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KUWAIT/IRAQ: SITREP 131600Z

SUMMARY

1. EUPHORIA AT OPEN BORDER ANNOUNCEMENT DISPELLED BUT MANY KUWAITIS AND EXPATS TRIED AND WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO GO SOUTH. CONSTANT REPORTS OF LOW MORALE IN IRAQI ARMY. AIRPORT SERVICEABLE.

DETAIL

2. EXFILTRATION: RCC ANNOUNCEMENT OF BORDERS OPEN SET MANY PEOPLE LOADING THEIR WAGONS AND FLEEING THIS MORNING. MOST HAD RETURNED THIS EVENING AFTER LONG QUEUES OR BEING TURNED BACK BY THE IRAQIS. ABDALY BORDER ONLY OPEN AFTER PROBABLE COMPLETION OF MILITARY MOVEMENTS. SALEMY ROAD NOW BEING USED AS TEMPORARY RUNWAY 10 KMS WEST OF JAHRA AND LINED WITH MILITARY CANTONMENTS. KHAFJI ROAD AND ROADS VEERING WEST TOWARDS WAFRA RIGOROUSLY BLOCKED SUGGESTING TOTAL MILITARY NO-GO AREA.

3. MILITARY: STORIES, SOME FIRST-HAND OF IRAQI ARMY LOW MORALE, ABSENCE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND DISORGANISATION. THEY VARY FROM CONSUL'S EXPERIENCES IN WAFRA AREA WHERE ORDINARY SOLDIERS WERE MILLING AROUND WITHOUT FOOD, MAPS OR DIRECTION AND ASKING WHETHER THEY WERE GOING, BACK TO OTHERS SELLING THEIR UNIFORMS AND WEAPONS FOR KD. CONSUL REPORTS NO PATTERN OF DEPLOYMENT, TROOPS THINNED OUT, FEW WEAPONS SYSTEMS ALONG ROADS SOUTH AND NO TANKS DUG IN ON ASAFAR MOTORWAY AS BEFORE. WAFRA AREA WAS CLEARLY SENSITIVE AND REMARKS OF IRAQI OFFICERS SUGGESTED IT WAS SOME SORT OF HQS AND FORCE CONCENTRATION. LARGE NUMBER OF VEHICLES AND PRIVATE CARS COULD BE SEEN IN THE DISTANCE IN THE WAFRA FARMS AREA.

4. ANGLICAN CHAPLAIN REPORTS AHMADI TROOPS THINNED OUT. RELIABLE BRITS REPORT ONLY TWO TANKS FROM MESSILA TO SHUWAIKH, A FEW MOBILE AA AND THINNED OUT MACHINE GUN/MORTAR NESTS. AHMADI HOSPITAL BARELY

WORKING WITH ALL BRITISH STAFF WITHDRAWN AND IN HIDING. IN MANGAF AREA BEACH MORTARS HAVE MOVED A BLOCK INLAND. TROOPS IN FINTAS/MANGAF AREA AND THOSE REMAINING IN CITY SEEM BETTER QUALITY.

5. FAILAKA FERRY SEEN LEAVING RAS AL SALMIYA WITH AIR DEFENCE WEAPONS.

6. CIVILIAN POPULATION: FOOD AND PETROL SUPPLIES CONTINUE BUT LAWLESSNESS STILL RISING. CARS SMASHED IF THEY CANNOT BE DRIVEN AWAY. IRAQIS STILL SEARCHING BLOCKS OF FLATS IN FINTAS/MANGAF AREA LOOKING FOR ARMS. SOME REPORTS OF ASSAULTS ON WESTERNERS AND CONSTANT REPORTS OF USING THEM AS CHAUFFEURS AT GUNPOINT.

7. BANKS STILL CLOSED AND KUWAITIS REPORTED TO HAVE THROWN AWAY KEYS TO VAULT SYSTEMS. SOME TELEPHONE EXCHANGES WORKING AGAIN AND ONE OR TWO INWARD CALLS RECEIVED ON ANBASSADOR'S LINE.

8. AIRPORT: USABLE ACCORDING TO BA REP WHO REPORTS HELPFUL ATTITUDE

OF IRAQI AIRWAYS STAFF OVER MAINTAINANCE OF BA 149. CREW STUCK AT AIRPORT. BA REP BELIEVES AIRPORT WILL REOPEN AS DOMESTIC AIRPORT TOMORROW. MUCH GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT TAKEN TO BASRA.

9. UTILITIES: STABLE. PURIFICATION CHEMICALS AVAILABLE FOR FORE-SEEABLE FUTURE.

10. RESISTANCE: NO RELIABLE INFORMATION BUT A PETROL TANKER STRANDED ON FOURTH RING ROAD IN THE MORNING OF 12 AUGUST DESTROYED EARLY EVENING (12TH).

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