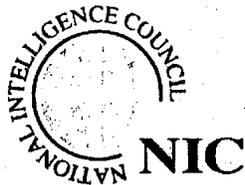


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**Intelligence Community Brief**

**Iraq: Unusual Logistical Activities In Preparation for an Anticipated US-Led Campaign**

**SECDEF HAS SEEN**

**MAY 06 2002**

**Key Points**

Recent activities detected at several ammunition storage depots in Iraq raise the possibility that Iraq, in preparing for an anticipated US-led military campaign to topple the regime, may be moving SCUD missiles or chemical and biological weapons (CBW) either to protect them or to prepare them for future use. The analysts who hold this view, a minority within the Intelligence Community, note that:

- Apparent transshipment activities have occurred at sites confirmed or suspected to have been associated with Iraqi SCUD missiles or CBW materials.
- The presence of a decontamination vehicle at one site and possibly another at an additional site is inconsistent with the movement of conventional munitions. The presence of decontamination/washdown trenches at one of these sites also is inconsistent with movement of conventional munitions.

Most analysts argue that these transshipment activities probably are the movement of conventional munitions from central storage sites to bolster defenses. They point out that detected activities are consistent with the movement of conventional munitions noted elsewhere in Iraq and emphasize that the overt character of detected activities and the relative absence of security associated with them are inconsistent with movement of SCUD or CBW materials.

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[redacted] **Anticipating US Military Action**

[redacted] Since mid-September 2001, Iraqi forces have been preparing for a US-led military campaign to topple Saddam's regime. These activities are the most extensive since the Gulf War and include:

- Preparing an extensive network of trenches throughout the country to defend strategic areas—one of the largest trenches is 7 kilometers long and is located east of Mosul in northern Iraq.
- Establishing dispersal areas and sites to support the relocation of equipment and personnel.
- Augmenting radar coverage of western airspace and deploying additional anti-aircraft artillery to the Air Defense Sector Operations Center for the western sector.
- Launching a large campaign to repair heavy equipment transporters. The size of this campaign is unprecedented. Iraqi forces recently have moved about 250 trailers to repair facilities. Iraq repaired about 10 trailers in 1995 and approximately 20 in 2000.
- Modifying new trucks diverted from the "oil-for-food" program to carry air defense artillery.
- Increasing the tempo of flight training.
- Stepping up preparations to contain civil unrest. [redacted]

[redacted] **Activities of Particular Concern**

[redacted] Since mid-March 2002, Iraq has engaged in

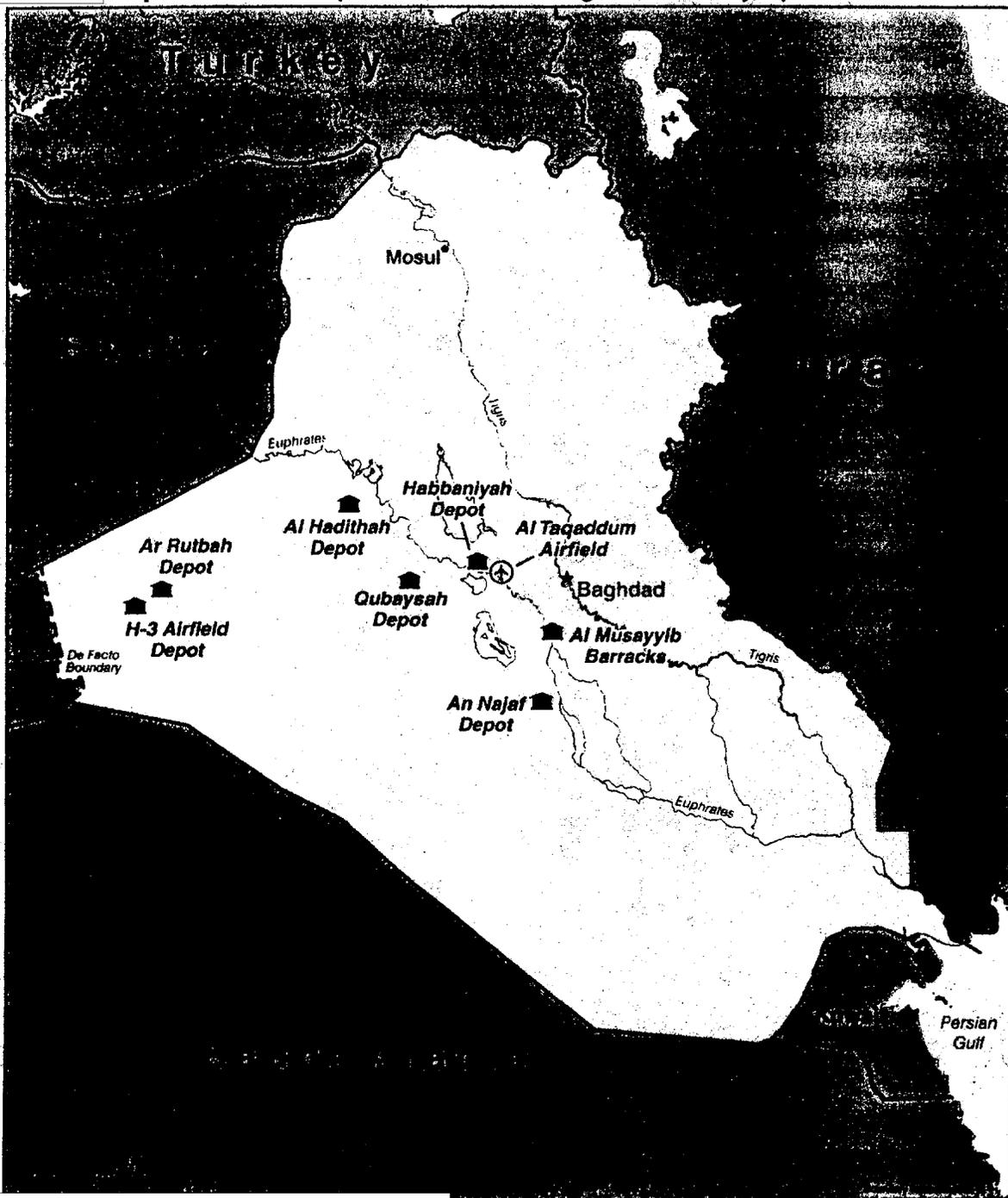
apparent transshipment activities at seven ammunition storage facilities in central and western Iraq. These facilities have confirmed or suspected historical links to Iraq's SCUD missiles or chemical and biological weapons (see map). We do not know whether the Iraqis have moved materials into or out of the facilities or what they have moved.

- [redacted] which revealed logistical operations at five strategic ammunition facilities (Ar Rutbah, H-3 Airfield Depot, Al Hadithah, Qubaysah, and An Najaf). Approximately 60 newly acquired stakebed cargo trucks were involved. These trucks are subordinate to the General Headquarters.
- The magnitude of the activity at Ar Rutbah and H-3 is especially noteworthy because these facilities in western Iraq are usually dormant.
- We have detected stakebed truck activity in conjunction with the presence of a confirmed and a possible decontamination vehicle at Al Musayyib Barracks and Habbaniyah Depot, respectively. We also have detected decontamination/washdown trenches near the entrance to a bunker area at Musayyib.

[redacted] **What We Know About These Facilities**

The logistical activity that concerns us [redacted] at the following ammunition storage facilities. In italics we highlight the Intelligence Community's judgments regarding each facility's past association with either SCUD missiles or chemical and biological weapons.

Iraq: Ammunition Depots With Unusual Logistical Activity, April 2002



DI Cartography Center/MPG 759790AI (R00667) 4-02

[redacted]  
**H3 Airfield Depot: Confirmed Association.** Following the Gulf War, Iraq admitted to UNSCOM that it had stored R-400 bombs filled with a chemical nerve agent.

[redacted] **Qubaysah Depot: Confirmed Association.** SCUD missiles were staged from this facility at the outset of the Gulf War. [redacted]

[redacted] showed SCUD missiles on transporter-erector-launchers (TEs) along the road. In addition, following the Gulf War Iraq admitted to UNSCOM that it had stored CW-filled SCUD warheads and bombs and unfilled CW rockets at this facility.

[redacted]  
**Al Hadithah Depot: Confirmed Association.** Iraq admitted storing CW rocket warheads at this depot before and during the Gulf War. It claimed that these rockets were unfilled.

[redacted]  
**An Najaf Depot: Suspected Association.** The Intelligence Community suspects that this facility once stored chemical and/or biological agents and SCUD missiles [redacted]

[redacted] We judged that this unusual deployment was related to the presence of proscribed materials. In 1996, we detected the presence of a Samarra-type decontamination vehicle; we regarded the presence of this vehicle as suggestive of chemical and/or biological agent storage.

- In the 1980s we confirmed [redacted] that a Samarra-type vehicle was associated with movement of Iraq's chemical weapons. We believe this type of vehicle also would be associated with the movement of Iraq's biological weapons.
- Moreover, the drive-in bunkers at An Najaf are similar to those at Qubaysah where Iraq stored SCUD missiles.

[redacted]  
**Al Musayyib Barracks: Suspected Association.** A separately secured ammunition storage area at Al Musayyib Barracks may house chemical and/or biological munitions. A Samarra-type decontamination vehicle has been present in this storage area since at least December 2001. Convoys of stakebed cargo trucks were noted on several occasions in March and April 2002. In addition, decontamination/washdown trenches have been present near the separately secured storage area since at least 1998.

- In 1997, Iraqi officials impeded an UNSCOM inspection of the barracks, one of several military installations Baghdad declared "sensitive" during a contentious UNSCOM inspection in September 1997. This Iraqi obstruction raised our suspicion that the facility might have stored proscribed materials.

[redacted]  
**Habbaniyah Depot: Suspected Association.** Before the Gulf War, the Intelligence Community considered the Habbaniyah Depot a

suspect BW storage site because of the presence of an unusual refrigerated storage bunker. UNSCOM inspected the Habbaniyah Depot after the war and found no evidence that it held CW or BW munitions. Analysis of Iraq's refrigerated 12-frame bunkers indicated that Iraq apparently used these bunkers to store high explosives.

- On 9 April 2002, we detected a tanker truck parked near a stakebed cargo truck involved in transshipment activities at Habbaniyah. We assess this tanker could be a decontamination vehicle. A decontamination vehicle suggests the presence of chemical or biological materials, because such a vehicle is not appropriate to handle conventional ammunition.
- In addition, Habbaniyah Depot is close to the Al Taqaddum Airbase, which is one of Iraq's major airfields. **Al Taqaddum was a confirmed CW storage site;** CW aerial bombs were placed in revetments during the Gulf War. Recent transshipment activity and the proximity of the airfield indicate that the Iraqis might be storing CW munitions at Habbaniyah.

[redacted] **Explaining What We Have Detected**

There are two principal explanations for the activities we have detected.

[redacted]  
**Movement of conventional ammunition.** In the view of most IC analysts, these transshipment activities probably are the movement of conventional munitions from central storage sites to bolster defenses. Analysts holding this view generally do not see the activities as anomalous but consistent with Iraqi logistic doctrine and with ammunition movements detected elsewhere in Iraq. They note that:

- The use of GHQ-level trucks—suggested by some as an unusual signature—to move ammunition from central storage areas to forward transfer points is consistent with Iraqi supply doctrine.
- There have been multiple transfers of ammunition from depots to the Iraqi Army.
- Divisions and brigades in the Iraqi Army and Republican Guard have made preparations to receive additional ammunition. Moreover, [redacted] there has been some transfer of items (most likely ammunition) from operational-level storage facilities to tactical locations.

They also emphasize that:

- We have not seen evidence of the significant security procedures we would expect to see if the Iraqis were moving SCUD components or CBW.
- The detected activities—involving scores of stakebed trucks at several facilities—have been far too overt to be related to movement of missiles or CBW based on what we know about Iraq's past practices in handling these sensitive items.

[redacted]  
**Moving components of Iraq's residual SCUD force and/or CBW-related materials.** An alternative, but not widely held, view is that Iraq is moving SCUD components and/or CBW-related materials (e.g., filled or unfilled weapons, CB agents) either to protect them from future strikes or inspections or to position them for use against Israel or US forces based in the region. Analysts holding this view note that:

**Is Saddam Engaged in Deception?**

[redacted] We have considered whether Saddam might deliberately be creating a number of apparently missile- or CBW-related signatures to divert US and coalition attention from activities elsewhere.

- So far we have not detected anomalies to indicate such deception.
- Analysts judge that deception is unlikely because of the timing; Iraq's activities to date have had the impact of increasing the Community's overall focus against Iraq's missiles and CBW. This focus has increased the risk to Iraq that movement of proscribed weapons and materials could be detected.

Alternatively, Iraq could be employing known CBW signatures to elicit false accusations from the United States.

- In our judgment, Iraq probably regards this ploy as too reckless. The gambit could go awry and trigger US-led military strikes.

- Activities have been occurring at facilities with a confirmed or suspected association with missiles (Qubaysah, Ar Rutbah, and An Najaf) or CBW (H3, Qubayasah, Al Hadithah, An Najaf, Al Musayyib, and Habbaniyah).
- The scope of the activities detected at H-3 and Ar Rutbah is especially unusual, because these facilities usually are dormant.
- The presence of a decontamination vehicle at Musayyib and possibly one at Habbaniyah, and the location of decontamina-

tion/washdown trenches at Musayyib are anomalies probably explained as associated with the movement of CBW-related materials.

[redacted] These analysts also suggest that Iraq has suspended normal security practices in moving proscribed systems and materials so as not to attract the attention of US intelligence.