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**Presenter: Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld; and General Richard Myers, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff**

**Tuesday, August 9, 2005 1:16 p.m. EDT**

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### Defense Department Briefing

SEC. RUMSFELD: Good afternoon, folks.

Q Welcome back.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Thank you.

Some 60 years ago, with the war in Europe turning against them, Hitler's forces faced defeat, and in desperation, the Nazi regime carried out some of the most indiscriminate acts of violence that had been seen during the war. With allied forces closing in on Berlin, Hitler ordered destruction of German infrastructure, and sent Germans, even very young children, Germans, out to face almost certain death as soldiers. If Germans were no longer willing to shed their own blood to ensure their right to survival, Hitler said, they deserved to die. The world saw in these acts the true nature of totalitarianism and its capacity for self-annihilation.

This may suggest why terrorists today in Iraq are indiscriminately killing so many Iraqis, even Iraqi children. They seem to either believe that this could turn the tide their way, or they've given up hope of rallying public opinion to their side. And it could also explain why extremists would risk bombing Londoners, which served, really, to harden the British people's determination to fight extremism.

At some point, most would-be terrorists should see that their cause is a desperate one. They can't hold ground for long, they have little visible political leadership, they have no positive vision to offer. The vast majority of Iraqis have rejected them at each opportunity, as evidenced by their votes in the last election, in a number of public opinion polls, and by lining up in the tens of thousands to defend their country and participate in the Iraqi security forces and in the constitutional drafting process. Even Sunnis, many of whom boycotted the January elections, have now joined the political process and decided to be a part of the Iraq of tomorrow.

In less than a week, Iraqis representing all of the various ethnic factions in the country are expected to have completed drafting the new constitution. It's important that they stay with their timetable. This will be a critical step in persuading the majority of the Iraqis that the new Iraq is worth fighting for; that they have a stake in it. Indeed, their new constitution, a piece of paper, could well turn out to be one of the most powerful weapons to be deployed against the terrorists. The enemy understandably senses this and is determined to stop the constitutional process through terror and intimidation. As the October 15th referendum date on the Iraqi constitution comes and the December elections approach, I think it's reasonable to expect that violence could

again increase for a time, as it did during the last elections. But given the political progress, that should not necessarily be considered an accurate gauge of the enemy's future.

As allied forces pushed towards -- forward in both the European and the Pacific theaters in World War II, the enemy's tactics, such as the cult of death among S.S. forces and the kamikazes in the Pacific, led to some of the bloodiest fighting of that war. But those deadly acts -- and they were deadly -- prove not to be harbingers of victory. So if such tactics are used in Iraq in the months ahead, one should be careful not to draw the wrong conclusion. As long as the Iraqi people persevere, the terrorists cannot win.

One additional note. Every year since September 11th attacks, Americans have commemorated that anniversary. This year the Department of Defense will initiate an America Supports You Freedom Walk. The walk will begin at the Pentagon and end at the National Mall. It will include many of the major monuments in Washington, D.C. reminding participants of the sacrifices of this generation and of each previous generation that has so successfully defended our freedoms. Freedom Walk participants will be invited to a special performance by country singer Clint Black. And more information about this event will be on the Department of Defense website, [www.americasupportsyou.mil](http://www.americasupportsyou.mil).

General Myers.

GEN. MYERS: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

And good afternoon. It's been a while since I've been up here with all of you. And over the last couple of weeks, as we all know, there have been several notable attacks on our forces in Iraq. American men and women have given the ultimate sacrifice or have been wounded in our effort to help bring Iraqis their freedom.

First and foremost, I would like to offer my sincere condolences to the family members and the friends and the relatives of those who have been wounded or killed; all those that have been personally affected, again, I offer my heartfelt condolences, and I also want to assure them that their loss is not in vain.

Some would argue that these attacks are a sign of a strong insurgency. What I'd like to do now is to give you my perspective on this. First, the political progress in Iraq continues and has met every single planned milestone -- every single planned milestone. Since the Iraqi people took control of their own country in June of 2004, more than 8 million Iraqis voted in free elections last January. The secretary said a constitutional assembly is drafting a constitution. That constitution will be voted on in October, and national elections will be held in December.

Secondly, the Iraqi security forces are growing in capacity and capability. There are more than 178,000 trained and equipped forces, and that number continues to grow.

In the last 24 hours, 29 of the 35 operations -- these are the major operations -- conducted in Iraq were combined U.S. and Iraqi operations. More and more, coalition forces are turning over responsibilities to the Iraqis. One of the first steps in the process of transitioning areas to Iraqi security force control involves them providing for their own fuel and food. Iraqis are now contracting for their own service support to five major training bases in Kirkush, Numiniyah, Umm Qasr, Rustamiyah and Tallil.

In February, the 6th Iraqi Brigade was assigned an area of responsibility in Baghdad and continues to have that area of Baghdad as their responsibility. And in July, the Iraqi army assumed control of a sector in the Diyala province.

And lastly on reconstruction. It continues, and ongoing projects are making a difference, and they include more than 140 new primary healthcare facilities are being built, more than 3,200 schools have been

renovated, 100,000 teachers are being trained.

I think these facts demonstrate that Iraq is making progress through their own efforts and the continuing support of the United States of America, our coalition partners, and the international community. We are committed to continue this battle, this help, until the Iraqis can take responsibility for the security of their own country and the political process has been developed.

Defeating the insurgency takes will power. Coalition forces continue to have the will power to take the fight to the enemy, as we have for two years now. And the only way the insurgents can win is to convince the Iraqis, to convince the American people, our coalition partners and the rest of the world that the fight in Iraq is not worth it. What I can tell you is that soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines in Iraq overwhelmingly see the benefits of this fight, and they believe as I believe, it is worth the fight.

And with that, we'll take your questions.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yes?

Q Mr. Secretary, could you tell us the nature of the personal misconduct that caused the head of the Army Training and Doctrine Command to be relieved of his duties? And are you satisfied that sufficient action has been taken against him?

SEC. RUMSFELD: It's a matter that just came up today, to my knowledge, and it's something that's being handled in the proper channels. And it's not something that it would be appropriate for me to get involved with.

Q General Myers, could I ask you to expand on your opening remarks about the strength of the insurgency? I wonder where the IED attack last week that killed the 14 Marines fits into that scheme. Are the IED attacks increasing or declining in number? Are they growing more powerful, these bombs? And finally, how is it that the insurgents are able to transport and hide bombs that powerful?

GEN. MYERS: All right. First of all, I think you're referring to the incident where 14 Marines, Marine Reservists, matter of fact, out of Ohio were killed. They were not killed by a bomb per se, they were killed by a land mine. In fact, in this case -- I haven't seen the final report on that -- but three land mines that were put together.

If you look at the size of the land mines, it doesn't require a big hole, doesn't require a lot of people to transport them. This is not a -- in your mind, if you have a vision of a big, big bomb that upset a fairly large vehicle, that's not the vision you should have. It was a small device placed in the road -- relatively small device -- placed in the road that overturned the vehicle, and when it did so, of course, there was no way out of the vehicle once it overturned.

That's going to continue to happen. I mean, people that are -- there is no -- we've talked about that up here before; there is no perfect defense in this country, in Iraq, anywhere in the world, against people that are bent on doing those kind of acts. We've just been witness of that in London and reminded one more time.

We do, every time this happens, talk to our commanders in Iraq just to ensure that they're doing what they are doing anyway, because their interest is the same as all of our interests, and that is that nobody -- that we keep this as safe as we can. They review their tactics, techniques and procedures; they change them as the enemy changes. Clearly, improvised explosive devices, vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, some with newer technologies these days, are going to change our tactics, techniques and procedures and some of the technology that we'll bring to the fight. Obviously we're going to try to do that.

Q Can I ask a question to General Myers, please. Thank you, sir. General Myers, can I expand a little bit on these sophisticated IEDs? There are reports that some of these sophisticated weapons, including shape charges, are entering Iraq from Iran. Is this true? Are they coming in in abundance? Is it part of the Iranian government, do you think, or terrorist organizations in Iran?

SEC. RUMSFELD: It is true that weapons, clearly, unambiguously from Iran have been found in Iraq. I'm not going to comment on the other aspects of your question.

Q Do you know how many, sir?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Oh, no. Goodness, how can you know? You only know what you know. That's a big border. And it's notably unhelpful for the Iranians to be allowing weapons of those types to cross the border.

Q Mr. Secretary?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yes?

Q If I can take you back to your opening statement when you -- actually, General Myers made similar references to the failings of the insurgency, including their failure to garner public support. And yet, this far into the operation, the insurgency has managed to sustain itself. Does this suggest a lack of understanding on your part on what the insurgency is about, who they are, the durability of their effort?

SEC. RUMSFELD: The people who are involved in analyzing that think not. They believe with great conviction that the progress on the political, the economic and the security side, moving forward together, will in fact create an environment in that country that the Iraqis will be capable of putting down that insurgency over a period of time.

If one looks back historically at insurgencies, this insurgency does not have a vision that's compelling. It doesn't have a future except the beheadings of people and that type of thing. It is clear that the United States and the coalition forces are not occupying forces with any intention of staying there in perpetuity or to seize their land or something else.

There are various elements to the insurgency as we've discussed here from this podium; there's not one motive. But I think that as the political process goes forward and as the economic progress goes forward and as the Iraqi security forces increasingly, as General Myers said, take over more and more responsibility for the security of the country, we'll find that the persuasiveness or the effect of the insurgency will diminish.

Q General Myers?

GEN. MYERS: Let me just tag onto that. The polling data would certainly -- and we have some recent polling data that certainly indicates just the opposite, and I think we can release that at some point.

GEN. MYERS: Yeah, we can release the polling data.

But the second point is on -- you know, I've talked about hotline tips. There's a national hotline. There's also the tips that units get by just being in the neighborhood, and we track those by month, and they've gone up consistently since elections. They've gone up consistently. And that's an important indicator, I think, that the insurgency doesn't have the backing -- a popular backing.

Now to emplace three land mines in a road doesn't require a lot of support. I mean, if you add up the

dollars and cents -- and the land mines are probably free, left over --

Q My point was just that, though, that despite the fact that they have apparently no public support, they continue to persist.

GEN. MYERS: Right.

Q And I'm trying to -- do you understand why?

GEN. MYERS: Well, you know -- well, and it's -- and understanding the insurgency is something that's a continuing process as it morphs. I think there are two pieces to it. There is one that will not be deterred, and that's the al Qaeda piece, the Zarqawi piece. There's the Iraqi piece, which will be deterred by the progress in the areas that the secretary talked about. Let me just give you a little more texture on that, that horrible incident when we had 14 Marines killed several days ago.

When we went back into the area -- U.S. and Iraqi troops went back into the area, and we immediately put people in detention that were accused of, by the local Iraqis -- they said, "Go look at these folks. They're the ones that killed the six snipers from the same unit" -- if you remember -- "that killed the six snipers." We were in there looking at both incidents, the land mine incident and killing the six snipers. And that was a joint U.S.-Iraqi operation; went into the town there near Hadithah Dam, and the public came forward and said: These are the folks. And so they're in interrogation right now to determine if in fact they are the folks.

Q General Myers, you talked about some Iraq units working on their own combat support. Today, how many Iraqi battalions are completely independent, able to provide their own support and able to conduct their own operations?

GEN. MYERS: I'd have to get the number for you. I don't have it top of my head.

SEC. RUMSFELD: It's also -- it's also not a useful construct in this sense: If you take the 173,000 Iraqi security forces, a large fraction of 173,000 are border guards. They're functioning in the borders; they're doing what they do. A large number are police. A number -- very few -- are counterterrorism elements or special police commandos that function and do their thing.

The army is the element that was originally designed to deal with external threats, and has been, obviously, reoriented to deal with the insurgency and normal security for the Iraqi people because the insurgency is what it is.

And we've got all that numbers we presented to the Congress. I don't happen to have it on the top of my head.

But I think that there's been a pattern where people have tried to diminish the capabilities of the Iraqi security forces by trying to pluck out a single number and saying, "Only -- out of 173,000, only these X number, small number of battalions are capable of functioning independently."

The reality is that a large number of them are doing exactly what it is they were organized, trained and equipped to do, and increasingly, they are doing it with less and less external support from the coalition countries.

GEN. MYERS: All 178,000 --

Q Sir, to pull U.S. troops home, won't you need the Iraqis to operate completely independently? I

mean, how are you defining victory in Iraq today?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Those are two different questions.

Q Well, isn't it -- you said before that you tie it to being able to turn over cities and security control to Iraqi forces.

SEC. RUMSFELD: And that's happening, as he said.

Q And won't they have to operate --

GEN. MYERS: I only mentioned a couple of areas. There are more than that. And we'll try to get that to you as well.

Q Mr. Secretary, along those lines?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yes.

Q Thank you. Turning to Asia for a second, the Japanese defense minister, Mr. Ono, said today that the plans to release an interim accord on U.S. force realignment in September would now be delayed because of the political situation in Japan. I'm wondering what you've heard about that from the Japanese side, and also --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I have not heard that. Obviously, there have been some announcements involving domestic political situation in Japan, and -- but I have not heard any public official announcements as to how it might or might not affect any of the things we're currently working on with them. Yes?

Q General Myers, Mr. Secretary, force -- turn to our force levels in Iraq, Mr. Secretary. Over the last couple weeks, there's been a steady drumbeat of stories implying a new exit strategy; depending on who you believe, up to 80,000 troops by next year or 30,000. You've hinted at it. General Casey has repeated remarks that --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I don't hint.

Q Pardon me?

SEC. RUMSFELD: I don't hint. (Laughter.)

Q Can you follow this a little bit? Is there a new exit strategy in the works that could go up to 30,000, as I think NBC had it last night?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Nothing has changed. It's condition-based. The president's said that from the beginning. I've said it from the beginning. General Myers has said it from the beginning. General Casey and General Abizaid have said it. Sometimes they say it first and sometimes they say it second. When they say it second, then the glass is half-empty. When they say it first, the glass is half-full. And the reports -- reporters have a lot of fun with it and try to find daylight between Casey and Abizaid or Abizaid and General Myers or General Myers and somebody else. There's nothing changed.

The fact is that the effort -- major effort is under way to train and equip the Iraqi security forces and to increasingly turn over responsibility for the security in that country to them. It takes time, it's going along very well, and we're pleased with the progress. The level of the insurgency is going to be a function as to what the --

of a variety of things which will affect the conditions, and the drawdowns that will occur eventually will obviously be based on those conditions.

Some of those variables that I've mentioned repeatedly are what are the Iranians doing? Are they going to be helpful or unhelpful? And if they become increasingly unhelpful, then obviously the conditions on the ground are less advantageous. Same thing with the Syrians; to what extent are they being helpful or unhelpful? How is the political and economic progress going forward to the extent that it persuades more and more Iraqi people to be supportive of the constitution and to have that vote on October 15th, the good Lord willing, on a constitution, to feel they have a stake in the future of that country, to give more tips like Dick Myers said, of there are the bad guys, go get 'em?

Q General Myers, can I ask you, how long can you sustain a force of up to 138,000 before you start butting into third tours for just about everybody? And more important -- and equally important, the 24-month rule that National Guardsmen and reservists are operating under, I mean, at some point, what do your planners tell you about when you're going to start hitting up against that limit?

GEN. MYERS: Well, Tony, you hit on an important point. It's something we do look at. We're good for several years. Let me just say that: we're good for several years.

Q You're good for several years because of what? Meaning --

GEN. MYERS: Well, just what you said. You said combat forces. I mean, there's the possibility of people going back for a third tour, sure. That's always out there. We are at war.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Active duty.

GEN. MYERS: Active duty. Reservists are being held to 24 months of duty cumulative, and 13 months, of course, on the ground in theater in whatever country we send them to.

SEC. RUMSFELD: It's important on this numbers of tour thing to disaggregate our forces. The Marines are doing -- active -- are doing seven-month tours; the Air Force sometimes doing a three-month tour. The Army's been doing a 12-month -- up to 12 months. And then you have volunteers who actually come in, put their hand up and say, "We want to go back in and do x, y, or z."

So when you start hearing rumors about people on their third tours or fourth tours, you start checking into it and looking at what you got, you're going to have people who may be in the Air Force who have gone back in on three-month tours, or you may have people who have volunteered because that's what they want to do.

And I think it's -- there's always a risk when people grab into the middle of something, take the worst of what might be, and then wave it around as though it's reality.

Q Mr. Secretary?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Yes?

Q Sorry. Going back to the insurgents, it's been said often from this podium that with each political milestone in Iraq that is met, the insurgents would, in effect, lose hope and see that the game was up. Yet --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I don't think anyone said that from this podium, that they'd lose up and the game was up.

Q It's been said often that the major political milestone would cause the insurgents to lose --

SEC. RUMSFELD: Have to be discouraging. That doesn't mean you lose hope and give up.

Q Well, I'm wondering, with each --

SEC. RUMSFELD: Dick Myers said Zarqawi's not going to give up. That's what he does; he gets up in the morning and wants to recruit people and arm them and finance them and kill people, preferably anybody he can get his hands on -- it doesn't matter what their age is, what their sex is, what their nationality is. That's what he does. He isn't going to give up.

I think you're misstating what you hear from this podium --

Q I'm wondering, though, in your opening --

SEC. RUMSFELD: -- to fit your question.

Q -- when you talked about the constitution being an important weapon against the insurgency --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I did so.

Q -- I'm wondering why are you -- why will this be --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I could be wrong.

Q -- more important than previous major political milestones that have been cited, such as the election in January, the hand-over last June of sovereignty to the Iraqis?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Well, first of all, I don't know; I think. I didn't state an unqualified that it will be, I said it might well prove to be. I think. Or something equally eloquent.

Why do I think so? Well, if you get a country like Iraq for the first time voting in a referendum on a piece of paper that was crafted by all the diverse elements in that country, and they then risk going to vote, because people will threaten them if they vote, and a constitution passes, and it's something that they decide is in everybody's interest -- not perfect for anybody mind you, but can be amended later, as ours has been any number of times; they very well, I think, will be demonstrating a confidence in that new system that ought to make more of them increasingly willing to do the things necessary to provide the security in their country, and that is doing what General Myers said: Going to the Iraqi security forces, going to the coalition forces saying, there are the people you want. There's a IED manufacturing facility. These are the people who killed those snipers. And that's important, and that's why I believe that. I could be wrong.

GEN. MYERS: All indications are -- hold it; let me just finish up.

All indications are that the Sunni leadership in Iraq has made a fundamental decision that they want to be part of the process, and that's been happening now for some time. Every report that we get says that. Eighty-five percent of the Iraqis that are polled say they want to vote, and that's of all ethnic groups. And I think that just supports what the secretary says. I think when that happens, when they have a constitution and they have elections under that constitution, that that gives those that are against the constitution no authority at all. I think the polling numbers are all very good with Iraqi citizens, they understand who the bad guys, who the good guys are I think in this case. But it'll just reinforce that and it'll -- I think it'll spur more cooperation from other

folks around the world.

Q Sir, can you shed any light on the story in The New York Times today that in the year 2000 there was a U.S. military team known as Able Danger that identified four of the 9/11 hijackers a year before, went to the Special Operations Command and asked that that be shared with the FBI, and that that did not happen? Can you clarify any details about that story?

SEC. RUMSFELD: I can't. I have no idea. I've never heard of it until this morning, and I understand that our folks are trying to look into it and see what they can find out for you.

Q May I ask, then, General Myers to clarify one thing about your statement about the insurgency, sir? You had said some weeks ago that you believe the insurgency in Iraq had the same -- "capacity" was your word -- to carry out its operations that it had a year ago. Given everything you see now, does that assessment still stand, and why or why not?

GEN. MYERS: Well, that was a way to try to characterize it when people -- the context of the question several weeks ago or a month ago or a month-and-a-half was how many insurgents are out there? And in insurgencies, that is not probably the best way to measure their capability. So I took a stab at saying, let's look at their capacity; and their capacity has stayed about the same in terms of numbers of incidents, particularly the number of incidents that have any effect -- wounding people or killing people, be they coalition or being they Iraqis or whatever. Their tactics/techniques will change a little bit, as we've seen, with more emphasis on vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, more suicide bombers. So some of the attacks are more effective than they were in the past. Nevertheless, the overall capacity of what they're able to do on any given day is about -- is about the same. As we've also seen here as we get into August and power production is at a premium, they've gone after the infrastructure as well.

Because you remember what Zarqawi said he was going to do. He says, what I'm going to do is foment civil war. We can't beat the coalition. We can't beat these soldiers and Marines and airmen and sailors over there, so we've got to do something else. And the other thing we're going to do is we're going to try to start a civil war inside Iraq. So I'm going to -- me and my jihadists, we'll do whatever we can do in a very uncivilized way, cause that to happen.

Q But if you say from the podium today unambiguously that weapons are coming in from Iran, what do you do about that, other than with -- with all due respect, other than to say it's unhealthy, what do you do to stop weapons from coming in from these two, Iran and Syria? What are you going to do about it?

SEC. RUMSFELD: It's a problem for the Iraqi government. It's a problem for the coalition forces. It's a problem for the international community. And ultimately, it's a problem for Iran.

Q General Myers or Secretary Rumsfeld, a story in USA Today yesterday had an operations officer from the Marine Corps saying he had asked for a thousand more troops. I know we've talked about this a lot. You've talked about it a lot from the podium. Larry DiRita said yesterday I don't doubt every colonel wishes he had more in his area, but the decision about how troops are deployed are made by the commanders above them.

First of all, did those Marines ask for a thousand more troops? And can you explain to people who see the security situation as still serious in Iraq, who know that the Iraqi forces aren't ready to take over, why there aren't more troops needed?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Well, I'll start. And I think Larry could well have said I don't doubt for a minute that

there are people in the country at the colonel level or lieutenant colonel level who might not want more at one moment, who might not want less in another moment. And there's 137,500 U.S. forces and a good slug of coalition forces, and how they are parceled out and allocated within the country of Iraq is a matter for General Casey and General J.R. Vines to determine. They do it every day. And at any given moment, they're moving people from one place to another. That's their job.

So the idea that someone in Washington -- or that because someone wishes they had more at a certain moment suggests that the total number is wrong, I think is a non-sequitur.

Q But are there enough troops --

SEC. RUMSFELD: Obviously a non-sequitur.

Q But explain to people why more troops aren't needed. People look at the security situation, General Myers said --

GEN. MYERS: More troops are needed. More troops are needed, and they're being provided by the Iraqis. And if you just think back, if you trace the number of Iraqi security forces that have come on line -- and to answer, partly, Bret's -- there's 178,000-plus of them, and every day when they wake up, they go out to defend their country, whether they're on the border or whether they're a brand new unit that's guarding a fixed site somewhere, they're at risk, they know they're at risk, they've lost a lot of their own members. I don't know what -- the current numbers are well over 2,000 that they've lost since we've started keeping -- keeping --

Q Mr. Secretary, you say we need more troops --

GEN. MYERS: -- 2,335.

Q -- and they're not ready to go, and they can't provide --

GEN. MYERS: What I'm saying is they are ready to go and they -- that's what I -- that's --

Q But they can't provide security for the Iraqis yet.

GEN. MYERS: They are in many areas. In one area of Baghdad they are providing security for Iraqis. In other areas in the country -- and I forget the number, but there's eight or 10 areas in the country where Iraqi forces are providing security for Iraqis; indeed they are. So it's not a correct statement.

SEC. RUMSFELD: The total number of security forces in Iraq is going up every week. If you add up the Iraqi security forces, the U.S. forces and the coalition forces, that number has gone up week after week after week after week.

Q Well, the question is, when are they going to take the lead in fighting the insurgency? General Abizaid said -- told Congress in the spring he expected them to take the lead in 2005. Is that still a working assumption, or are you pushing that to next year?

GEN. MYERS: There are some units today in Iraq that take the lead in fighting the insurgency.

Q I mean all. When are they going to take the lead in fighting --

GEN. MYERS: It's going to be progressive. I've already said there are certain areas that have been turned over to Iraqis. It continues to happen. It's not over, so it will continue to happen. It's going to take time.

Let's just --

Q Well how much time? A year? Two years? Three years?

GEN. MYERS: Nobody knows. It's event-driven. It's going to have to be driven by a lot of events. And we've tried to explain the complexity of this before. I don't --

SEC. RUMSFELD: I just answered that question earlier that it's based on the conditions --

Q You're saying nobody knows when they're going to be able to --

GEN. MYERS: It's going to be event-driven. And we can't predict all events because of all the issues -- the secretary just went over that. He said you have threats, internal and external; you have economic progress that has to be made; you have political progress that has to be made. So you can't predict your troop strength based on what you think's going to happen, you're going to have to wait till events on the ground prove it. We also think Iraqi security forces are going to come on at a certain rate with certain capability. We're not going to bet on that until we have the capability in hand.

Q I'm sorry, can we just go back to that 1,000 -- that 1,000 --

SEC. RUMSFELD: Last question. Do you want to take it or shall we call on someone who hasn't asked one?

Q This question is just a follow-up.

Q You should call on me, since she's already had --

SEC. RUMSFELD: We'll call on you.

Q In a follow-up to the question about the arms coming into Iraq from Iran, you just said that ultimately that would be a problem for Iran. How so?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Why sure. They live in the neighborhood.

Q How so, Mr. Secretary?

SEC. RUMSFELD: They live in the neighborhood. The people in that region want this situation stabilized, with the exception of Iran and Syria.

Q So that was not an implied threat of possible retaliation?

SEC. RUMSFELD: Oh, I don't imply threats. You know that.

Q And also, why can't you tell us whether it's believed the weapons were actually coming from the government of Iran as opposed to some kind of --

SEC. RUMSFELD: If one sees it there on the ground, you identify it, it's from Iran, and you don't know who brought it in or who tolerated it being brought in, and who facilitated it to be brought in, who sold it someone to take -- to bring in, what you do know of certain knowledge is the Iranians did not stop it from coming in.

GEN. MYERS: In an area in the country where the border is -- people go back and forth.

SEC. RUMSFELD: Hundreds of miles, porous.

STAFF: Thank you, folks.

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