. Any comment on the pre-war level of crime, violence, oppression?

KELLY: No.

Q: Okay. We'll move on then. Describe the security and public order system when you arrived.

KELLY: I arrived in early February of 2004. The situation I think was fairly stable then. We were in light-skinned vehicles with some armed escorts to move around fairly freely. For example, we visited areas that in April would be the heart of the Shia insurgency – with relatively little concern. I mean, we had to be careful when we went to certain places, Najaf in particular, and we in fact went with local people and local (Iraqi) security as well as U.S. people just to make sure. But I think that the security situation was relatively stable and our freedom of motion was fairly good.

Q: You mentioned that the Iraqis were participating in your security in some of those places. How did that relationship work?

KELLY: Basically, the people that we visited with... My job was to get rid of the militias, so I would visit with the different militia groups. They provided security for their own leaders, and so they would provide security for us when we were traveling with them or traveling to visit them, if we asked them to.

Q: What were the threats to public order and on the street in general?

KELLY: At that time, there were, of course, some suicide bombings going on sporadically around the country. The targeted assassinations had not really started yet, at least not to the level that they are at the moment. Certainly, some of the suicide bombings were targeted at either headquarters or leaders and there were some assassinations that happened, but they weren't, for example, assassinating midlevel government officials and people of that nature. There were, of course, also some efforts to kill coalition people. That was certainly prevalent throughout the time I was there, but it got much worse towards the end.

Q: What about street crime?

KELLY: I'm not an expert on that. I didn't deal with that. I can give you some impressions but they really are only anecdotal.

Q: Please do.

KELLY: I think shortly after the coalition defeated Saddam's regime, organized crime moved in fairly aggressively. Street crime did exist, some of it organized, some of it just normal thuggery.

It never really rose to the level where it was a large security concern for the people working out of the CPA. I traveled periodically out of the Green Zone to visit with these different militia people. I know we never were worried about street crime, but we also weren't walking the streets downtown unescorted either.

Q: What was the role of the coalition and military in law enforcement?

KELLY: Once again, that's not what I focused on. Clearly, they had a fairly large role in public safety and in a lot of law enforcement issues. I don't know if you plan on interviewing Dave Brannen, by the way. He is a RAND person who was the senior policy advisor and then the chief of staff for the senior advisors to the Ministry of Interior. Dave could tell you a lot more about the status of the police force, about the law and order situation, basically all the questions you've been asking. He's out in Missouri.

Q: Alright. Let's talk about the militias, which is obviously your field. What was their status towards the end of Saddam's regime?

KELLY: Well, these are basically all the major resistance groups, many of whom I dealt with extensively, some of whom only started coming on board right as the CPA was ending and I was leaving. The two major Kurdish parties were the KDP [Kurdistan Democratic Party] and the PUK [Patriotic Union of Kurdistan] and they were above the Green Line, so they were in a semi-autonomous Kurdish-governed area. So, we didn't really call them "militias." We called them "armed forces" because, in fact, they were really professional armies that had military academies and training bases. They were armies. Most of the groups we dealt with were the Shia militias. Of course, remember, we're dealing with the militias that were part of the resistance and are now willing to be part of the political process, so the folks who were aligned with Saddam (like the current former regime elements) weren't resistance groups; they were part of the regime at that time. Most of the Sunnis were better treated than other Iraqis, so they weren't necessarily [involved in militias.] We only really dealt with one Sunni militia group. That was the group associated with the Iraqi Islamic Party. Of the Shia groups, some were expatriate groups like Badr Corps, which was in Iran and probably had around 15,000 people. They claimed a little bit over 16,000, but probably 10-15,000 active people in Iran fighting against Saddam's regime from Iran. They now call themselves the Badr Organization. They're a political party/an NGO kind of party that provides public services, which they do. And they are in the process of turning themselves into a political party. There were also the resistance groups of Ahmed Chalabi and Iyad Allawi, who is now the prime minister. There were a number of different Dawa organizations. The one that we dealt with mostly was the one associated with Ibrahim al-Ja'fari, who is now one of the vice presidents [one of two "deputy presidents"]. These militias are all associated with major political parties also in Baghdad, all of the core ones that I dealt with throughout my time. There are some that came on board afterwards that were not associated with major political parties. Because I was pretty much a one man show doing this, I had limited reach and really focused on the ones with major political influence and those that were represented in Baghdad so I could meet with them regularly without extensive travel. That was purely because of time and resource constraints.

Q: What was your goal with them?

KELLY: The goal of the whole program was to establish a policy by which these militias could fade away. These groups had once posed a threat of significant civil unrest or even civil war for the big three of them - and that's the two Kurdish parties and Badr Corps; the others are smaller and really couldn't rise to that level - but we also needed to recognize that they were the good guys, they fought against Saddam. Even the Shia who were expatriates in Iran, [they] still were fighting against Saddam. From an Iraqi perspective, they fought a repressive regime from Iran, even though the U.S. perspective was that we have a natural distaste for anything associated with Iran. These guys, frankly, had the choice between staying in Iraq and be killed or going to Iran because nobody else was going to shelter them. These people are largely Shia from the south-central and southern parts of Iraq. In Saudi Arabia, Shia aren't terribly welcomed. Certainly neither the Saudi nor the Kuwaiti government was about to harbor a 15,000 man resistance force to Saddam. That's just too dangerous for their security. Iran was open because of the Iran-Iraq war and because of the longtime animosity between the two. Iraq, by the way, harbored the MEK, a mirror image to the Badr corps fighting Iran, MEK being the State Department-declared terrorist group that was basically against a revolutionary government in Iran. So, those are the big three.

Dawa [an Islamic, Shia political organization based out of Tehran which supports the establishment of an Islamic state in Iraq.] had a number of splinter groups. Some of that stuff is classified, but I think we can say that they had splinter groups. Ibrahim al-Ja'fari's party/group [affiliated with Dawa] basically was disbanded when we asked them to disband. Some of the other groups remained active and had semi-active roles during the Shia uprising. They weren't actively aligned with organizations, with Moqtad al-Sadr's group [the Mehdi Army], but there were individuals from those groups who did misbehave. When we talk about these militia groups, it's important to differentiate between what the organization does as a political party, as a political organization, and what individuals and maybe even small groups of individuals in local areas do.

We also had the Iraqi Communist Party, which is a predominantly Shia but secular party, very definitely a secular party. I guess there are people in the central and northern parts of the country involved, too, Kurds and Sunnis. But I think there were probably more Shia than others in the Communist Party. Other militias were associated with Iraqi Islamic Party, a Sunni group, and Iraqi Hezbollah (which is not associated with the terrorist group by the same name in Lebanon; "Hezbollah" means "Party of God"). A Shia religious party in the marsh areas - "the Marsh Arabs" they're sometimes called. Abu Hatim [A.K.A. 'Abd al-Karim] was their leader. He was called the "Lord of the Marshes" or the "Prince of the Marshes" because he fought Saddam for the Marshes for a long time. These were the main groups. There were nine of them. I hope I covered them all. I think I covered them all. And then afterwards we had a number of smaller groups come on board. We had one of the other Dawas, which was a major group, come on right as I was leaving. We had 15 Shaban [a Shia militia group with ties to Iran] come on right as I was leaving, a medium size, relatively militant group. And then we had a couple of smaller groups. One was called the Iraqi Hezbollah Movement, different from Iraqi Hezbollah, which is more of a political party than a militia. And there is another one, Seyyed ol-Shohada, which was a smaller group that was somewhat associated with 15 Shaban. Also Shias from the southern part of the country.

Q: Going back to your arrival, what was their initial reaction to your presence?

KELLY: I'll give you the whole thing. To start with, when I arrived, people had started thinking about what needed to be happening. We had the idea that we could put some of the militia guys, particularly the Peshmurgas, since they were professional soldiers, into the security forces. For example, we were interested in getting them into the army because they could help because of their professionalism to create a good army. And we also would have to make allowances for the other groups to join the military, but we wanted to be more careful with some of the other groups. Remember also that the Peshmurga, which are the Kurdish groups, fought alongside the U.S. forces as they came into the country. They were viewed much more positively, really as allies to some extent. So we were going to bring some of them into the security forces. We thought that we could provide pensions to others of them, and we didn't know quite how to do that, but thought if we could get some of them to retire, that would be good. Then mostly we wanted to create a reintegration program. If you look at the way armies are disbanded after conflicts, there is a process called "demilitarization, demobilization, and reintegration,"—DDR -- which basically means you interview these guys, you find out what their skills are, you provide them some job training, and you try to find them jobs. So there was a reintegration component of this also. We decided on a three track policy that would have security (transition into the security forces), retirement, and reintegration. Because these guys had fought against Saddam, we decided that in the truest sense, these people were soldiers of Iraq. They had fought for the Iraqi people against an oppressive regime. So we declared them all to be veterans. We said, "If you actively fought in Iraq against Saddam, we'll declare you to be a veteran. Your militia leadership needs to provide us the standard information that we would need to enroll you as a veteran: How long you served, what rank you had, whether you were disabled, all the kind of normal things a veterans agency would need to know. But there was no veterans agency at the time. We did create this later as a parallel process not only to deal with a militia but also to deal with Saddam's former army people, who were on stipends. Those stipends have to end sometime. Several hundred thousand people to deal with there. The total militia population, by the way, was just over 100,000 people.

Q: And what size was Saddam's army?

KELLY: In Saddam's army, there were conscripts and there were professional army people. The conscripts we didn't pay a whole lot of attention to because they basically came for a short period of time and then left. The professional army people, I think the population that was on active duty when the war ended was about 300,000 people out of an army of about 750,000 total. So there were a lot of conscripts who just deserted or went home or did whatever. And then of course there was a large number of already retired people. But that's a parallel effort. I can talk a bit about that if you want to.

Q: We'll come back to it.

KELLY: So we created this policy. Then to get back to your original question, the reaction of the different groups was, of course, different. Three of the groups, I think because of political reasons, said, "Okay, we have no need for a militia. They are already disbanded or we will

disband them.” So the INC [Iraqi National Congress], which is Achmed Chalabi’s group, said, “Okay, we’ll disband them.” In fact, Chalabi’s group really didn’t exist anyways other than as a bunch of bodyguards. He had, of course, made a lot of promises to the U.S. government which he didn’t fulfill. He had promised thousands of fighters who would help liberate Iraq, which never materialized. He may have had upward to a thousand (rough “guestimate”) at the time of the invasion, but most of these guys were just people he hired off the street, paid a paycheck to, and when the war was over, he didn’t want to pay them anymore, so they went away. I imagine he had a few hundred based on discussions with the intelligence community at the time that we negotiated with him. So, when they said, “We’ll disband our militia,” in fact, their militia was already disbanded for all intents and purposes other than people to guard party leaders and party buildings and things of that nature. INA, which is the militia of Iyad Allawi, currently the prime minister, also said, “Okay, we’ll disband our group. No problem.” I think they realized it was necessary if they were going to be part of a viable state and to be a viable political leader in a state. Iyad Allawi at this time is the head of the security group which meets regularly with the coalition leaders. He had been a CIA employee for a long period of time, feeding information to the intelligence community. A very bright man, a neurosurgeon, spent lots and lots of time in London. Clearly, he understood for the political process to go forward and for him to be part of that, he couldn’t be a leader of an active militia outside of government control. Once again, this is my reading the tea leaves, but I think he realized that he only needed to keep some people for personal and facility security. (All of these guys need to do that. Otherwise, they end up dead.)

Q: And some of them end up dead anyway.

KELLY: Yes. The other group that said, “Okay, we’ll go ahead and disband” was Dawa, Ibrahim al-Ja’fari’s people. Dawa, has a bunch of different splinter groups. They split over differences in primarily, I think, the role of Islam in the future government. I think that’s about all we can say without getting into classified areas. But anyway there were distinct splits. They weren’t groups that remained loosely affiliated. There were distinct splits, different groups. So, Ja’fari said, “Okay, we’ll disband it,” I think for the same reasons as Iyad Allawi did. So those groups said, “Okay, we’ll disband our militias,” so we didn’t really have to do any negotiating with them.

Both Kurdish parties said, “We’re allies. We need to have a special status. We’re going to keep our Peshmurga. You should not be asking us to disband them.” If you look at Kurdish history, I was told many times, “Go back and look at the history of Iraq. The Arabs have been killing us since time immemorial, since there was no Iraq in particular. There’s no way we’re disbanding the Peshmurga.” The Badr Corps specifically – I think I met them on my second day in country – said (and this is close to an exact quote), “We would rather starve than get rid of our security.” They, too, had suffered the crushing of the Shia uprising in the early ‘90s and the oppression of the Shia throughout the history of Saddam’s regime. Its leaders had all had many members of their families killed. Abu Hassan al-Amri, who is the secretary general, the civilian leader of the Badr Corps, told me (I think) he had 16 members of his immediate family killed by Saddam. They said, “There is no way. We’re not getting rid of our security.” The other groups varied considerably. A couple of them were relatively non-committal. At that point, not all militias were standing forces. The only groups that really had standing forces were those three, the two

Kurdish groups and the Badr Corps. Badr Corps fought from outside of Iraq, sponsored by Iran, so they could maintain a standing army without being oppressed by Saddam.

The ones who fought from inside obviously couldn't maintain standing armies without attracting the Iraqi army. That includes the Marsh Arabs, Abu Hatim's people. I spoke initially with his deputy, who basically said, "Our people just need jobs." The Marshes are a very economically depressed part of the country. Most of the groups wanted to know how many generals they could have in the new security forces, how many senior people they could have in the government. They were interested in political power and military power. Abu Hatim himself was somewhat interested in that, but his deputy was specifically interested in economics. "We need jobs. We need pensions for the people that qualify for pensions. We just need to provide economic relief for our people." It was refreshing. The Iraqi Communist Party was, to repeat, mostly a political party, not a standing military force. They were willing to work with us. And the Iraqi Islamic Party was willing to work with us. So as time progressed though, we basically had overcome some of these hurdles. I don't know if you want to ask more questions or if you wanted me to just continue this.

Q: Keep talking. I'll throw in when necessary.

KELLY: I'm going to focus on the two Kurdish parties and Badr Corps because that's where we spent most of our time. As I said, those were the three groups that were really capable of creating significant political unrest, significant civil unrest, and potentially, particularly in the Kurdish case, civil war. So, those are the ones we focused most of our time on.

We had a hard time getting Badr Corps to meet with us. Again, initially, they were extremely hesitant. But over time, we got to the point where we were meeting just about weekly. I think the Shia in general recognized that Iraq was going to be a democratic country. The Shia are 60% of the population. If you look at Iraq, 60% are Shia. People then automatically think then 40% are Sunni, and that's the force that's aligned with Saddam. But that's actually not right. 20% of the country, which is half of that remaining 40%, are Kurds. There are only about 20% who are Arab Sunnis. So, it's really a relatively small portion of the population that dominated Iraq for a very long time. So the Shia recognized that they're going to be part of the political process. SCIRI, which is the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, one of the major political parties and the political party with which Badr is associated, clearly is remaining part of the political process because they recognize that's where the power is going to come from in the future. That's where they can influence the shape of Iraq, the position of their religion, the economic position of the people, etc. Clearly, all these groups have to stay inside the political process. They can't be active resistance forces or their political parties will be disenfranchised. So, that was an important factor, particularly for the Shia militias. The Kurds not so much, but we can talk about the Kurds later. With Badr Corps, we got to the point where they were willing to talk with us and listen to our proposals. We ended up getting into two hour meetings every week, very long, most of the time spent with them relating their thoughts on what was wrong with Iraq -- what Baathist officials were still in power, "Why isn't the coalition doing this, that, or the other thing," here are the security issues of the day that we needed to pay attention to -- just various complaints about different things.

Over time, I think we built some trust. We actively reached out to them. We created a significant number of positions for them in the security forces. I think we were going to bring 1,000 of them into the army, 1,000 of them into the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps, which is now called the Iraqi National Guard, which is basically the domestic component of the Iraqi armed forces, 1,000 into the police force, and I think 500 into the border police. Those, of course, were focused in the areas where they lived, which are the areas which are important to them – Baghdad and the south primarily. So, they were pretty happy about that. They saw that we were dealing with them in good faith, that we really wanted them to be part of the solution, and that, at the same time, they were making progress in terms of the government. The former commanding general of Badr Corps is now one of the deputy ministers of interior, which, of course, controls the police forces. The ministry of interior was a major source of oppression in Saddam's regime. Unfortunately, there were not any Badr Corps people who were senior general officers, but I think with the expansion of the army and the National Guard division by Iyad Allawi, there probably will be some. Also, the current minister of finance was the political director for SCIRI, the number two person in SCIRI, the political party associated with Badr Corps. So, they saw that they were actually being brought into the fold.

We spoke frequently and at length about the fact that Iran was their only avenue of escape from Iraq and that they really had no other choice. Badr Corps, by the way, was created by the Iranian Republican Guard corps' intelligence service out of prisoners of war that were taken during the Iran-Iraq War. The Iraqis were basically recruited into the resistance group that would fight against Saddam. Some of them came willingly. Some of them were given the choice of staying in prison or joining Badr Corps. "Here are your choices." So they chose Badr Corps as the lesser of two evils. But there are two different components in there. So, over a period of time, we built up trust on this issue as well. We made them aware that the fact that they had been associated with Iran while the U.S. still had great concerns regarding Iran wasn't necessarily going to be held against them. I made clear a number of times that I understood that was their only choice and that we were willing to work with them, that we would hold them to their promises and to the rule of law, but as long as they worked in good faith, they were very welcome to be part of the process of reconstructing Iraq. And so over the five months I was there, we built up a trust and we ended up coming to an agreement with them. They were very focused on positions in the security forces and they only got about half of what they wanted but they were willing to live with that. It took a lot of work but it was a success.

With the Kurds, on the other hand, at one point we were pretty much at loggerheads. As I said, they had been very oppressed by the Arab Iraqis. When on April 4th the big Moqtad al-Sadr and Jaysh EI-Mehdi insurgency kicked off, that confirms their belief that they really need to keep the Peshmurga around because there are no guarantees that there's not going to be an Arab theocracy or some other kind of government which would be antithetical to the kind of state that they think that they should have. Nevertheless, on March 8th, the "Transitional Administrative Law" was agreed to and signed, which by the way is a really amazing document for that part of the world to have created. All of the parties in the negotiations (with Jerry Bremer beating them upside the head to do it) give up things which are truly meaningful to them and really make some compromises, which, frankly, nobody thought they would be able to make. So, we see that Islam is a fundamental source of Iraqi law but not *the* fundamental source of Iraqi law. The people who want a religious government give up something which is truly important to them.

The Kurds agree to be part of the process, agree that national security, border security, all the things which they want to control in their part of the country, are central government responsibilities. But [more] importantly, the Kurds keep responsibility for internal security and police in the Kurdish areas, which basically gives us the leeway to say, "Okay, if you're responsible for internal security and internal security forces, then you've got to have some forces to do that."

The Kurdish areas are the only area of Iraq which are relatively secure, where there's not a major terrorist threat, although every once in a while there is an incident. I need to caveat that. I'll come back to that. Every once in a while, there is a suicide bombing up there. When I say "a major terrorist threat," I mean active terrorist attacks going on in the area. They do have Ansar Islam, which is just across the border in Iran. It's an Iraqi-Kurdish-Sunni fundamentalist movement which had killed a number of Peshmurga in the late '90s before the PUK Peshmurga, in particular, drove them across the border into Iran where the Iranians protect them, or at least do not permit the PUK to come into Iran to finish them off. You can read that in a number of different ways. And you've got the PKK... They've got a new name. They were PKK. Then they were KADEC. Now they're something else. I'm just going to refer to them as the PKK. They're a Turkish-Kurdish terrorist group which attacks Turkey in the mountains in the northern part of Iraq, mostly on the KDP area. The KDP fought against them in the mid-late '90s and lost over 3,000 Peshmurga, very large casualties for a relatively small army. And, of course, you've got the Zargawi network. Zargawi, by the way, is the father of Ansar Islam. He's put that together. One of the connections that was postulated between Saddam and fundamentalists and Al-Qaeda and the fundamentalists terrorists was Zarkowi and Ansar Islam and the fact that Zargawi received medical treatment in Baghdad and this, that, and the other thing. So, Zargawi is related to Ansar Islam, certainly trying to be active in that part of the country but not having a lot of success because of the Peshmurga. Clearly, the Kurds need to keep the counterterrorism force in being because that's what they're doing.

The Kurdish area is very mountainous. Certain strategic sites in those mountains are very important to keep control of. In particular the Kurds are worried about a situation where terrorists will establish themselves, as the PKK has, in the mountains in the north part of the country, because, once established, it would be darn near impossible to get them out. One of the strengths of the Peshmurga against Saddam's army was that they could always retreat to the mountains and Saddam's army couldn't get them out. Similarly, the Kurds don't want terrorists becoming entrenched in those mountains, giving them the same kind of problems that Saddam's army had with them. So, they want to have a mountain ranger force that patrols mountains and they want to have rapid reaction forces to be able to react to suicide bombers or any kind of civil unrest that might happen more in the urban areas, in other densely populated areas, and probably in other areas as well. So we came to agreement with them based on the clause in the Transitional Administrative Law – and I think it's paragraph A or B, but I can't remember off the top of my head – that makes them responsible for internal security and internal security forces, so they've got to have some people. We finally sat down with them and said, "Okay, tell me the things that you need to be able to do and how many forces you need to be able to do that." We reached agreement on numbers with them, which ended up being about half of the current Peshmurga force that they think that they need to keep.

Remember, we've got these three tracks: Internal security, retirement or pensions, and reintegration (mostly through job training). About half of the Peshmurga go into these Kurdish internal security forces, which they're permitted to keep. Some will, of course, go into the army and other security forces, but relatively small numbers. The Kurds are not real keen on going into the army because it's predominantly Arab. They've fought against the Arabs for their whole lives. There is a lot of anecdotal evidence that the Arabs are making it tough on the Kurds who have joined the army even though the Kurds are arguably far better soldiers than they are. If you look at some of the unrest that happened in April and May and who fought and who didn't, for example, in the ICDC units, the Kurds did pretty well. And so we end up with a situation where we had originally thought about a third would go into each of those tracks but with about half of the Peshmurga, roughly 35,000 people or so, remaining in the Kurdish forces. About 60% end up staying in the security forces. The remaining 40% - and this is roughly 100,000, so 60% is about 60,000 - about half would be eligible for retirement and half would go through job training. These numbers for those two components (retirement and training) are about what we anticipated. We then found out when we actually got the numbers from the different militia communities that there were far more people involved. We thought we would originally have a militia of about 60,000 to deal with. We ended up with just over 100,000. Some of those numbers, I think, are padded because there are benefits. So, people are added to those who are part of the political party but not really part of the resistance, not active fighters. That's a price worth paying to get these groups to go demobilize, especially since pensions in particular are peanuts, less than \$100 a month. So, that's kind of an overview of it. I can [can't?] go into more detail about any one of the specific groups.

Q: How would you evaluate the stability of these agreements?

KELLY: That will depend on whether the Iraqis are successful in implementing them. So let me talk about that. That's actually an important part. I should talk probably a little bit more about the Kurds also. Some of this touches on the classified realm, which obviously we can't go into. But, first, the two Kurdish parties are distinct. The PUK and the KDP fought an internal civil war in the mid to late '90s. I think it ended in '97. The KDP is a much more homogenous political party, more of a tribal nature, focused largely on a single large tribe, although there are a number of other tribes involved I'm sure. But it's a single political party led by the Barzanis. Mustafa Barzani, of course, is the legendary leader who led all the Kurds, including Kurds that currently live in other countries, in the great resistance in the '60s and '70s and died, I think, in the '80s. Mas'ud Barzani is his son, who is now the leader of the KDP. And so there is a lot of history there. You go into any of their meeting rooms and there are these almost godlike pictures of Mustafa Barzani, a picture of him overlooking the Kurdish countryside in a kind of deified kind of way. There are similar pictures of Mas'ud Barzani but not quite in the same way. So the Barzanis have a lot of longtime political credibility. Mas'ud Barzani's personality is reflected in the way that KDP appears to be run. It is much more predictable, much more professional than the PUK. We brought a lot of the Kurds into senior political positions in the government and the army. The KDP just seems to be a much more professional organization.

The PUK Peshmurga was also a good fighting force, but my understanding is that the PUK is really an umbrella group and there are a number of political parties underneath that. It's led by

Jalal Talabani, who used to be Mustafa Barzani's political director back in the days when there was a single Kurdish resistance. They broke away. The PUK includes a number of political parties. So, Jalal Talabani, who is a bit more mercurial, more emotional than Barzani, has to move forward more cautiously. You can think of it like a parliamentary system where he has a number of different groups who have come together to form a government and he has to move together with that government in order to secure his position. So, it takes the PUK longer to make commitments and fulfill commitments. When we asked them to, for example, provide names for senior civilian and general officers, it took them a much longer time to produce those names. The result of that was that many of the senior positions were filled by the time they produced the names. Also, the people that they nominate in some cases are extremely qualified but make known very clearly that they have no intention of living in Baghdad. Whether there is a political reason why Jalal Talabani nominated these people, I don't know. Did he know that they would come down and say, "No, I don't want to live in Baghdad" and therefore be refused the positions, creating a situation, a political position where he could then demand other things. That's a possibility. One of the analogies is that the coalition was playing checkers and these guys were playing chess and we were getting our clocks cleaned. These guys were very sophisticated politicians. Whether Talabani is playing political games or not there is some internal political positioning going on inside the PUK. Very senior people are being nominated for these positions who say that they don't want these positions. The end result is that the PUK doesn't get as many senior positions. That process is still being worked to make sure that, for example, the commander of the northern division of the army, which is right up against the Kurdish areas, will be a Kurd. That will be very helpful in preventing the Kurds from viewing the army as a threat to them. The Iraqi army is the only real threat the Kurds have known for 80 years. In any case, the KDP and PUK have different personalities. That said, the PUK has some tremendously talented people. Barham Salah, currently the deputy prime minister for security, was the prime minister for the PUK.

I should probably digress a bit and talk about the structure of the Kurdish government for a moment. There is a Kurdistan regional government which consists of a single legislature which you can think of as two executive branches. The KDP and the PUK both have prime ministers. They both have interior ministries. They both have education ministries. But they're part of the same government. So that said, they independently administer the different areas they control.

Q: Is there a very distinct KDP/PUK division of territory or is there some overlap?

KELLY: The way that it's usually viewed... [Looking at map...] The PUK has got Sulaymaniyah and the northern part of Diyala province. Over here is Arbil and Dahuk -- Sulaymaniyah province, which is where the KDP is. So the KDP area is maybe one and a half times as large as the PUK area. [Describing where cities are on map] Just above Mosul, just above Kirkuk... Of course, there are hotly disputed areas. You can think of Sulaymaniyah and northern Diyala as being part of the PUK administered territory and the other parts -- Arbil, Dahuk, and part of Ninawa -- being the KDP administered territories. [End of Tape]

So basically we've got these two Kurdish groups, different internal political considerations for each, both U.S. allies, both with a set of extremely talented people but different internal political considerations and abilities to work with the coalition government. We reached agreements with

them that allowed them to keep some of their security forces. We brought some of the senior people from the different parties into the government. I had said I was going to digress and talk about the Kurdish government and then come back to a specific issue, and that specific issue escapes me at the moment. So, perhaps we'll figure it out and come back to that. Let's go on to the next question.

Q: The questions I have here are slanted to the issues of police rather than militias, so I'm adapting them as I go along.

KELLY: Let me talk about militias and police then.

Q: That would be good, yes.

KELLY: When I arrived, police academies had already been established in Jordan and Baghdad and they're beginning to produce people. The population of real police that is required – and this is different than people that are just being paid or are on the books – is roughly 75-80,000. It has fluctuated a number of times, but it's in that ballpark. I think now it's a little bit above 80,000. And so one of the tracks of the effort is to bring former militia people into the security forces and of course they're interested in being part of the police. In February of 2004, the police academies were only starting to produce professional police officers. Basically the police force was manned by people who are, you could almost say, hired off the street to fill police positions without any training. They do get a little bit of on the job training from the coalition and military forces, who are not police officers, and I think also by some of the international police forces like the Carabinieri [Italian Police] and some different folks that came in. But by and large, these are not professional police officers. I can't speak of when the specific policy decision was made, but the policy ended up being that eventually every police officer in Iraq – and we're talking about the Arab areas because the Kurds control the police forces in the Kurdish areas – will have gone through one of these police academies and be a professional police officer.

There are decent standards for these folks. Literacy, for example, is a standard which is going to eliminate maybe as much as a third of the potential militia people. So literacy becomes one of our large concerns for the reintegration component of our militia process. Literacy is required for the armed forces, for job training, for basically anything. So, literacy is a key issue. A lot of the young men in the militias left school at an early age to fight in the resistance forces. Also remember that the groups that we're predominantly working with are those that were oppressed by Saddam, so the educational system [in] their regions of Iraq is not as robust as it is in other parts of the country. For all of the different social services, the disparity in social services in Saddam's Iraq varies in this way greatly.

So, we reach agreements where we will bring 1,000 Badr Corps folks into the police force. From all the other Arab militias, we have another 1,000 people for whom we're going to make allowances to get them in police forces basically sprinkled throughout the areas where they live. Then 1,000 total people, 500 of them from Badr, in the border police. Border police is a huge issue. One of the things the coalition failed to do and continues to fail to do is secure the borders of Iraq. The Kurds wrote a proposal in August 2003 that they delivered to the coalition articulating the fact that they needed 19,000 people to secure the border in the Kurdish controlled

areas alone. They were going to be authorized, at least when I left, about 1,900 people. The total border police force is now less than 20,000. Saddam had 110,000 - that's what the Kurds tell me - guarding the borders of Iraq. So there are significant issues with placing the borders under control. I know they're working on that. Hopefully they're making some good progress on that.

But remember, part of the reintegration process is to secure a number of billets in the police academy. Eight week courses are run there. I don't know the sequencing, but basically there are courses that run concurrently and we've reached agreement with the Ministry of Interior that a certain number of positions in those police academies would be reserved for former militia members. Of course, the militia people have to meet all the same criteria as others do to join any of the security forces. They've got to be the right age. They've got to meet physical fitness requirements. They all get medical exams and if they don't pass the medical exams they're not allowed in. And so as we start recruiting these people, for example, in the army, we found that anywhere from 25-50% of them were disqualified for illiteracy and medical reasons. Also, some of them wanted to be officers and there are not enough officer slots to go around. One of the interesting anecdotes was that we asked Security for nominations for people to be senior officers, generals. Of course, they want all their guys to be generals. They sent 48-49 people to be interviewed. I think three or four were chosen to be colonels. They were pretty upset about it and they want to know why their guys weren't chosen to be generals. One of the reasons I tell them is because the total number of generals in the entire army is to be only 40. Now, there were 15,000 generals in Saddam's army. This just flabbergasts them. One of the things that the Coalition Provisional Authority did dreadfully was public information, public diplomacy. That major Iraqi political leaders would not know the size of the envisioned Iraqi army is just... It is a first order piece of information and to imagine that people on the Governing Council and the major militia leaders of the country wouldn't be aware of that is just phenomenal. It just speaks to a failure on the part of the CPA that is almost unimaginable.

Q: Not just the number of officers, but also the shape in terms of chain of command.

KELLY: Yes. When we went around and briefed them as part of the militia policy - we being David Dunford, who's my boss, who works predominantly with the members of the Governing Council, Abd al-Aziz al-Hakim for security, Barzani and Talabani for Kurds, Ja'fari for Dawa, etc. - when we briefed them (other than Iyad Allawi, who is the chair of the security committee for the Governing Council; I think he was pretty well attuned), these people had no idea about the structure or size of the security forces or the plans, for example, for the police academies. When I would meet with the militia leaders, it would be the first that they heard of all these things. So, it speaks to a true shortcoming on the CPA's part. I don't want to beat it to death, and I don't think it needs to be beat to death; I think it speaks for itself.

Q: What's the capacity of the police academies? What numbers do they turn out?

KELLY: That's something that Dave Brannen will need to talk to you about. I can't give you the specifics. They started last March at relatively minimal levels, turning out a few hundred. I think when I left there were maybe 1,700 -- a relatively small number of people -- who have been trained through the police academies out of 83,000 or 90,000 or whatever the number of total

police needing training is. But the throughput is increasing as the academies expand [and] increase their ability to do training. I kept fairly good notes on all of the meetings I had. I think the envisioned throughput is someplace in the neighborhood of a couple thousand a month – 2,500 a month I want to say – sometime in this calendar year, reached as additional academies come on line and as things progress, and as the academies already created increase their capacity.

I'm going to digress and make a couple of general comments about CPA and the way things worked. Teddy Roosevelt's "Man in the Arena" is one of my favorite works. Do you remember it? Basically he says, "The critics can stand aside and say whatever they want, but the credit goes to the man in the arena who tries and fails, and tries and fails, and tries and succeeds, and the rest of you guys who didn't come and didn't help, go and say whatever you want to. It doesn't matter." I have the greatest respect for Ambassador Bremer and all the people over there. Excuse me, I'm getting a little emotional about it. But CPA goes over there (you've got to remember) having planned to work in a situation where everybody's going to be joyous that we're there. There's going to be a government that's going to be stood up, and there is a civil service that, much like in a western country, can run the government. A civil service that, by the way, doesn't exist. Everybody in what you might refer to as Iraqi civil service, those that remained after the war, were trained under the Baathist regime. They won't sneeze without a political leader telling them to do something. There is no initiative. There is no concept of a professional civil service that runs the government with political direction being provided by the politicians. So, CPA goes over there – ORHA first and then CPA goes over there – with a mission to help the Iraqis out for a little while, withdraw all our military forces very quickly, and things will work out great.

Over the period of probably six months to a year, the DPA [?] figured out that, "What we really need to do is run the government, reconstruct the government, train all these people, provide all of the civil services, provide everything." This is a fundamental change in our understanding of what it is that we're over there to do. And so when people are critical about the fact that "Well, why didn't you do this last summer," the frank answer is that the political direction from the people running the show in the Pentagon in Washington was, "Don't even plan for this because you're not going to have to do it." So, fundamental failure, I think, in our understanding of what the situation would be over there in the planning that was done ahead of the war. Now, we have a transition from ORHA to CPA and then we have the CPA discovering what their role is, and reinventing itself, creating coordinators out in the provinces, regional coordinators, and bringing in two deputies to help Ambassador Bremer manage the process. A complete evolution of what you could think of as the occupational government takes place. So, our understanding of what would have to be done evolves and the institutions to do it evolve.

The police academies are a good example. They are created. They are expanded. They are developed. Their control, this last spring of 2004, transitions out of the CPA to the Office of Security Cooperation. Originally they were part of the CMATT (Coalition of Military Advisor and Training Team), commanded by Major General Paul Eden, which is to train the army. CMATT then becomes the Office of Security Cooperation, and now they realize that the police forces need a similar structure. They create the Coalition Police Advisory Training Team. It's the mirror organization although without the assets for training the police given to the military. It's placed under what's now the Office of Security Cooperation. Then it's expanded from a

two-star to a three-star command and General Petraeus arrives in June and takes command of it with a broader mandate. So this whole machinery develops. Our understanding of what needs to happen for the police forces to succeed evolves.

Resourcing continues to be an issue. How are you going to pay for all this stuff? People think of Iraq as a very wealthy nation because of its oil supplies. It does have the second largest known resources of oil in the world, but recall this statistic -- if you took the oil revenues from all of Iraq and divvied them up per person, it would only be a few hundred dollars per person. It's not like Kuwait with similar size reserves and 1/30th or 1/50th of the population, where people can actually live off oil revenues -- or Saudi Arabia, where people can actually live off the proceeds from the oil industry. Iraq can't do that. I guess that's a long way of saying that they've come to grips with what the needs are on the police side. A lot of this has evolved over time. They're going forward and they're doing it.

Q: What are we providing in the way of technical assistance and equipment and so on?

KELLY: For the police, you would have to talk to Dave Brannen on that. As far as equipment, they've got Glock pistols and AK-47s. They're woefully short on communications equipment both to talk to police officers in the field and to talk to the central police authorities in Baghdad. The telephone system, for example, in Iraq is absolutely dysfunctional. Getting a hold of anybody and talking to anybody on the telephone, even if they're within Baghdad, is a chore. The different mobile networks are the best way to do that. Radio networks -- for the life of me, I don't understand why we haven't fixed that. It seems like we could go to Radio Shack and buy the stuff we need for these folks and do that, but maybe I don't understand the situation there. Dave Brannen could speak much more in depth about that. Body armor, all that kind of stuff, remain issues for the police forces.

Q: There was one question I wanted to ask you going back to the participation the Kurds in the central government. You talked about an unwillingness of some of them to do that. Is any of that related to their sense that being out of the Kurdish areas causes them to lose credibility, to lose contact with their constituency, that kind of thing?

KELLY: You ask me to speculate. The Kurdish areas are very pleasant areas to live in -- mountainous, green for much of the year, although in the summer they brown out a bit. Safe, civil rights respected, you can walk down the street without a huge bodyguard; if you're an American, you can go to the store. In Baghdad, you've got to travel around in armored vehicles with a whole cohort of people. It's miserably hot. It's dusty. It's just not a pleasant place to live. You certainly wouldn't want to bring your family there. If you look at what's being asked of the Kurds who come down, basically to leave their families up north, live in a very difficult situation both physically and from a security perspective, a lot's being asked of them. And so for example, General Nishvan, who is the minister of Peshmurga for the PUK and is one of the eminently qualified people we interviewed, basically said, "I'm a minister where I am. I live in a wonderful area. Why would I want to come to Baghdad?" He basically made it known that he did not want to move to Baghdad. He is also, by the way -- and this is speculation -- also one of the more powerful people in the PUK and he may be the number two guy in the political

hierarchy. If things shifted, he could be the number one guy in the political hierarchy, so perhaps he doesn't want to move to Baghdad because he wants to be in Sulaymaniyah.

Q: Positioning.

KELLY: Yes. That's speculation, but you've got to speculate to try and understand some of these things.

Q: Of course, and it's part of understanding the culture and the political organization.

KELLY: Yes.

Q: Let me go back to a couple of other things you mentioned as part of the third area of the reintegration of the former militia. What's actually being done in terms of job training? What are these people being offered and what are their prospects once they go through training of getting real jobs?

KELLY: Let me talk about the whole implementation thing and I'll get to that last. Regarding recruiting into the security services, the Kurds, of course, are taking care of the Kurdish internal security and they're reorganizing their armies of Peshmurga into these different forces, or so they tell us. That's something which will have to be monitored over the next year or so. There are also issues regarding the disposal of their artillery; what do they do with their heavy weapons? Should they turn them in? Can the Arab Iraqis convince them to turn them in? These are issues that the minister of interior and the prime minister are aware of and they have to deal with. Currently, most of the recruiting is run by coalition military people and contractors. That is transitioning over to the Iraqis. But those mechanisms are pretty mature. We've established good contacts for all the different components between the militia groups and the people doing the recruiting. I'm fairly confident that will proceed on schedule and things will work out. By the way, what we've done is, we've created a quarterly schedule of how many people will flow into these different security components - these different programs, if you will - of the transition and reintegration program. The goal is to reduce the remaining component of the militias to zero sometime in the future, but before the constitution is due to be finalized in December of 2005. I think by the first of October, 2005, if things go according to schedule, which of course they won't. It's a country that's reinventing its government; it's reinventing all of its structures. It would be delusional to think that it would all run according to schedule. But I'm pretty confident that it will work.

The Iraqi veterans' agency (I said I would mention that later) has been created. It's being run by what I believe is a pretty competent Iraqi, [a] former brigadier who basically left the Iraqi army at the time of the invasion of Kuwait because he was unwilling to do certain things that the government asked him to do, or so he says, and I have no reason not to believe him. He's being advised by a very competent Australian, formerly of the CPA, now on the Iraqi Reconstruction Management Office [IRMO] staff. Basically, the way we've set this up is, if the militia groups turn in the data that we've asked them to turn in, they will be entered into the veterans databases and for all intents and purposes it will be impossible to determine whether they served as a sergeant in the Peshmurga or as a sergeant in the former Iraqi army. So there's no way to then

later go in and pull them out and deny them their benefits. Benefits include pensions for those who qualify and preferences in job training, which I'll get to in a moment. As soon as policies are developed, there will also be benefits for people who were disabled in conflicts, and for widows and orphans, which is extremely meaningful to the resistance groups and also a difficult point because Saddam killed and maimed so many people, not all of whom were part of resistance groups. Survivor benefits will only be available to survivors of veterans killed in armed conflict against Saddam. There will have to be another process to deal with the vast majority of Saddam's other victims. This was not a pleasant thing for these folks to hear, although Ambassador Bremer did announce a separate program which is, frankly, not well funded but is in the formative stage, for all the victims of Saddam. So, if the militias turn in this information, they will then be registered, I'm confident, as veterans and, although the process may move very slowly – it may take six months for their benefits to start flowing – they will receive benefits, which is a positive thing.

Q: Did any of the groups offered veteran status feel they should resist it because they were providing information to a central government that they didn't trust?

KELLY: You know, I really expected that some of them would do that. Dinsinta Carol is the woman from Australia who is advising the veterans agency. When they put together the organization for the veterans agency, they did a very smart thing. They created an "Office of Resistance Fighters Benefits" or something like that which would exist for 18 months until all of the former militia were brought on board. That office is staffed entirely by representatives from the militia groups. They also created, much as we would in the U.S., an advisory board of senior people to advise on veterans issues. The board contains some former army generals and senior government people but also senior people from each of these militias. So the militias are well represented and, I hope, feel well protected both by their liaisons in the former fighters office and by their advisors in the advisory board. All of them indicated that they would get together that information and turn it in. So, I'm optimistic that it will go forward. That's a relatively minor bureaucratic task that needs to happen in order for those benefits to flow, assuming that the new government will put the machinery in place to make sure that those benefits do flow. But for any viable ministry of defense and army, you've got to have a veterans agency, you've got to be able to pay pensions, you've got to be able to take care of survivors of those killed in the line of duty (their widows and orphans), you've just got to be able to do certain things or nobody's going to join the military. So, I'm relatively confident that these benefits will flow.

The third track is the reintegration track. There is an official from the U.S. Department of Labor named Craig Davis who was over in Iraq for a long period of time, almost killed twice, really a very courageous man, who actually wanted to stay for an extra year. The State Department couldn't find a couple bucks to pay his salary, so basically there is now no labor attaché. The Department of Labor also couldn't find the bucks for him to stay. I don't understand why we can't find salary for a GS-13 or whatever he is to stay. He put together a program which was originally focused at providing job training for former soldiers but then was broadened for the whole country. It started out to be about a \$200 million program. There are a number of different funding sources. If you count U.S. funding, which was somewhere between \$75-100 million (it was whittled down a little bit as time went by) and Iraqi funding, which was also whittled down, it ended up being about a \$150-175 million program basically to run job training

and job placement facilities throughout the country. There were originally, I think, 26 job placement and 18 job training sites, basically in the major urban areas and each of the governorates. That was then expanded when they inherited a bunch of new sites. Training is an area where we're working hard to try to get World Bank and UN help with funding. I know the World Bank is very interested in investing in education in Iraq and in some of the human capital issues. So there is this program that was created and it has a veterans preference component. If you're a veteran, you get preferential treatment as far as job training and placement.

The program has some problems with regard to the training that takes place and the degree to which it aligns well with the jobs that are anticipated to be created. We hooked up people from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs [MLSA], which is where Craig Davis worked. He brought down an analyst to work with the PMO [Project Management Office] folks who were letting all the contracts for the \$18.7 billion that was appropriated from the U.S. to provide basic analysis of their contracts, requests for proposals, and to see what kind of skills would be needed. Whether or not that happened well and whether or not that was then connected with the actual skills that will be trained at these different sites, I can't tell you. But I do know that we set up the process for that to happen.

One of the things that happened right before I left was the selection of a whole new slate of Iraqi government ministers by Mr. Brahim and Ambassador Bremer. Unfortunately, the new MLSA minister basically canceled out that program. We had to go to the national security advisor to the prime minister and say, "You need to fix this" and he said that he would. When I left, that was in the process of happening. I had drafted a letter for the prime minister to send to the minister saying, "Please turn this back on." So I assume that happened, but I have not heard that it has. In any case, that roughly \$150-200 million program is the reintegration component for former militia members. We secured an extra few million dollars over a couple of years for roughly 15,000 former militia to be trained, and, of course, they do have the veterans preference. Because they have been declared veterans, more than 15,000 can apply for this preference.

Q: Is there a literacy component in this?

KELLY: There is a literacy component in the job placement centers. They teach basic literacy, computer literacy, and English as a second language, but they have pretty limited capacity to do that. Of course, we had to hand all this off to the Iraqi government when the CPA closed down.

I 'stole' this idea from Abu Hatim, the "Lord of the Marshes", one of the militia leaders. When we met with him at one point, he suggested that all people nominated for senior security positions, whether as ministers or generals or whatever, should be approved by a panel of people representing all the different tribes, the different geographic areas, and the different theological persuasions, so that no one tremendously objectionable could be put into any senior position. Based on Abu Hatim's idea, we created the Transition Reintegration Implementation Committee [TRIC]. The acronym is pronounced the "trick." So, the trick is to get rid of the militias, and that's got a dual meaning. My boss originally wanted to call it the Transition Reintegration Component Iraq [TRICI], but we didn't do that. The TRIC was established. It's chaired by the minister of interior. Basically, the members of the Ministerial Committee for National Security, which is the Iraqi version of the U.S. National Security Council, are on the panel. In addition,

the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and Education are represented. And they have the option to bring in people from the governorates, people from the tribes, as they see fit.

This broad-based committee is also able to do things like approve changes in the schedules. The schedules will certainly have to change as the program, the new government, evolves. So those things all need to be managed and approved by the TRIC.

I mentioned the fact that there is not really a civil service that's functional in Iraq. The TRIC is basically made up of fairly senior level director general advisors to the ministries, fairly senior civil service/political level people, director generals (being roughly the equivalent of assistant secretaries in the U.S. system). I think we got a couple of deputy ministers at least for a couple of our meetings. But it doesn't appear as if that committee is going to be able to provide the aggressive, energetic, focused leadership that is needed to move programs forward. This is hard in western societies, as you well know from participating in Interagency working groups. To move inter-ministerial efforts requires a committee and a leadership of the committee that's going to really provide energy, aggressively pursue things, and do things that this culture is just not well suited to do. Now, the national security advisor, Dr. Malfaqa Rabi, has taken a strong interest in this and may provide some leadership. He and I have traded a couple of e-mails since I returned to the States. So, it may work, but implementation isn't easy.

I've already mentioned the problems with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs [MLSA], which - let me digress a minute - is the most decentralized component involved. Basically people have to go to the MLSA sites for benefits and training. We're trying to collocate the veterans affairs and Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs sites out in the urban areas so that people can get to them. You know, it's not like in the U.S., where you get in your car and you drive over. Iraqis have got real transportation issues. There is no viable public transportation system in Iraq. We want them to be able to go to one location and see somebody about all their benefits. So, this is the one real decentralized piece. We haven't linked up a local militia leader with a local coalition military representative and a local police chief to bring people together that are eligible for these benefits like we have for police recruitment and training. People have to know to come to these sites to get their benefits, so there needs to be a public information campaign. We need to work through the militia groups. A lot of these MLSA sites are still being stood up and created, so there is ongoing process which I'm not comfortable will be completed as scheduled. At some point these things have to be turned over to the Iraqis whether that's now or later. If someone could have stayed and managed this thing from the coalition perspective for a period of time, that would have been good. We proposed what we called a Donors Committee, a parental committee for the TRIC from the Coalition and then, as the international community comes on board, from the international donors, to help provide technical expertise to help keep them focused. For example, to keep the connection between the coalition military who are assisting in training and recruiting and the Iraqi government that's working with the militia groups. Our proposal through the prime minister and Ambassador Bremer was to have the Donors Committee jointly led by the U.S. embassy pol-mil section and the British embassy first secretary for political-military affairs. They had not met when I left. Basically, the embassy doesn't have the staff that it needs to do all the gazillion things that it needs to do.

Q: Even with a gazillion people?

KELLY: The embassy is not huge, but the mission is pretty darn large out there. But even with all those people, basically, you're running a shadow government for the Iraqis without real staff. You don't have totally populated ministries; you've got advisories for all these different ministries at one level or another. Particularly on the security side you've got a significant number of advisors, but you've got all of the security problems of a nation to address. The pol-mil section is, I think, scheduled to have five or six people in total. Think of the National Security Council maybe as its equivalent. Think of who's on the seventh floor at the State Department or in the E ring of the Pentagon, the hordes of people that pay attention to security issues. They've got five-six people that do that. They're just unable to manage well the things that they're going to be asked to manage for the ambassador. That's not a putdown. Maybe that's appropriate. I'm not making a value judgment here. There is a point where the Iraqis have to do this. We can't do it for them forever and we certainly don't want to be in a position of doing it forever. So, I'm not making any value judgments. I'm just stating a fact that they don't have the people to cover all the things that people like me would say they should. "Here's my issue. You need to cover this." So, I don't know whether that donor committee will get going and actually be helpful. I don't believe it's met. And there is a lack of help from the coalition side. In fact, I was sending an e-mail off to them this morning before you came about some of the facts that they have wrong about the militia stuff. Basically, since there's nobody minding the store, there's nobody keeping the pieces together.

Q: You mentioned the need for public outreach, public diplomacy, information diplomacy, that kind of thing. In terms of the security issues, who is managing that and how would you evaluate the programs?

KELLY: Who is now managing? I have no idea. I have no idea what was created since I left. I can talk a little about the CPA stuff.

One of the interesting things about CPA is that you have to recognize that every single person over there volunteered to be over there. I have a theory. You're going to get some of my soapbox issues here. If you define an "A" team person to be someone who's willing to be in Iraq for a year, is a Middle Eastern expert, and is working in their area of expertise, a "B" team person to be somebody who's got at least one of those characteristics but not all three, and a "C" team person who's got none of those characteristics, the CPA was like a pickup basketball game. It was all volunteers. It was almost entirely B and C team people. I talked about this at the Iraq conference that we were at yesterday [July 29 at NDI] and somebody came up to me and said, "Well, what do you mean I'm not an A team person?" Well, if you're not willing to be there for a year, it doesn't matter how talented you are and how many years of expertise you have. People who have just got a world of expertise may just not stay long enough. Larry KRANDal, a former AID guy, did the DDR for Haiti and ran the AID mission in Haiti. You couldn't find a more qualified person to do some of the things over there. But he wasn't there for a year, so he's not an A team person. Almost no A team people are over there. Now that there is a large number of Foreign Service officers in Iraq and there are some AID people who have been over there who are willing to stay a year or more, we're getting some A team people in place.

But not during the CPA reign. People think we pulled people from different parts of government. We didn't pull anybody from anywhere. We didn't direct anybody to go over there other than military people. It was all tremendous people who volunteered to go over there. But the CPA operated at most at 60% of the strength of the people that we thought we should have had there. People were working in fields that they weren't experts in. People who were experts in fields that they were truly needed in ended up being put to work someplace else because that's where they ended up. People rotated in and out of there every three months. Three to six months was the average length that people were there. There were some people that stayed for a year, but very few. So, in that way, the CPA was very, very dysfunctional.

But what was your question again?

Q: It had to do with public diplomacy.

KELLY: Oh, yes. So, nothing against any individual who went over there, but from Terry Kelly's perspective, every press officer I worked with was over there because he worked on some Republican campaign someplace. These are not people who are over there to craft messages to the Arab world. That wasn't their area of expertise and, frankly, that wasn't their direction. Once again, this is my perspective. I've actually had it verified by some people who know it better than I do but who will remain nameless, but basically, the Strategic Communications, the targets for STRATCOM, were "The Washington Post," "The New York Times," and "The LA Times." Not Al-Jazeera. Not the Arab media. They did create an Iraqi TV station. They did create print media publications, which I understand did have a decent amount of success. They did a tremendous amount of polling. So, even though they were kind of stuck in the Green Zone, I think through the polling, they probably had a pretty good idea of the macro level understanding. But if you walked into what was called the Green Room, where Strategic Communications, STRATCOM, was, there was not an Arab face in there. There was nobody in there who I think understood the nuances and was competent to say, "Yes, you're trying to address the right issues, but you're not doing it in a way that will connect with Iraqi people." So I think that the politicization of that function was very harmful.

Q: Understandably, yes.

KELLY: One of my colleagues who, by the way, grew up in Soviet Russia and is now a U.S. citizen, made the observation that as young persons growing up in Soviet Russia, they'd listen to Voice of America because even though they knew it presented the American perspective on things, it was crafted in a way that was meaningful to the Soviet people and so they could understand it. Even though they knew it was "propaganda" (not my word, their word), it was crafted in such a way so that it was believable. We did not do that in Iraq I don't think.

Q: The Voice of America, in my own experience in Central Europe as well, was very good at being aware of local cultures and the local perceptions and being able to give them the information they wanted in a way that they could accept it. That's huge, of course, in a situation like this.

KELLY: A national expert who I won't name made the observation that, "How could the United States, the media center of the universe (think of all the advertisements), be getting beat to death on the public information campaign?" It shows that the focus of effort was misplaced. We need to think where we focus our efforts, particularly in situations like this. If you think of Iraq as a giant counterinsurgency campaign right now, what you do in counterinsurgency campaigns is predominantly with information and then with some military and security kind of things to take care of the stuff that you can deal with. But if you don't have the information piece, you can't win an insurgency campaign ever.

Q: I went to the RAND web site a few days ago and there is a study published just a couple of months ago.

KELLY: Yes. By the way, I should have said this at the very beginning: I'm giving you my impressions as a former CPA official, not a RAND analyst. These are my impressions. They're not based on analysis that I have done on Iraq.

Q: That report made some of these same points, of course. The network concept, which was what I hadn't encountered before, was an interesting one.

KELLY: Yes. I'm not so sure I agree that this is a network situation. I know Bruce Hoffman thinks that. There are some very smart people who are certainly more eminent in that field than I am who think that. But I don't think this is so much of a network thing. Whenever you talk about any of these things, people talk in binary mode (It either is or it isn't) and that's not the right way to look at it. There certainly are certain aspects of this which, as in all insurgencies, have a network kind of flavor to them. There certainly are also hierarchies over there. There certainly are some much more traditional kinds of organizations and command and control structures in the way that they do things even though things are compartmented perhaps, like the terrorist cells are. If you're in a certain compartment, you basically don't know what anybody else is doing. That's just normal operational security. That's not a network. So, I don't think I would go as far as Bruce does on that, but that is an interesting point and something that certainly bears consideration. [End of Tape]

I should also say that Bruce has done some excellent analysis of some of the issues over there, whereas I'm working off of my impressions of being over there. So, he may have a more objective perspective of what's going on than I do.

Q: We'll leave it at that, I guess.

Let me go back to my questions and see if I can work any more of these into your area. We can think of concluding and just let you wing it a little bit towards the end. What lessons did you learn from the experience? What do you draw from this?

KELLY: We can spend another two hours probably on that. Let me see if I can capture some things. I'm a retired army officer. I spent 20 years in the army. I had an unusual army career. The first half was normal. I worked in the 82nd Airborne Division and then in the 8th Infantry Division in Germany. But after that, I probably spent 10 out of 20 years in civilian clothes. I

worked in the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon, and taught at West Point. But I had never actually been 'in action.' For me personally, the area of greatest personal growth came in having to go out and actually negotiate all these agreements with these people. Basically, I developed the policy. I negotiated all the agreements. I created the implementation piece, and then I handed that off to the Iraqi government. Policy development I've certainly done a lot of. Implementation I've certainly done a lot. But the actual negotiation with what ended up being over a dozen political-military organizations from radically different cultures, radically different from ours and then different from each other's also -- the Kurds versus the Shia versus the Sunni and all their differences -- it was culturally very expansive. It was a very good opportunity for me. We were successful pretty much across the board in everything we went out to do, which was difficult. When I first got there, one of my colleagues who had been there for most of a year jokingly said that my pay should be contingent on my success. The implication was "That there's no way in hell you'll ever do this." So we were very happy when we did succeed.

David Gompertt played a big role, too, on the higher political level, particularly when it came to some of the major issues that the Kurds were concerned about. We had to interface with the party leaders to get them to agree to certain kinds of things. He played a major role. Of course, he played a major role in intellectual direction and supervision of the whole project. I don't want to make this sound like a one man show.

Q: Gompertt is here at RAND?

KELLY: Gompertt was a RAND person. He was a 3161 employee for the DOD, which is a temporary DOD employee. Next year he's going to be at the National Defense University. If nobody's interviewed him, he certainly should be interviewed. His span of control was much broader, of course, than mine was. He had basically the whole national security portfolio for Ambassador Bremer and moved the ball quite far, I think.

So, from an area of personal growth, that was very important. I don't know if you want me to talk more on that.

Lessons learned for the U.S. are tremendously numerous, especially for times when we might go into totalitarian countries that are closed. You can think of a lot of those -- North Korea, Cuba, Iran -- places where it's not inconceivable that the current government could implode, and there might be international relief efforts led by the U.S. to reconstruct governments and do certain things. Our preconceived notions and our notions based on what expatriates tell us need to be taken with a grain of salt. We need to do a great deal of contingency planning, which we basically didn't do any in this case. I hope it's not partisan political issues, but this being a presidential year, of course, if anybody listens to this, probably they'll assume that it is. It's not meant to be. But we need to plan. There is a tremendous amount of expertise in the international community which, because of the way that we went into Iraq, we could not tap into. And so we lost a great deal of our ability to understand what we were walking into when we lost those connections. I personally think that a lot of that understanding could have been tapped into anyway. Having worked in relatively high political levels for a long period of time, I think there certainly were a lot of people in academia who would have been willing to talk to us. I can't

imagine that there wouldn't be a lot of people at the UN who would be willing to unofficially talk to people and help with understandings. And people even in foreign governments, even in the French government. On a RAND project, in May 2003, I was in Paris talking to their ministry of defense and senior army people, who were very open about how they saw the world. This was not about Iraq. This was about the future of the French army and how they would work with the U.S. army. They were very open about political opinions and their understandings of things. So, I think if we had managed it differently, we could have walked in there with a much better understanding of what was going to happen. So, I think that that should be a lesson learned for any future government. Like I said, that is not meant to be a partisan political statement. That's meant to be an observation. That would probably be the largest political issue.

From the perspective of planning, from a Defense/State Department, from a national security perspective, we went in there with far too few troops, far too few assets. I already talked about A team, B team, C team. We went in there with a U.S. government personnel policy which did not permit us to bring the A team in there. Basically, we needed the incentives to get the right people over there and that either was not envisioned or was not permitted, so we did this with a pickup team of non-experts. It was amazing that we got done what we did, I think, considering. Just as an anecdote, we had 23-year-olds doing things that you would expect GS-15s to do. And these people are in for a tremendous letdown when they come back to the U.S. Specifically, one GS, a 23-year-old - my oldest daughter was older than she is - was the advisor from the government's team for the national security affairs people. She is an extremely switched on person, very bright, was working on a master's degree at Georgetown when she volunteered to come over here. But at 23 years old, your experiential base is extremely limited and your ability to give good advice is therefore also extremely limited.

Q: Was there a willingness of people to accept the advice from such young officials?

KELLY: Well, that was amazing. This was the most meritorious place I think I've ever worked. Particularly as I worked for the military, there were some more rank conscious kind of things going on. But on the CPA side, if you could get the job done, it didn't really matter whether you were a GS-4 or an SES-4. So, that was the good part. But there were a tremendous number of young, inexperienced people, people working out of their fields, people who didn't understand the culture, doing the best that they could.

If I could point out certainly one of the three major failings of the U.S. government going into there, it was the failure to have a personnel policy that would bring the people over there for the period of time that was needed to make this work well. From a U.S. government perspective, our military services, frankly, are not large enough to do this for this size country. I'm fairly optimistic that it's going to work. We are probably going to get it done. But we could have done it much better. We could have nipped this insurgency very much more in the bud. Look at the number of people, for example, it would just take to close the borders and control the ammunition dumps. There were dumps all over Iraq which were pretty much unguarded. You can just drive up there in your pickup truck and load up a bunch of RPGs and drive off. That's a little bit an exaggeration, but not a huge exaggeration. The number of troops it would take to do that is far greater than we have over there. When General Senseki testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, he was asked how many troops it would take to do that. He

originally said, "Well, you'd have to ask the commander that question." When pressed, Senseki said (he was the chief of staff of the army at that time, had been a U.S. army Europe four star who commanded the Bosnia stuff) that from his experience, it would take several hundred thousand troops. We had a little bit over 100,000 troops. I think he is being proved correct. We need to think hard about how we come up with the human and financial resources to do a thing like this.

I talked about some countries that could implode. Imagine what would happen if Iran imploded. Iran has three times the population of Iraq and is very mountainous in parts. It would be an extremely tough place to do something like we are doing in Iraq. It's just not possible that we could do that alone. If you look at who could help us – we're getting off the subject, I know, a little bit – people think of NATO. Well, the NATO nations are pretty tapped out. Their armies are significantly smaller than ours. They're not just a small version of our army. They're armies that have niche kind of capabilities. The British and perhaps to a lesser extent the French militaries are the only ones that you could think of as smaller versions of the U.S. The Brits are totally tapped out with Iraq. The French have got commitments all over the world. They envisioned sending maybe a brigade, a couple thousand people, to some of these emergencies, not 100,000 people. So then you're looking at partners like the Indians, the Arab world, who can actually put a lot of folks in the field because it's in their neighborhood for one thing. So there are some interesting implications for our geostrategic relationships and how we should do things. I don't know what the answers to those are. I'm just posing some of the issues.

Q: Any closing words?

KELLY: I would like to say one more thing about the legal structure that we put in place, just to be complete. We created a CPA order, which is federal law for all intents and purposes, in Iraq which was in force when the CPA was in existence and, in theory, is going on, although to think that all will all be honored by the incoming Iraqi government isn't realistic. But at least for the moment it has provided the Iraqis with a starting point for them to go forward. We actually came up with an interesting legal construct for dealing with the militias. The Transitional and Administrative Law declares all armed forces and militias outside of central government control to be illegal. That went into effect on the first of July. So, what we did in this law was to echo that prohibition. But because these were resistance groups and we didn't want to just bring them all into a camp on July 1 and disarm them and send them on their way, we agreed on a period of drawdown for all of them, so we created a temporary legal status for them which we called Residual Elements.

A Residual Element is the rump end of a militia that has agreed to a transition reintegration process. The Residual Element status last just as long as the time required for that process. The rules are that they are to not procure new weapons and ammunition, and that they must coordinate with the ministry of interior and the multinational force as long as it's operating under UN Security Council resolution on any kind of operation it would want to do. So, for example, while the Peshmurga are guarding the northern border, that's a central government responsibility, so they would have to coordinate their activities with the ministry of interior and the multinational force. During some of the big religious holidays for the Shia, we worked with some of the Shia militias to help man checkpoints and provide some security. That would all

have to be coordinated. They couldn't do those things independently. They had to do that as part of an authorized government force.

Then we built in some prohibitions for illegal armed forces and militias. For example, political parties that support them would be declared illegal. Leaders of these parties would be not able to run for office or hold elected or appointed political office for a number of years. I won't go into all that stuff, but there were some pretty interesting legal things there which might be good examples for someone in the future who's looking at doing a similar kind of thing. If you look at DDR [demilitarization and demobilization and reintegration] experiences around the world, this was a very different kind of approach from any of the case studies that I am aware of and that I read before going over there and from any of the things told to me by the different experts. So, I think it was a creative, interesting, and successful approach to a difficult problem which is worth looking at for people in similar situations in the future.

Q: Great. Finally, Terry, I'd like to go over the possibility of contacting a few other people. You mentioned David Brannen and David Gompert, assuming, of course, that these people haven't already been "captured" by the Iraq Experience project.

KELLY: There were six RAND people that went over there. Gompert didn't go over as a RAND person, so I'm not including him in that. Besides Brannen and myself, there was Andrew Rathmell, a British citizen, who was the director of the Planning Policy and Analysis cell for Ambassador Bremmer. You should definitely speak with him. He was here this week and has now gone back to the UK, but he'll be back in the future. Of the RAND people, he probably had the broadest perspective because he was the planning policy and analysis chief for Bremmer on all the different things going on there.

Olga Oliker, who is a RAND person here in Washington, also worked for Gompert in the Office of National Security Affairs and she basically managed for the three or four months she was there the creation of the ministerial Committee of National Security and worked with the different national level security groups, including the Governing Council Security Group chaired by Iyad Allawi. She did a lot of high-level coordination executive secretary kind of functions and other issues.

Keith Crane, who is also here in the Washington office, worked in the Policy Planning and Analysis cell as an economist, has got some very interesting viewpoints and insights into the Iraqi economy and the future thereof, and continues, I believe, to do some work for the U.S. government on those issues.

Thomas Sullivan also worked in Policy Planning and Analysis. He is a statistician and he did a number of statistical analysis for Ambassador Bremmer. On data specific things, quantitative things, he would be a very good source. I think he's actually back over there now working for a couple of weeks with the embassy helping them transfer some of the capability that we had with CPA over to the embassy and/or mission staff. I'm not sure exactly where that will be resident.

So those are all people I would recommend you getting in touch with. I can give you a bunch of other names if you're interested.

Q: Well, the Project is meant to be as broad as possible. I don't know what the ultimate constraints of the budget that has been allotted to the project are in terms of reaching numbers of people, but they're trying to be fairly thorough and trying to be fairly broad in terms of the areas of expertise that are represented.

KELLY: One person you should definitely get a hold of is Fred Smith. He is a senior executive in the Defense Department, although I think he's considering retiring at this point. He's former principal deputy assistant secretary for international affairs. He was the person in the Office of National Security Affairs basically responsible for creating and standing up the Iraqi ministry of defense. All of the other Iraqi ministries other than the defense department continued in some shape or form after the CPA took over. The ministry of defense was gotten rid of and recreated from scratch. Fred was instrumental in making that happen. He was the real leader of that group. He is somebody that definitely should be spoken with. He also spent time as the national security advisor for Bremmer between Slocum's departure and Gompert's arrival and after Gompert left he held that position. And he was there for probably a good eight or nine months, so he may be one of the few A team-ish, though he wasn't there for a whole year. He is three quarters of an A team guy.

Colonel P.J. Dermer at the National War College this year is an A team person, even though he's an army guy. He was over there for a year. He worked on the civilian side for the CPA. He is a Middle Eastern foreign area officer. Basically, more than anyone else that I know of, he went to every corner of Iraq, spoke to every group and every tribe. He will have some very significant insights. He's somebody that should definitely be touched bases with. He should be pretty easy to find. He's a student there this year. He's a colonel over there. Then I can give you a whole bunch of other names.

Q: That's great. Terry, thank you very much.

KELLY: You're welcome.

Q: It's been interesting. I've learned a lot.

KELLY: I probably left a whole bunch of stuff out, but so be it.

Q: Postscript.

KELLY: One last comment. In talking about this militia stuff, it may have come across as I was focusing predominantly on the CPA effort, but this was an effort that the CJTF7 folks and then later the Multinational Force of Iraq put a very large effort into. CMET, then OSC, particularly Brigadier Ellen Foster, who was the deputy commander, a British brigadier, played a significant role in some of the negotiations. This effort was kind of an umbrella effort. Underneath it, as I think you probably have gathered from what I said, were a bunch of stand alone programs that we tapped into run by just extraordinary people. Colonel Paul Lane, another British officer, basically ran recruitment for the police in the ICDC, now the Iraqi National Guard. His predecessor, another British colonel, Mark Waring, was tremendously helpful. A number of

people in the ministry of interior and CPA – Matt Shervin, Dave Brannen - were extremely helpful. So there were a lot of people working on this. I focused a lot on my experiences. I just don't want to leave the impression that I did this without a tremendous amount of help from a whole bunch of people.

Q: Thank you again.

KELLY: End of postscript.

End of interview