



Adjunct Professor of International Affairs

January 18, 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR: SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Subject: Beyond Baker-Hamilton -- One Approach to a Last Try at Stability in Iraq
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A collapse of the Iraqi state would be catastrophic -- for the people of Iraq, for the Middle East and for America's strategic interests. We need a new political and military approach to head off this impending disaster -- one crafted with bipartisan congressional support. But Baker-Hamilton isn't it.

Our objective should be a large-scale U.S. military withdrawal within the next 36 months, leaving in place an Iraqi government in a stable and mostly peaceful country that does not threaten its six neighboring states and does not intend to possess weapons of mass destruction.

The courage and skill of the U.S. armed forces have been awe-inspiring. Our soldiers, Marines and Special Operations forces have suffered 25,000 wounded and killed, with many thousands permanently maimed, while fighting this \$400 billion war.

But the situation in Iraq is perilous and growing worse. Thousands of Iraqis are killed each month; hundreds of thousands are refugees. The government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki is largely dysfunctional. Our allies, including the brave and competent British, are nearly gone. Baghdad has become the central battlefield in this struggle, which involves not just politically inspired civil war but also rampant criminality and violence carried out by foreign jihadists. Shiite and Sunni Arabs overwhelmingly anticipate and endorse a U.S. strategic withdrawal and defeat.

We could immediately and totally withdraw. In less than six months, our 150,000 troops could fight their way along strategic withdrawal corridors back to the sea and the safety provided by the Navy. Several million terrified refugees would follow, the route of our columns marked by the burning pyres of abandoned military supplies demolished by our rear guard. The resulting civil warfare would probably turn Iraq into a humanitarian disaster and might well draw in the Iranians and Syrians. It would also deeply threaten the safety and stability of our allies in neighboring countries.

There is a better option. First, we must commit publicly to provide \$10 billion a year in economic support to the Iraqis over the next five years. In the military arena, it would be feasible to equip and increase the Iraqi armed forces on a crash basis over the next 24 months (but not the police or the Facilities Protection Service). The goal would be 250,000 troops, provided with the material and training necessary to maintain internal order.

Within the first 12 months we should draw down the U.S. military presence from 15 Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), of 5,000 troops each, to 10. Within the next 12 months, Centcom forces should further draw down to seven BCTs and withdraw from urban areas to isolated U.S. operating bases -- where we could continue to provide oversight and intervention when required to rescue our embedded U.S. training teams, protect the population from violence or save the legal government.

Finally, we have to design and empower a regional diplomatic peace dialogue in which the Iraqis can take the lead, engaging their regional neighbors as well as their own alienated and fractured internal population.

We are in a very difficult position created by a micromanaged Rumsfeld war team that has been incompetent, arrogant and in denial. The departing defense secretary, in a recent farewell Pentagon town hall meeting, criticized the alleged distortions of the U.S. media, saying that they chose to report a few bombs going off in Baghdad rather than the peaceful scene he witnessed from his helicopter flying over the city. This was a perfect, and incredible, continuation of Donald Rumsfeld's willful blindness in his approach to the war. From the safety of his helicopter, he apparently could not hear the nearly constant rattle of small-arms fire, did not know of the hundreds of Marines and soldiers being killed or wounded each month, or see the chaos, murder and desperation of daily life for Iraqi families.

Let me add a note of caution regarding a deceptive and unwise option that springs from the work of the Iraq Study Group. We must not entertain the shallow, partisan notion of rapidly withdrawing most organized Marine and Army fighting units by early 2008 and substituting for them a much larger number of U.S. advisers -- a 400 percent increase -- as a way to avoid a difficult debate for both parties in the New Hampshire primaries.

This would leave some 40,000 U.S. logistics and adviser troops spread out and vulnerable, all over Iraq. It would decrease our leverage with Iraq's neighbors. It would not get at the problem of a continuing civil war. In fact, significantly increasing the number of U.S. advisers in each company and battalion of the Iraqi army and police -- to act as role models -- is itself a bad idea. We are foreigners. They want us gone.

Lack of combat experience is not the central issue Iraqis face. Their problems are corrupt and incompetent ministries, poor equipment, an untrained and unreliable sectarian officer corps (a result of Rumsfeld's disbanding the Iraqi army), and a lack of political will caused by the failure of a legitimate Iraqi government to emerge.

We need fewer advisers, not more -- selected from elite, active military units and with at least 90 days of immersion training in Arabic. Iraqi troops will not fight because of iron discipline enforced by U.S. sergeants and officers. That is a self-serving domestic political concept that would put us at risk of a national military humiliation.

All of this may not work. We have very few options left. In my judgment, taking down the Saddam Hussein regime was a huge gift to the Iraqi people. Done right, it might have left the region and the United States safer for years to come. But the American people have withdrawn their support for the war, although they remain intensely committed to and protective of our armed forces. We have run out of time. Our troops and their families will remain bitter for a generation if we abandon the Iraqis, just as another generation did after we abandoned the South Vietnamese for whom Americans had fought and died. We owe them and our own national interest this one last effort. If we cannot generate the political will to take this action, it is time to pull out and search for those we will hold responsible in Congress and the administration.



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Biographic Summary of General Barry R. McCaffrey, USA (Ret.)

General Barry R. McCaffrey is President of his own consulting firm based in Arlington, Virginia (brm.associates@att.net). He serves as a national security and terrorism analyst for NBC News and writes a column on national security issues for *Armed Forces Journal*. The Washington Speakers Bureau (www.washingtonspeakers.com) exclusively represents his speeches.

General McCaffrey is also an Adjunct Professor of International Affairs at the United States Military Academy at West Point, NY. From January 2001 to May 2005, General McCaffrey served as the Bradley Distinguished Professor of International Security Studies.

In October 2004, General McCaffrey was elected by the Board of Directors of HNTB Corporation (www.hntb.com) to serve as the Board Chairman of a newly formed subordinate company, HNTB Federal Services. HNTB is a preeminent U.S. engineering and architectural design firm with net revenue of \$500 million and 3000 + employees.

He has been elected to: the Board of Directors of DynCorp International, CRC Health Corporation, McNeil Technologies, The Wornick Company, Phoenix House Foundation and the Atlantic Council of the United States. He is also: a member of the Council on Foreign Relations; an Associate of the Inter-American Dialogue; a Principal for the Council on Excellence in Government; a member of the CSIS U.S.-Mexico Binational Council; Chairman of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Education Center Advisory Board; a Senior Executive Associate for Army Aviation Association of America and is a member of the Board of Advisors of the National Infantry Foundation.

General McCaffrey stepped down as the Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) in January 2001. He was confirmed to the position by unanimous vote of the U.S. Senate in February 1996 and served as a member of the President's Cabinet and the National Security Council for drug-related issues. As ONDCP Director, he coordinated the \$19 billion federal drug control budget and developed the *U.S. National Drug Control Strategy*.

General McCaffrey graduated from Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts and the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He holds a Master of Arts degree in civil government from American University. He attended the Harvard University National Security Program as well as the Business School Executive Education Program.

General McCaffrey is active in national security affairs. He co-chaired the Atlantic Council of the United States NATO Counterterrorism Working Group, leading a delegation to Moscow, Mons, Brussels and Warsaw. In January 2004, he visited Iraq to conduct a country-wide evaluation of the security situation. In 2004 he addressed the "Security of the Americas Conference" in Mexico City. While in Mexico City, he met with senior officials of the Mexican Government. In April 2004, General McCaffrey and Congressman Jim Kolbe (R-AZ) jointly released the CSIS Bi-national Commission Reports on Migration and Border Security. In August 2004, General McCaffrey visited Afghanistan and Pakistan to conduct a political-military assessment. In February 2002, General McCaffrey visited Cuba and participated in a small group session with Fidel and Raul Castro discussing U.S.-Cuba policies. In June 2005, he again visited Iraq for a country-wide evaluation of the Coalition strategy.

Among the honors he has received are: Health and Human Services Lifetime Achievement Award For Extraordinary Achievement in the Field of Substance Abuse Prevention (2004); recognized as one of the 500 Most Influential People in American Foreign Policy by World Affairs Councils of America (2004); the Department of State's Superior Honor Award for the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks; The Central Intelligence Agency Great Seal Medallion; the United States Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award; the NAACP Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award; the Norman E. Zinberg Award of the Harvard Medical School; The Federal Law Enforcement Foundation's National Service Award; The Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America Lifetime Achievement Award; and decorations from France, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela.

Prior to confirmation as the National Drug Policy Director, General McCaffrey served as the Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Armed Forces Southern Command coordinating national security operations in Latin America. During his military career, he served overseas for thirteen years and completed four combat tours. He commanded the 24th Infantry Division (Mech) during the Desert Storm 400-kilometer left hook attack into Iraq. At retirement from active duty, he was the most highly decorated four-star general in the U.S. Army. He twice received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest medal for valor. He was also awarded two Silver Stars and received three Purple Heart medals for wounds sustained in combat. General McCaffrey served as the assistant to General Colin Powell and supported the Chairman as the JCS advisor to the Secretary of State and the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.