President George W. Bush
Oral History Project

BRIEFING MATERIALS

George Casey

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GEORGE CASEY NEWS TIMELINE
Prepared by Rob Martin
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2001

September


About a week after the 9/11 attacks, Casey is asked to prepare a plan to provide a coordinated joint military effort to respond to future terrorist attacks occurring inside the U.S. Casey is told, “No one in the United States has a direct responsibility for homeland security… We are the ones who have the resources…to take charge of homeland security. We need to stand something up.” The plan takes roughly six weeks to complete. (The Patriot Ledger, 09/04/2011)


October

Richard Myers succeeds Hugh Shelton as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the 1st. Peter Pace begins serving as vice chairman the same day.

Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan begins on the 7th. Reportedly, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld is initially frustrated with delays in moving SOF into Afghanistan and also has lingering concerns about the CIA’s role in the theater of battle. Rumsfeld had initially arranged with CIA Director George Tenet for CENTCOM to have operational control over CIA activities on the ground in Afghanistan once military forces arrive. (George Tenet, At the Center of the Storm, New York: Harper, 2007, p. 208; Bob Woodward, Bush at War, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003, pp. 240, 286; Franks, pp. 283-296; Rumsfeld, pp. 374, 393-394)

The first U.S. SOF enter Afghanistan on the 19th. (Franks, pp. 301-305)

At the end of the month, Casey succeeds Lt. General John Abizaid as director of Strategic Plans and Policy, J-5, the Joint Staff, where Casey reportedly plays a
key role in planning the military’s long-term approach to fighting global terrorism. Abizaid begins serving as director of the Joint Staff. *(The New York Times, 07/05/2004)*

**November**

On the 13th, Kabul falls as Northern Alliances forces enter the city with some anti-Taliban southern forces. Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell had helped pull together a British-led international coalition under a mandate from the UN Security Council (UNSC) to stabilize the city. *(Doug Feith, *War and Decision*, New York: Harper, 2008, p. 132; *NBC News*, 11/09/2001)*

Jalalabad surrenders on the 14th.

**December**

Rumsfeld orders Franks to begin work outlining an Iraqi battle plan on the 1st. Franks splits up the assignment between different parts of the Joint Staff’s planning apparatus to help maintain secrecy. *(Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honor*, New York: Crown, 2011, p. 172)*

On the 4th, Franks presents his first “Commander’s Concept” on initial military plans for Iraq in a video teleconference with Rumsfeld, Myers, Pace and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Doug Feith. They follow up on the 11th, with Franks recommending the U.S. begin to improve its force posture in the region. *(Franks, pp. 329-335)*

On the 5th, the UN holds a conference in Bonn, Germany to set up a governance plan for Afghanistan. The Bonn Process is ratified by the UN, and Hamid Karzai is named chairman of the interim government. Department of Defense (DOD) officials support a “smaller footprint” to avoid the U.S. from being seen as occupiers. *(Feith, pp. 134, 140)*

Kandahar, the Taliban’s seat of power, falls on the 9th.

On the 28th, Franks briefs Bush on Afghanistan and the revised military plans for Iraq in Crawford, Texas. Franks says he is adapting lessons from Afghanistan to revise the war plans from the first Gulf War to incorporate a lighter footprint using speed and multiple SOF on the ground to identify targets for precision airstrikes. *(Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004, pp. 53-64; Bush, p. 234; Cheney, pp. 369-370; Franks, pp. 345-360)*

**2002**

**February**

On the 7th, Bush announces that Taliban and al-Qaeda detainees will be treated humanely in accord with the Geneva Conventions, but neither are entitled to POW status. However the detainees will be provided with many POW privileges. *(Philippe Sands, *Torture Team*, New York: Palgrave, 2008, p. 33; Feith, pp. 162-165)*
March  Coalition forces launch Operation Anaconda on the 7th, which is the largest battle since Tora Bora in December and the first that includes a large number of conventional U.S. ground forces participating in direct combat operations. The coalition victory destroys al-Qaeda’s last stronghold in Afghanistan. (Franks, pp. 377-381)

April  On the 17th, Rumsfeld announces the creation of the U.S. Northern Command to support the civilian authority in the event of another domestic terrorist attack. (The Washington Post, 04/18/2002)

On the 29th, the Deputies Committee teleconferences with Franks and Zalmay Khalilzad, Bush’s special envoy in Kabul, to discuss the conflict between Karzai and Pacha Khan, an Afghan warlord. Deputy NSC Advisor Stephen Hadley, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage, and Deputy Director of Central Intelligence John McLaughlin raise concerns about Karzai’s vulnerability but Pace and Franks argue it is too early to decide whether coalition action is prudent. The president decides in May not to intervene. Vice President Dick Cheney, Powell, NSC Advisor Condoleezza Rice, and Tenet had reportedly favored intervention while Rumsfeld and Myers opposed it. In the end Karzai is able to convince Khan to stand down. (Feith, pp. 140-146)

June  Bush announces his proposal to create the Department of Homeland Security on the 6th.

Myers presents Franks’ “Running Start” option to Rumsfeld. It is a plan to begin the Iraq war before all U.S. forces are in the region. Rumsfeld approves the option and Franks presents the plan to Bush. (Woodward, Plan of Attack, pp. 134-135)

The Joint Staff prepares its “Political-Military Strategic Plan for Iraq.” (Feith, p. 283)

July  On the 10th, Casey creates the Iraq Political-Military Cell, an interagency group to coordinate planning on Iraq between policy-making in Washington and military planning at CENTCOM. The group is also asked to conduct post-war planning. An Executive Steering Group is later created to direct the work of the Iraq Political-Military Cell in August. (Feith, pp. 276-277)

August  On the 5th, Franks briefs the president and NSC on OPLAN 1003V, which has been developed from the early “Commander’s Concept” into a full military plan for Iraq. Franks discusses the “Generated” and “Running Start” options, as well as the “Hybrid,” which is a combination of the first two plans. Franks also discusses concerns about “Fortress Baghdad” regarding the possibility of urban warfare. (Bush, p. 235; Cheney, p. 386; Franks, pp. 385-393)

September  Franks meets with the president and NSC on the 7th at Camp David to update them on planning for Iraq. Franks argues that military and technological changes
call for a different kind of war plan than had been used in the first Gulf War. Powell argues in favor of seeking a UN resolution. Cheney and Rumsfeld reportedly oppose it as it could “trigger a long bureaucratic process that would leave Saddam even more dangerous.” (Bush, p. 237) Bush decides to seek the resolution. (Franks, pp. 393-397; Rice, p. 180; Rumsfeld, p. 438)

On the 12th, Bush speaks before the UN General Assembly on Saddam Hussein to call the international community to action. (The New York Times, 09/21/2002)

The Joint Staff completes “Joint Publication 3-06: Doctrine for Joint Urban Operations,” which incorporates lessons from Somalia, Serbia and Haiti to revise the military’s urban strategy for fighting in cities. It calls for isolating the city and relying on overwhelming combat power to capture or destroy crucial targets. (The New York Times, 10/22/2002)

Fall
Abizaid calls for the DOD to work with State Department officials on planning for the post-war reconstruction of Iraq. Casey and Abizaid reportedly have reservations about the invasion and are concerned that rebuilding Iraq will be much harder than expected. Abizaid is reportedly told by senior Administration officials that a separate study is not necessary and that a long-term occupation would not be needed because Iraqi exiles are ready to step in and lead the effort. (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 123-125; The New York Times, 07/04/2004)

October
On the 12th, Congress passes a resolution authorizing the use of military force against Iraq.

November
On the 8th, the UNSC unanimously passes Resolution 1441 giving Iraq a final opportunity to disarm. The resolution gives Iraq one month to issue a declaration of its weapons programs and to begin the verification process. (Karen DeYoung, Soldier: The Life of Colin Powell, New York: Knopf, 2005, p. 420; Rice, pp. 183-185; The Washington Post, 01/14/2003)

December
Casey puts together a small group of 58 active and retired military officers to work on possible post-war problems in the Middle East regarding such issues as electricity generation and clean water in preparation for a possible invasion of Iraq. Rumsfeld reportedly has concerns about the U.S. playing too a larger role in rebuilding Iraq. (Cloud and Jaffe, p. 162)

Franks names Abizaid as deputy commander at CENTCOM on the 28th. Abizaid will serve out of CENTCOM’s forward headquarters in Qatar preparing for the invasion of Iraq. (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 110-111; The New York Times, 12/28/2002)

2003

January
Casey succeeds Abizaid as director of the Joint Staff.

On the 30th, Rumsfeld, the JCS, and Bush review the final war plans against Iraq. (Rumsfeld, pp. 453-454)

On the 31st, Prime Minister Tony Blair meets with Bush in Washington to argue for a second UN resolution against Saddam. Cheney, Rice, Powell, and Rumsfeld are against it, but Blair states he needs it for political support at home. Bush agrees to proceed but the resolution negotiations fail by March. (Cheney, pp. 397-398)

**March**

On the 19th, Bush gives the order to launch the Hybrid 1003V OPLAN, Operation Iraqi Freedom. Lt. General David McKiernan serves as commander of the Coalition Forces Land Component Command. The coalition’s first task is to destroy Iraq’s visual observation posts to blind the enemy. The plan is changed last minute when new intelligence suggests that Hussein will be meeting with his sons at Dora Farms the next day. Bush decides to target the location with airstrikes. Franks also decides to revise the war plan after receiving last minute intelligence that Saddam is planning to burn oilfields in southern Iraq after the initiation of the air campaign. The original plan had called for the near simultaneous start of the air and ground assaults but Franks decides to initiate the G-Day ground attack before A-Day to help secure the oilfields. Franks runs the war from his forward command center in Qatar. The coalition forces total to 290,000 from 23 countries, including the U.S. U.K., Australia and Europe. Franks is able to gain operational surprise not only by launching the ground attack before the air attack, but also by passing misleading intelligence to Saddam that a major portion of the coalition forces will attack from the north through Turkey. Furthermore, since Franks plan hinges on speed and momentum rather than superior numbers, the plan does not necessitate the same large force build-up as there had been in the first Gulf War. This helps to avoid tipping off the Iraqis that the invasion is imminent. Franks’ plan calls for roughly about one-third as many troops as the first Gulf War. Franks, who is very concerned about WMDs, issues the troops chemical and biological protective suits. (Bush, pp. 250-251; Franks, pp. 432-440; Rumsfeld, pp. 460-461; ABC News, 03/13/2003; CBS News, 03/23/2003)

A strong sandstorm hits Iraq, slowing the coalition’s war plan. Over the next several days, though coalition forces are able to take advantage of the sandstorm to gain a tactical advantage in destroying hunkered down Republican Guard units. (Franks, pp. 501-504; Cloud and Jaffe, p. 110; Feith, p. 396)
April

On the 1st, coalition forces find new Iraqi chemical-biological protection suits and masks in Fedayeen barracks. Franks later writes that he believed a WMD was coming and would likely occur as the coalition forces closed in on Baghdad. (Franks, pp. 513-515)

On the 7th, Pace announces that hundreds of Iraqi fighters opposed to Saddam are being airlifted into southern Iraq to battle Saddam’s remaining army in the region. The forces were assembled by Ahmad Chalabi and the Iraqi National Congress from both exile volunteers and volunteers from within Iraq. Chalabi is permitted to accompany the volunteers on the mission despite Abizaid’s protests. Abizaid had reportedly wanted to put an “Iraqi face” on the coalition’s war efforts but has concerns about Chalabi’s direct participation in the mission. Some are concerned that Chalabi’s participation could politically charge the mission. (Feith, pp. 396-401; The New York Times, 04/07/2003)

On the 9th, Baghdad falls.

On the 15th, Garner opens the Nasiriyah conference to help the Iraqis begin the political process of working towards self-government. Abizaid and Franks had reportedly argued that the coalition needed to organize a visible political event to demonstrate that the new government in Iraq would be run by the Iraqi people. Abizaid’s organizing principle for the conference is “don’t cut anyone out of the process.” (Feith, p. 412) Rumsfeld reportedly argues that the conference would provide a good opportunity to begin implementation of the Iraqi Interim Authority plan. (Feith, pp. 411-418)

On the 16th, Franks issues his “Freedom Message” to the Iraqi people, which says the coalition forces have come as liberators, not conquerors, and helps transition from Baath Party rule to the Coalition Provisional Authority. (L. Paul Bremer III, Ambassador Paul Bremer Timeline, 08/19/2012, 08/21/2012; Franks, pp. 528-529)

May

On the 1st, while in Kabul, Rumsfeld announces major combat operations in Afghanistan have ended. Smaller scale operations will continue to attack remaining Taliban and al-Qaeda members. (The Washington Post, 05/02/2003)

Also on the 1st, Bush announces the end of major combat operations in Iraq. Additional countries begin contributing troops, including Poland, Italy, Ukraine, Japan, and nine others. Pace and Wolfowitz announce in June that between 20,000 and 30,000 allied troops from over a dozen countries are expected to arrive in Iraq in August to replace some U.S. forces. (Franks, pp. 523-533; Rumsfeld, p. 497; Cloud and Jaffe, p. 123; The New York Times, 06/19/2003)

Bush and Bremer visit Franks in Qatar on the 5th to discuss the transition from major combat operations to stabilization and reconstruction in phase IV, which
entails the transitioning of coalition leadership in Iraq from the military to a political ambassador. (Franks, pp. 532-533)

On the 7th, Bush announces Paul Bremer as special envoy to Iraq, who will head the U.S.-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). The ambassador will serve as the senior coalition official in Iraq, overseeing reconstruction efforts and the transitioning to Iraqi sovereignty. He will report directly to Rumsfeld. Franks will continue to maintain command over coalition military personnel in Iraq. Franks meets with Bremer and Rumsfeld in Washington to discuss the line of authority in Iraq and how the civilian team will work with the military. (http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov; CNN, 05/08/2003)

Bremer announces de-Baathification on the 16th and the dissolution of the Iraqi army the following week. Bremer plans to create a new Iraqi army which would be trained by the CPA, not the DOD. Abizaid reportedly opposes both orders. Rumsfeld later asks Abizaid to look into reconstituting some part of the old Iraqi army but Bremer reportedly opposes the idea. Responsibility for training the new Iraqi army remains with the CPA until the spring of 2004, when it is transferred to the military. (Rumsfeld, pp. 514-518; Feith, pp. 425, 433; Cloud and Jaffe, p. 123)

Franks’ retirement is announced on the 22nd. He is succeeded by Abizaid on July 7th, who earns his fourth star. (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 123-126; Franks, pp. 533-536; The New York Times, 06/26/2003)

**June**

Lt. General Ricardo Sanchez begins serving as commander of the Multi-National Force (MNF) in Iraq.

**July**

On the 14th, Abizaid reports in a video-teleconference call from Tampa with Rumsfeld and Bremer on foreign Islamic extremists entering Iraq from Syria into the “Sunni Triangle,” where many of Saddam’s forces had fled after the fall of Baghdad. Abizaid confirms that the jihadists are being trained in Syria and Lebanon. Abizaid and Rumsfeld discuss ways to seal off the border with Syria, including the use of Polish coalition forces. (Bremer, pp. 104-06)

In his first press conference as CENTCOM commander, Abizaid acknowledges on the 16th that the Iraqi insurgents are “conducting a classical guerilla-type campaign.” Rumsfeld had previously argued that this was not a guerilla campaign. Abizaid returns to the Middle East the next day to visit the troops in Afghanistan. (Cloud and Jaffe, p. 127; The Washington Post, 07/20/2003)

On the 29th, David Kay, a U.S. weapons inspector, tells Bush that he has not found any WMDs in Iraq. (Michael Isikoff and David Corn, Hubris, New York: Three Rivers Press, 2007, p. 310)

**August**

After visiting Mosul, Abizaid finds that the people on the streets “don’t see us as their liberators or their friends,” and decides it would be very helpful to have
Muslim forces working side by side with U.S. troops. He negotiates with the Kurds to bring in Turkish forces, but Bremer later notifies Abizaid that the deal is off. (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 133-135)

On the 14th, a U.S. helicopter accidently knocks over a religious banner in Sadr City, sparking protests and riots, as violence continues to rise. Bremer sends Rumsfeld a memo about the need to stop Muqtada al-Sadr, an extremist Shia cleric with ties to Iran. (Terry Anderson, Bush’s Wars, New York: Oxford University Press, 2011, p. 163; Bremer, pp. 135, 136; Rumsfeld, p. 538)

Abizaid says on the 21st that terrorism is the biggest threat to reconstruction in Iraq and that the coalition needs “to bring an Iraqi face to the security establishments” to counter that threat. The UN headquarters in Baghdad had been struck by a truck bomb two days earlier. (The New York Times, 08/22/2003)

On the 31st, General Geoffrey Miller, the commander at Guantánamo Bay, arrives in Baghdad with a seventeen-member team reportedly to advise Sanchez on how to obtain better intelligence. Rumsfeld is reportedly disappointed by the quality of information coming from U.S.-held prisoners in Iraq. (Senate Armed Services Committee, Inquiry into the Treatment of Detainees in U.S. Custody, 11/20/2008; The New York Times, 08/22/2003)

September

On the 8th, Bremer publishes his seven-step plan for Iraqi sovereignty in an editorial in The Washington Post. His plan, which had not been previously circulated with Bush’s national security team, states that the CPA will not dissolve until a constitution is ratified and elections are held. Bremer’s editorial is met with opposition from within the Bush Administration, as well as from Iraqi political leaders. (Feith, p. 453, 460; Rice, p. 242; Rumsfeld, p. 524)

Abizaid and Sanchez brief Bremer in Baghdad on security in Iraq. Abizaid recommends that Sanchez take over the training of an Iraqi police force from the CPA. Bremer disagrees, preferring the CPA to arrange for the training to be conducted by the Lebanese. (Bremer, pp. 168-169)

On the 22nd, Bremer meets with Rumsfeld where they discuss whether the CPA could be dismantled before a final constitution is adopted. Rumsfeld calls for the CPA to be dismantled by mid-2004. Bremer continues to argue that the Iraqis are not ready. (Bremer, pp. 170-171; Feith, p. 459; Rumsfeld, p. 525)

Rice chairs the Iraq Stabilization Group to help the NSC coordinate Iraqi reconstruction policy. Rumsfeld, who states he was not consulted about the group’s creation, writes a memo to Bush, Cheney, and Card the following week recommending that Bremer report to Rice or State, rather than Defense. The media has been reporting that Rice’s group has assumed responsibility for Iraq. (Rumsfeld, pp. 524-527; Rice, p. 242)
**October**

Casey is named Army vice chief of staff and promoted to four stars. One of Casey’s major responsibilities in this position is to oversee the multiyear reorganization of the army. (George Casey, *Strategic Reflections*, Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 2012, p. 5; Cloud and Jaffe, p.162)

On the 16th, Rumsfeld writes “the long, hard slog” memo to Pace, Myers, Wolfowitz, and Feith, asking how the U.S. should frame its progress in the war on terror. (Feith, pp. 509-511; *The Washington Post*, 10/23/2003)

Abizaid attends a series of meetings with Bush, Rumsfeld, Meyers, Rice and Bremer at the White House at the end of the month. Bremer eventually agrees to the plan to dismantle the CPA before a final constitution is adopted. Bush approves the June 30th, 2004 timetable on the 29th. Abizaid reportedly re-raises the proposal of bringing back qualified Sunni officers from Saddam’s army to help strengthen the new Iraqi security forces. (Woodward, *State of Denial*, pp. 260-262; Rumsfeld, p. 525; Bremer, pp. 204-205; Feith, p. 460-66)

**November**

On the 15th, the CPA and the Governing Council agree to a governance plan in which a national assembly would be elected to draft a constitution. The CPA begins working with the Governing Council to draft an interim constitution, the Transitional Administrative Law, in early 2004. (Bremer, pp. 213-231)

At an NSC meeting on the 24th, Abizaid says that that 5,000 “hardcore” Baathists are now the coalition’s biggest threat in Iraq. (Bremer, p. 235)

**December**

On the 13th, Saddam is captured. (Bush, p. 266; http://www.cfr.org)

**2004**

**Mar.-May**

The coalition faces resistance from al-Sadr and his Mahdi army in the south and from Sunni forces in Fallujah in the west. As the crises continue, Bush agrees to Bremer’s suggestion of a differentiated policy: resolve the Fallujah crisis by negotiation and use military force (the “Anaconda strategy”) against Mahdi’s forces. There are reportedly concerns that Sunni opposition on the Governing Council to a continued coalition offensive in Fallujah could threaten the June 30th timetable for transitioning sovereign to Iraq. This period becomes the deadliest up to this point in the war. (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 152-154; Bremer, pp. 310-354; Rumsfeld, pp. 532-535; Feith, pp. 480-486)

**April**

Rumsfeld acknowledges that the level of violence in Iraq is worse than he had expected as critics charge that Rumsfeld should have sent more troops to the country. Pace defends the level of troops sent over, stating that some flexibility had been built into the plans to allow for the total troop levels to be adjusted as needed. (*The Washington Post*, 04/16/2004)

60 Minutes runs a segment on prisoner abuses at the Abu Ghraib prison.
May
Bush issues a National Security Presidential Directive establishing the division of labor in Iraq between State and the DOD, calling for “the closest cooperation and mutual support.” (Casey, p. 156)

Bush nominates Casey to succeed Sanchez as commander of the MNF in Iraq. Abizaid had reportedly raised the idea of replacing Sanchez, a three-star general, with a four-star general and had recommended Casey to Rumsfeld. (Casey, p. 5; Rumsfeld, pp. 671-674; Cloud and Jaffe, p. 165)

June
The UNSC passes Resolution 1546 on the 8th establishing the relationship between the MNF and the new Iraqi government, calling it a “security partnership.” (Casey, p. 156)

Casey travels to Iraq with Wolfowitz in mid-June. Casey later writes that the purpose of his trip was “to gain a better understanding of the issues surrounding the transition of sovereignty to the IIG” scheduled to take place at the end of the month. (Casey, p. 14)

Casey’s Senate confirmation hearings are held on the 24th. (The New York Times, 07/05/2004)

On the 28th, the U.S. transfers sovereignty in Iraq to the appointed interim government headed by Prime Minister Ayad Allawi. The CPA ceases to exist as Bremer steps down as special envoy and John Negroponte begins serving as the U.S. ambassador to Iraq. Negroponte calls Casey personally to inform him that sovereignty had been transferred two days early. (Casey, p. 19)

Before leaving for Iraq, Casey has dinner at the White House with his wife, the president, first lady, and the Negropontes. Bush is impressed with Casey, calling him a “block of granite.” (Bush, pp. 361-362)

Casey travels to CENTCOM’s forward headquarters in Qatar and his supporting Army headquarters in Kuwait before arriving in Iraq on the 29th. Before leaving, Casey meets with Rumsfeld, who emphasizes the importance of bringing the troops home and warns Casey not to try to do too much. (Casey, p. 19-33; Cloud and Jaffe, p. 169)

July
Casey begins serving as commander of the MNF in Iraq on the 1st, where he oversees roughly 140,000 U.S. and 25,000 allied troops from 33 countries. Casey reports to Abizaid and also serves as Negroponte’s senior military adviser. Casey decides to continue with Sanchez’s plan to create a separate MNF-I headquarters to handle strategy and to work with Washington, Negroponte, and the Iraqi government. Casey and Negroponte also create a special “Red Team” to bring key staff together to further facilitate relations and work together on particular issues such as threat assessments to help guide the writing of a joint mission statement.
To help facilitate civilian-military relations and establish a One Team/One Mission concept, Casey and Negroponte move their offices next to each other and integrate their staffs. Casey, Abizaid and Rumsfeld begin placing greater priority on strengthening internal security in Iraq and the size of the Iraqis security forces. Negroponte also agrees to shift funds from infrastructure to the training of more Iraqi forces. General David Petraeus is selected to take over the training and equipping off the Iraqi security forces. He is directed to make sure the Iraqi forces can begin to play a greater role in fighting the insurgents. (Bradley Graham, *By His Own Rules*, New York: PublicAffairs, 2009, p. 481; Rumsfeld, pp. 671-674; Cloud and Jaffe, p. 165; *The New York Times*, 07/05/2004)

After Petraeus appears on the cover of *Newsweek* on the 5th, Rumsfeld instructs Casey to “get Petraeus off the net.” Casey calls Petraeus and tells him to keep a “little lower profile” in Iraq. (Graham, p. 493)

**August**

Casey issues his campaign plan on the 5th to lay out the coalition’s direction for the next 18 months. This includes the completion of the UNSC’s timeline and the formation of constitutionally-elected Iraqi government. (Casey, p. 29)

After Casey completes a review of the security situation in Iraq, Allawi and the U.S. government agree in mid-August to further increase the Iraqi police forces and national guard units. (Casey, pp. 38-39)

Casey and Negroponte issue a joint mission statement on the 18th. (Casey, p. 26)

U.S. forces encircle al-Sadr’s forces around Najaf, home to one of Shiite Islam’s holiest shrines, to step up efforts to eliminate insurgent forces in Iraq prior to next January’s elections. Casey sends two U.S. Army battalions and three of Petraeus’ newly trained Iraqi battalions. Ali Al-Sistani, a highly respected Shiite cleric in Iraq, helps negotiate a truce in which al-Sadr’s forces agree to disarm and leave Najaf. Casey reportedly notes to Abizaid, “Sadr gave the interim government its first real test and he lost.” (Cloud and Jaffe, p. 174; *The New York Times*, 08/27/2004)

**Early Fall**

Casey orders a historical review of successful and unsuccessful counterinsurgency campaigns in the 20th century. (Casey, p. 44)

**November**

Bush orders U.S. troops into Fallujah on the 8th in an attempt to re-take the city from insurgents. Casey argued that retaking the insurgent stronghold is essential to provide security during the January elections. The last pockets of resistance in Fallujah are neutralized by December. Casey goes on to request an extra 10,000 troops for the upcoming elections to help maintain momentum. (Scott McClellan, *What Happened*, New York: Public Affairs, 2008, p. 241; Casey, p. 43; Woodward, *State of Denial*, p. 359)
Abizaid meets with Casey and Petraeus on the 14th in Casey’s office in Al Faw Palace in Iraq, where they discuss how to best fight the insurgents. Abizaid reportedly argues that U.S. policy has been counter-productive in its attempts to encourage the Iraqis to play a bigger role in providing security in Iraq. “We are missing something philosophically,” Abizaid argues. To help put the best officers possible in the field to train the Iraqis, they discuss creating a new advisory command to train the U.S. officers who are working with the Iraqis. (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 182-183)

December

Casey and Negroponte order the Red Team to conduct a study of possible electoral outcomes in January. The Red Team finds that a major Shia victory could worsen Sunni-based insurgency. (Casey, p. 46)

Casey orders the MNF-I staff to conduct its first semi-annual Campaign Progress Report (CPR). It concludes that the strategy was “sound, but must be implemented more effectively” and that the Iraqis must play a bigger role. (Casey, p. 47)

Casey meets with Bush, Rumsfeld and the Joint Chiefs to discuss the upcoming elections and share the findings of his CPR, Red Team, and Counter Insurgency studies. Casey also recommends embedding coalition advisers in Iraqi security forces. (Casey, pp. 48-49)

2005

January

Casey writes an assessment of the situation in Iraq to Abizaid on the 5th and sets out his plans for 2005. (Casey, pp. 51-53)

Iraq holds elections on the 30th to select a National Assembly to draft a national constitution. The Shiite party, United Iraqi Alliance, under al-Sistani, wins 48% of the vote. Rumsfeld calls Casey towards the end of the day and says, “George, when the eyes of the world were on you, you stood and delivered.” (Cloud and Jaffe, p. 188; Anderson, p. 188; Department of Defense Documents, 01/28/2005)

February

Casey and Negroponte issue their second joint mission statement on the 7th, which emphasizes that a key goal is to help the Iraqis begin to take the lead on providing for their own security. (Casey, pp. 56-57)

March

On the 4th, Casey briefs Bush on his plan to embed more U.S. advisors with the Iraqi units to help accelerate the training of the Iraqi forces. Additional forces are approved later that month. Casey hopes to embed coalition troops by June. The MNF-I staff creates a campaign action plan to help train the trainers in Iraq. (Casey, pp. 58-61; Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 190-193)

April

Bush nominates Pace as chairman of the JCS on the 22nd. He is sworn in on September 16th. (The New York Times, 04/23/2005)
May

The new Iraqi government is formed and Ibrahim al-Jaafari becomes prime minister. (Casey, p. 64)

June

Abizaid and Casey meet with Bush in the White House, where they secure Bush’s final approval for the plan to embed more U.S. forces with the Iraqi units. Bush asks Casey to stay on as MNF commander past August. Casey also appears before Congress while in Washington. (Casey, p. 66; Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 192-193)

Casey’s second semi-annual CPR is completed. (Casey, p. 64)

Khalilzad succeeds Negroponte as U.S. ambassador to Iraq on the 21st. Khalilzad had been serving as U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan since 2003. He reaffirms with Casey the One Team/One Mission concept. Casey and Khalilzad ask the Red Team to study the nature of the enemy and assess the effectiveness of the counter-insurgency campaign. Casey and Khalilzad also begin to develop an interim guidance, later known as the “Bridging Strategy,” to help set the conditions for meeting the UNSCR 1546 timeline for holding elections. The resolution calls for a constitution by August, a national referendum on the constitution by October, and elections based on a constitution by December. The guidance would also look at the period after the elections. Casey sums up the strategy as, “Al Qaeda out, Sunni in, ISF [Iraqi security forces] in the lead.” Casey later notes that Khalilzad was very supportive of Casey’s and Abizaid’s efforts to bring more Sunnis into the political process to help undercut the Sunni insurgency. (Casey, pp. 67-69)

Summer

Casey and Khalilzad begin a pilot effort to replicate provincial support teams that had had success in Afghanistan to help build support from the bottom up, as opposed to the top down from Baghdad. Casey also asks Colonel Bill Hix to conduct a survey of how well coalition forces were implementing counter-insurgency doctrine. The survey finds implementation uneven and lacking resources. Hix also finds that the lack of political and economic progress in Iraq to be a significant problem. Casey orders the creation of a counter-insurgency academy, which opens in November. (Casey, pp. 69-73; Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 201-203)

July

Abizaid is asked to stay on as CENTCOM commander after completing his two-year term. (The Washington Times, 08/26/2005)

After visiting the U.S., al-Jaafari announces the creation of a Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility to establish the conditions under which security responsibility can be transferred back to the Iraqis. Casey serves on the committee. (Casey, p. 75)

September

Casey orders a review be completed of the transition team and partnership program to embed coalition forces into Iraqi units. The review finds that the program has made a “significant difference.” (Casey, p. 72)
Rumsfeld asks Casey to provide NSC Advisor Hadley with an update on the campaign in Iraq. Casey later writes that there was “some uncertainty” within the Administration on what the coalition had been doing despite the fact that Casey had been providing regular weekly updates via video-teleconference. (Casey, p. 76)

**Fall**

Testifying before Congress, Abizaid and Casey reportedly argue that the gradual withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq is imperative to help reduce dependency and encourage the Iraqis to play a greater role in providing for their own security. *(The New York Times, 11/18/2006)*

**October**

On the 15th, the Iraqi constitution passes in a nation-wide election. It gives Iraq a weaker central government that controls foreign, fiscal, and defense policy, leaving many domestic matters in the hands of the provinces. Many Sunnis do not support the constitution. (Anderson, pp. 188-189)

On the 19th, Rice testifies before Congress that the U.S. strategy in Iraq is to “clear, hold, and build.” Casey, who is taken by surprise by the new strategy announcement, later asks Rice, “Well, if it’s my strategy, don’t you think it would have been appropriate for someone to ask me about it?” *(Cloud and Jaffe, p. 208)*

Rumsfeld later argues that it is up to the Iraqis to hold and the civilian agencies like State to help the Iraqis build. (Bob Woodward, *The War Within*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008, pp. 31-33; Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 206-208)

**November**

On the 2nd, Casey participates in an NSC meeting with the president via video-teleconference in which he and Abizaid recommend against sending two additional brigades to Iraq in preparation for the December elections. Bush decides to send one brigade to Iraq and one to Kuwait. (Rumsfeld, p. 678)

Casey meets with Bayan Jabr, the interior minister of Iraq, to confront him about evidence of torture against Sunni prisoners found in a Jadiriya bunker outside of the Green Zone. Casey opens a secret investigation into the charges, in addition to the joint Iraqi-U.S. investigation, after Jabr denies all knowledge of the bunker. *(Cloud and Jaffe, pp.213-215)*

Casey and Khalilzad issue a new joint mission statement, “Building Success – Completing the Transition,” which builds off of a review that’s been conducted of the next four years in Iraq. *(Casey, p. 77)*


**December**

On the 15th, a permanent Council of Representatives of Iraq is elected. The United Iraqi Alliance wins the majority of seats. Al-Jaafari remains prime minister. Just prior to the elections, a breakthrough had been made with moderate Sunni leaders
who agreed to encourage Sunnis to vote if Casey promised there would be no major new operations in the days before the elections. The Sunnis also go on to tell Casey that their common enemy is al-Qaeda and Iran, and that they believed the coalition forces were leaving. Rumsfeld and Casey agree to drawdown two U.S. combat brigades after the elections. (Casey, p. 86; Anderson, p. 194; https://georgewbush-whitehouse.gov)

Casey and Khalilzad hold the semi-annual CPR, which notes that the UNSC timeline for holding elections had been met. The CPR also finds that strong progress had been made in building the ISF. (Casey, p. 78)

Cheney meets with Abizaid, Casey and Khalilzad on the 18th in the Green Zone on a one-day surprise visit to Baghdad. (https://georgewbush-whitehouse.gov)

2006

January

Chiarelli takes over as Casey’s deputy on the 17th. (Cloud and Jaffe, p. 222)

Three days after Rumsfeld requests a schedule for the rest of the year that would show “decision points” for reductions in troop levels and other cuts, Casey turns in a “conditions-based, off-ramp strategy” calling for “decision points at three month intervals” beginning in March. (Graham, p. 598)

February

On the 22nd, al-Qaeda and Sunni extremists bomb the Shiite al-Askari Golden Mosque in Samarra, unleashing waves of sectarian violence. Al-Jafari initially resists Casey’s and Khalilzad’s calls for al-Jafari to issue a curfew and call for calm. Casey and Abizaid had reportedly hoped prior to the bombing that the U.S. could begin withdrawing troops later in the year. After the bombing, Abizaid argues that sectarian violence has replaced terrorism and Sunni insurgents as the biggest threat in Iraq. Casey orders a study which finds that having increased coalition forces in the streets is effective and does not necessarily lead to increased coalition casualties. (Casey, pp. 89-96; Rumsfeld, p. 659; The Washington Post, 12/21/2006; The New York Times, 12/20/2006)

March

On the 4th, Abizaid meets with al-Jaafari and President Jalal Talabani in Baghdad to discuss who would become the next Iraqi prime minister in the new government. Al-Jaaffari has been nominated by a Shiite bloc to continue on in the prime minister position. Talabani is supported by a coalition of Kurds, Sunnis and secular groups calling for an inclusive government. (The New York Times, 03/05/2006)

May

Jawad al-Maliki becomes prime minister of Iraq’s first official, non-interim government since the fall of Saddam, on the 20th. Questions had reportedly remained regarding al-Jaafari’s support of Shiite militias. Al-Maliki, who is also Shiite, is reportedly more moderate. Casey and Khalilzad hold multiple meetings over the coming days with al-Maliki to try to build a good relationship and

Rice assembles a group of 48 advisors from State and other agencies to travel to Iraq and assist the new al-Maliki government. Casey, who reportedly believes that economic and political progress is needed for the military effort to ultimately be successful, tells Rice that more people are needed. (Rumsfeld, p. 690; Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 228-229)

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June

Rumsfeld and Pace discuss possible replacements for Casey and Abizaid. Casey has served two six-month extensions in Iraq beyond his initial twelve-month tour and Abizaid had told Rumsfeld that the U.S. needed “fresh eyes” on the situation. (Rumsfeld, pp. 701-702)

Coalition forces begin a plan to stop sectarian violence in troubled Baghdad neighborhoods by increasing U.S. forces to over 15,000, with the Iraqi army taking the lead in searching homes and securing neighborhoods. The plan is ended in October amidst rising sectarian violence. (Knight Ridder Washington Bureau, 06/08/2007)

Casey calls Rumsfeld to inform him that coalition forces have killed Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaeda’s operational commander in Iraq. (Rumsfeld, p. 694; Woodward, The War Within, p. 3)

Bush holds a national security meeting at Camp David on the 12th. Participating by video teleconference, Casey and Abizaid continue recommending a gradual drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq as the situation on the ground allows. Casey says increased violence by different groups has complicated the security situation on the ground but that violence is not widespread. Casey’s Red Team April reviews of the situation and priorities in Iraq had helped inform Casey’s presentation. (Casey, p. 106; Cheney, pp. 435-436; Rumsfeld, pp. 694-696)

On the 13th, Bush travels to Iraq to hold a surprise meeting with al-Maliki. (The Globe and Mail, 06/14/2006)

Casey launches Operation Together Forward with the Iraqi government to help quell sectarian violence in Baghdad. (Casey, p. 110)

Casey orders two Red Team studies, one on Iran’s influence in Iraq and the other on whether coalition strategy in Iraq should be revisited in light of increasing sectarian violence. (Casey, p. 116)

Upon returning to Washington, Casey meets with Rumsfeld. They tentatively conclude that the U.S. could reduce its forces in Iraq by three brigades later in the year. However those plans are changed following an upswing in violence in the aftermath of al-Zarqawi’s death. (Casey, p. 107)
**July**

Amidst rising sectarian violence in Iraq, Casey tells his MNF-1 commander that Baghdad is the number one priority and to work with the Iraqis to develop a plan to secure the city. However, Casey later notes that his relationship with al-Maliki is complicated by al-Maliki’s belief that Sunni extremists constitute a bigger threat than Shia militias. (Casey, pp. 111-112)

On the 22nd, Rumsfeld meets with Pace, Casey, Abizaid, Deputy NSC Advisor Stephen Hadley, Khalilzad, and Meghan O’Sullivan, deputy national security adviser for Iraq and Afghanistan, to discuss sectarian violence in Iraq. They reportedly discuss whether al-Maliki needs additional resources and what can the U.S. do to further help stem the violence. (Woodward, *The War Within*, pp. 73-79)

Rumsfeld extends the Stryker Brigade, which had been scheduled to return home. Casey had supported the decision. (Rumsfeld, p. 698; Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 231)

**August**

Casey launches Operation *Together Forward II* in mid-August, which calls for the addition of 12,000 Iraqi and coalition forces to further stabilize Baghdad. The Red Team’s June review had concluded that additional resources were needed to provide security in Baghdad. (Casey, p. 118; Rumsfeld, p. 698)

Casey participates in a national security meeting at the White House on the 17th. Abizaid updates Bush on the status of the Iraqi police and security forces. Rumsfeld argues that the focus should be on turning responsibility over to the Iraqi government by accelerating training and helping the Iraqis help themselves. However, Bush stresses that, “If the bicycle teeters, we’re going to put the hand back on. We have to make damn sure we do not fail.” (Bush, pp. 370-371) Bush later says he wanted to send Rumsfeld a message. (Woodward, *The War Within*, pp. 88-99)

**September**

On the 3rd, the members of the Iraq Study Group travel to Iraq on a fact-finding tour. (Cloud and Jaffe, p. 238)

On the 6th, Bush acknowledges for the first time the CIA’s program of secret detention of terrorist suspects in foreign prisons and the use of harsh interrogation methods to collect intelligence. The Military Commissions Act is passed and signed into law in October. (*The New York Times*, 10/18/2006)

Iraqi Joint headquarters assumes operational control of the Iraqi Navy, Air Force, and Iraqi Ground Forces Command on the 7th. Iraqi leaders have also assumed control over three provinces around this time, with local police taking full responsibility for security.

On the 25th, Pace initiates a broad review of Iraq, bringing in two and three colonels and captains from each of the services back from Iraq for a 90-day
assignment to participate in the review and make recommendations on how to best move forward. The group becomes known as the Council of Colonels. One of the options Pace’s review considers is a surge, which reportedly meets with opposition from Casey, Abizaid, the Joint Chiefs, and Rumsfeld. Rice, who is conducting a review at State, also opposes a surge. (Bush, pp. 363-364, 371, 376; Cheney, pp. 440-441; Rice, p. 506; Rumsfeld, pp. 713-715)

October

Casey returns to Washington, D.C. in early October where he meets with various people to discuss planning for 2007. Casey’s key concern is to reduce sectarian violence in Iraq. (Casey, p. 122)

Casey reportedly has a tense meeting with al-Maliki when al-Maliki acknowledges that he had bypassed the chain of command and ordered 17 Shia soldiers on the 12th to a Sunni neighborhood on a raid. Casey later notifies Abizaid that he told al-Maliki that his actions were unacceptable but was not convinced al-Maliki would stop. They discuss whether al-Maliki is spurring sectarian violence by using Iraqi soldiers to launch offenses targeting Sunnis. (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 239-241)

Abizaid is reportedly frustrated that the Army is not sending better advisers to embed with Iraqi units. Casey reportedly agrees but also remains skeptical that any efforts will be effective until he sees “a greater commitment from the Iraqis to solve the sectarian situation in their capital.” (Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 244-241)

On the 20th, Casey and Abizaid brief Rumsfeld and Pace on a military strategy review in Iraq. Rumsfeld asks Casey if a change in troops levels in Baghdad is needed. Casey recommends against either adding or withdrawing the current level. (Rumsfeld, p. 702; CNN, 10/20/2006)

Bush has a teleconference on the 21st with Cheney, Rumsfeld, Pace, Abizaid and Casey where they reportedly discuss how long it will take before Iraqi forces can play a larger role in securing the country. Al-Maliki agrees at the end of the month with Bush to accelerate the training of the ISF. (Casey, p. 125; The New York Times, 10/22/2006)

November

Bush announces Rumsfeld’s resignation after the mid-term congressional elections on the 8th. (http://www.cnn.com)

Abizaid tells Casey that the White House is strongly considering a surge option in Iraq. Casey had first learned that the Administration was considering the surge in October from Pace. Casey meets with his top commanders in Iraq to discuss the option. Casey also meets with Hadley in Iraq, who is overseeing the president’s strategy review. (Casey, p. 126, 134, 243; Woodward, The War Within, p.231)
Abizaid meets with al-Maliki in Baghdad where he pushes the Shiite Iraqi leader to begin disarming the Shiite Mahdi army. Groups have reportedly been breaking off from the Mahdi army to form death squads. (*The Washington Times*, 11/16/2006)

Abizaid testifies before the Senate Armed Services Committee on the 15th, where he advises against Democrats’ calls for a large troop withdrawal over the next six months, noting that the U.S. presence in Iraq might be the only thing preventing a large scale civil war. He also cautions against significantly increasing troop levels, which could dampen Iraqi efforts to play a bigger role in providing for their own security. Abizaid also acknowledges publicly for the first time that the Bush Administration should have initially deployed more troops to the region at the start of the war. Abizaid also recommends a temporary increase of U.S. trainers embedded within Iraqi units. (*Cloud and Jaffe*, p. 245; *The New York Times*, 11/16/2006, 11/18/2006; PBS, 11/15/2006)

Bush orders Hadley to merge his NSC review of Iraq with similar reviews being conducted at State and DOD. Hadley’s deputy, Crouch, leads the larger review. The group begins meeting on the 15th. Doug Lute, director of operations at the Joint Staff, is reportedly very skeptical and argues that any increase in military forces would have to be matched with equal emphasis on the political and economic side from civilian agencies. State also has serious concerns. (Peter Baker, *Days of Fire*, New York: Doubleday, 2013, pp. 510-511; Woodward, *The War Within*, pp. 207, 230-239)

Al-Maliki tells Casey that he intends to make a national statement announcing the ISF will begin operations against both Sunni terrorists and Shia militias. However the plan is delayed when devastating car bomb attacks are launched in Sadr City. (Casey, p. 129)

Casey tells the Joint Chiefs in a video-teleconference that he believes a surge would have a temporary local effect on quelling sectarian violence but expresses concern that it would reduce the Iraqi’s incentives to seek political reconciliation and take the lead in providing for their own security. (Casey, p. 138)

Crouch presents his Iraq strategy review to Bush, Cheney, Rumsfeld, Pace, Hadley, and Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson in the White House solarium over Thanksgiving weekend. Cheney, Hadley and the NSC staff support a surge to stem the violence and help the Iraqis train their security forces to take over. State and many top military officials still reportedly have reservations about the surge. Bush says he will consider everyone’s arguments and make a decision in the coming weeks. (Rice, pp. 541-542; Woodward, *The War Within*, pp. 244-248)

Bush meets with al-Maliki in Jordan on the 29th and 30th to discuss the findings of a Joint Committee they had created to study plans for accelerating the training of Iraqi security forces as well as the political reconciliation process. (http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov)
On the 6th, the Senate votes 95-2 to confirm Robert Gates as defense secretary.

Also on the 6th, the Iraq Study Group presents its findings to Bush. Its primary recommendations include a pull-back of U.S. forces over the next fifteen months, an amnesty program for insurgent fighters, a “diplomatic offensive” toward Israel-Palestine negotiations, and high-level talks on Iraq with Iran and Syria. (Woodward, The War Within, pp. 314-315; USA Today, 12/06/2006)

Casey and Abizaid participate via video-teleconference on the 12th with Bush and his top national security advisers to discuss the surge. Casey tells Bush that he has reservations about the surge option in the absence of political reconciliation in Iraq. He proposes an integrated political-military approach that would give Iraq responsibility for providing for its own security in 2007, with continued U.S. support, and requests two additional brigades and two battalions for Baghdad and the Anbar province. Abizaid lays out the pros and cons of the surge option. While it would reduce sectarian violence and give extra time for political reconciliation to occur, it would put a strain on the military personnel and their families, limit the ability to make progress in Afghanistan, and limit options should a conflict with Iran erupt. Casey and Abizaid had also previously argued that the surge would not work without greater help from the State Department and civilian agencies, that it would strengthen a mentality of dependence on coalition forces within Iraq, and it would bolster opposition and insurgency. Casey has five video teleconferences with the NSC around this time to discuss the surge. (Casey, p. 140; Cloud and Jaffe, pp. 246-248; The Washington Post, 12/21/2006)

Bush and Cheney meet with Pace, Rumsfeld, and the Joint Chiefs at the Pentagon on the 13th to discuss the surge. Pace had met with Bush two days earlier to inform him that the Joint Chiefs are prepared to support the surge but have some reservations regarding al-Maliki’s level of commitment, the need for other U.S. agencies to play a greater role in Iraq, and whether the surge would “break the military” by putting too much strain on the troops and their families back home. Rumsfeld later writes that he and Pace work with the Joint Chiefs to help allay their concerns. (Bush, p. 376; Cheney, pp. 451-453; Rumsfeld, pp. 714-715; The New York Times, 05/16/2007)

On the 18th, Gates officially takes over as secretary of defense. (AP, 12/18/2006)

Gates and Pace travel to Iraq, where they meet with Abizaid and Casey to discuss the surge option. They brief Bush at Camp David on the 23rd upon their return. Gates also reportedly recommends Petraeus to replace Casey as the commander in Iraq and for Casey to serve as the Army chief of staff. Pace tells Bush that Petraeus and General Ray Odierno, the number two commander in Iraq, would want the full amount of five brigades of troops under consideration in the surge option to be committed to Iraq. (Cheney, p. 454; The Associated Press, 12/24/2006; The Washington Post, 12/21/2006)
Abizaid announces on the 20th that he will retire in March. (The Washington Post, 12/21/2006)

On the 23rd, al-Maliki approves a plan that the Iraqis have been working on with Casey to create joint army, police and coalition security stations across Baghdad, with the Iraqis taking command. The plan is announced, along with the policy that the ISF would take action against “all who broke the law,” Sunni and Shia alike, in early January. (Casey, pp. 131-134)

Pace tells Casey that the president feels his two brigade, two battalion proposal is “too modest.” Bush decides in favor of the five-brigade surge. (Casey, p. 144)

2007

January

Bush participates in a video-teleconference with al-Maliki to finalize plans for the new Baghdad security plan on the 4th. Bush informs al-Maliki of a coming increase of troop levels in Iraq and asks al-Maliki to make a public statement of support. (Casey, p. 146)

On the 10th, Bush announces a surge of five brigades, or roughly 20,000 troops, to Iraq. U.S. forces in Baghdad are to number over 30,000, which will work with 30,000 Iraqi army and 21,000 policemen to secure neighborhoods. The Bush Administration also launches a political surge with provisional construction teams integrating civilian, military and diplomatic workers to be embedded with local Iraqi leaders to help serve as mentors. The number of teams increase from ten to 24 from 2007 to 2008. The Administration also begins a less public surge in Afghanistan over the next year. (Associate Press, 11/01/2007)

On the 15th, Casey warns that the new campaign to secure Baghdad could take months to produce signs of progress. (The New York Times, 01/16/2007)

February

On the 1st, Casey defends his record in Iraq during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee. Disagreeing with Bush’s characterization of the Iraq effort as “maybe a slow failure,” Casey says he “actually [doesn’t] see it as a slow failure; I see it as slow progress.” (The New York Times, 02/02/2007)

On the 8th, the Senate votes to confirm Casey 83-14. Casey takes over the position of chief of staff in April, succeeding General Peter Schoomaker, and serves in this position through 2011. He is succeeded as commanding general of the MNF in Iraq by Petraeus on the 10th. (Casey, p. 149; The Washington Post, 02/09/2007)

Bush says that factions within the Iranian government are supplying Shiite militants in Iraq with roadside bombs used to kill U.S. troops. (The New York Times, 02/15/2007)
March

On the 7th, Gates approves a request to send more military police to Iraq prior to a security crackdown in the country. *(The Associated Press, 03/07/2007)*

Abizaid completes his assignment as CENTCOM commander on the 16th. He is succeeded by Admiral William Fallon. *(Woodward, The War Within, p. 284)*

On the 22nd, the Senate Appropriations Committee approves a bill that would fund the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq but also requires the president to withdraw from those countries by spring 2008. On the 29th, the Senate approves the measure by a vote of 51–47. *(The Associated Press, 03/22/2007, 03/29/2007)*

April

With O’Sullivan announcing on the 2nd she is stepping down as deputy national security advisor for Iraq and Afghanistan, Hadley develops a proposal to create a new deputy national security advisor position at the assistant to the president level to take her place, arguing that the job requires someone with more authority to cut through the red tape of the Washington bureaucracy. The new position would manage the implementation and execution of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, coordinate with Hadley, and report directly to Bush. The new position would have “tasking authority” to issue instructions to agencies in Washington to help ensure the forces on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq receive all the support they need. The position is later filled by Lute, who is dubbed the “war czar.” *(Gates, pp. 66-67; The Washington Post, 04/13/2007; https://georgewbush-whitehouse.gov)*

On the 4th, Gates states that ethnic cleansing and increased violence could occur in Iraq if Congress passes a proposed law that would only allow “targeted” funding for Iraq. The proposed bill is a measure by Democrats to increase pressure on Bush to withdraw troops from the war-torn country. *(The Associated Press, 04/04/2007)*

Casey officially begins serving as Army chief of staff on the 10th.

On the 11th, Gates announces tours of American soldiers in Iraq have been extended from 12 to 15 months. Casey says the extension was requested by the Army because the alternative was cutting the number of months military personnel could spend at home. *(The Washington Post, 04/13/2007)*

On the 25th, by a vote of 218-208, the U.S. House of Representatives passes funding legislation for the war in Iraq provided the U.S. start bringing troops back by October 1, 2007. *(The Associated Press, 04/26/2007)*

May

On the 2nd, Gates suggests that Walter Reed Army Medical Center should be closed. His recommendation comes after a review by a report issued by an independent advisory group. According to the report, “money woes and Pentagon neglect were mainly to blame for shoddy outpatient conditions and bureaucratic delays at Walter Reed.” *(The Associated Press, 05/02/2007)*
On the 8th, the Pentagon announces that the U.S. may continue troop buildup in Iraq through December 2007. *(The Associated Press, 05/08/2007)*

On the 16th, Casey meets with the parents of Keith M. Maupin, an Army reservist who was captured in Iraq in April 2004, to discuss the Army’s attempts at finding their son. *(Dayton Daily News, 05/18/2007)*

**June**

On the 4th, General Bismullah Khah of Afghanistan suggests that the U.S. should accelerate training in the region so that Afghans can fight insurgents on their own. Gates remains mute on the subject but posits that Taliban fighters are currently using weapons smuggled into the country by Iran. *(The Associated Press, 06/04/2007)*

On the 21st, Gates states that the improvements to the mental health system for veterans will be improved. One such proposal suggested is to eliminate questions that ask servicemen and women if they have previously suffered from a mental health issue. According to Gates, generally, many soldiers “avoid seeking mental health treatment because of the fear that they may lose security clearances.” *(The Associated Press, 06/21/2007)*

On the 28th, Bush announces Admiral Mike Mullen is his nominee to be the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Mullen is confirmed on August 3rd.

**July**

During a visit to Fort Bliss in Texas on the 10th, Casey says that cavalry soldiers serving in Iraq may have to stay longer than the 15-month extended tours previously announced. *(The New York Times, 07/15/2007)*

**August**

The Bush Administration considers cutting troop levels in Iraq but *The New York Times* reports there is a difference of opinion between commanders in Iraq and senior generals in the Pentagon as to when these cuts should occur and how large they should be. Casey is reported to support “steep reductions by the end of 2008, perhaps to half of the 20 combat brigades now in Iraq.” In contrast, Petraeus is expected to propose at most modest reductions in troop levels. *(The New York Times, 08/25/2007)*

On the 30th, Casey discusses the state of Army, arguing that “our force is stretched and out of balance. The tempo of our deployments are not sustainable, our equipment usage is five times the normal rate and continuously operating in harsh environments.” *(The New York Times, 09/01/2007)*

On the 31st, Bush meets with Casey, the other chiefs, Gates and Cheney at the Pentagon to discuss the Administration’s Iraq strategy. During the meeting, Bush is informed that the “surge” is leading to a heavy level of stress on troops in Iraq. *(The New York Times, 09/01/2007; The Washington Post, 09/01/2007)*
**September**  
Petraeus recommends that reductions of American troops in Iraq should be postponed until December. In this plan, the number of American troops will be brought down to pre-surge levels by August 2008. Petraeus and Ryan Crocker, who has been serving as U.S. Ambassador to Iraq since March, 2007, defend the proposal in testimony to Congress. (*The New York Times, 09/10/2007*)

On the 20th, Gates meets with roughly 20 House Republicans to discuss the situation in Iraq, as well as Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV). The meetings come after the defeat of a bill in the House that would have limited funding for the war in Iraq. On the 26th, Gates asks Congress for $190 billion to fund both wars for FY 2008. (*The Associated Press, 09/26/2007*)

On the 26th, Casey testifies before the House Armed Services Committee and argues that the existing troop rotations of 15 months in combat and 12 months at home are not sustainable. Casey announces that the Army will use the withdrawal of five combat brigades by summer of 2008 to either lengthen the number of months soldiers will remain at home or decrease the number of months they spend in combat. Casey warns that the Army is stretched dangerously thin. (*The Washington Post, 09/27/2007, 09/26/2007*)

On the 26th, Gates announces he is sending a fact-finding group to Iraq to examine the role of private contractors in the country. Gates’ announcement comes after an incident with Blackwater, a private contractor based in North Carolina, where 11 Iraqi civilians were killed by the company. (*The Associated Press, 09/26/2007*)

**October**  
On the 9th, Casey announces that Gates has approved a plan to ease the strain on the military by increasing the size of the Army faster than previously planned. The plan will increase the size of the active-duty Army to 547,000 servicemen and women by 2010. (*The New York Times, 10/10/2007*)

**November**  
On the 1st, Gates states that Iran has agreed to stop the flow of weapons and bomb-making materials into Iraq. The announcement comes after a period of tension, where the U.S. accused Iran of helping Iraqi insurgents and reportedly considered military options against Iran. (*The Associated Press, 11/01/2007*)

Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf declares a state of emergency and cancels upcoming elections. In response, Gates and Rice both argue that the U.S. wants to continue to cooperate with Pakistan in the war on terrorism but that Pakistan needs to follow democratic principles and the rule of the law. (*The Associated Press, 11/05/2007*)

On the 15th, Gates argues that if Congress does not pass a war funding bill needed to continue the missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, he will be forced to lay off workers and cut government contracts. On the 16th, the Senate votes to block the war funding bill by a vote of 53-45. (*The Associated Press, 11/15/2007*)
**January**

The Pentagon announces that it plans to send an additional 3,000 troops to Afghanistan to help the country fight insurgents. The move comes after a year of increased violence in Afghanistan. (*The Associated Press*, 01/10/2008)

On the 16th, Casey states that he hopes to shorten the 15-month tours in Iraq and Afghanistan by summer. While cautioning that any decision on tour length would depend on conditions in Iraq, Casey says he expects to bring deployments down to 12 months by July. (*The Washington Post*, 01/17/2008)

On the 17th, Gates announces that he has instructed Casey, the other chiefs, and Petraeus to prepare proposals for the size of worldwide deployments. The proposals should be presented to Gates before Petraeus’s scheduled testimony before Congress this spring. (*The New York Times*, 01/18/2008)

**February**

On the 1st, after receiving a letter from Gates asking for help in the south of Afghanistan, German military leaders say that they will remain in the north. Germany, along with France, Italy, and Turkey, have all refused to send troops to the war-torn south. (*The Associated Press*, 02/01/2008; *USA Today*, 02/08/2008)

On the 4th, Gates appeals to Congress to pass funding for both wars. The appeal comes months after Gates warned Congress that failure to pass funding for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq would have severe implications. Democrats in Congress have been reportedly stalling on passing the bill in an attempt to bring troops home. (*The Associated Press*, 02/04/2008)

On the 26th, Casey testifies before the Senate Armed Services Committee, stressing the strain the Iraq and Afghanistan wars have put on the Army. Casey also says he will reduce combat tours to 12 months by the end of the summer. (*The New York Times*, 02/27/2008, 02/28/2008)

Near the end of February, Turkey steps up military incursions into Northern Iraq. (*The Associated Press*, 02/08/2008)

On the 28th, the Army releases a revised operations manual. According to the manual, future efforts to secure U.S. interests will rely on successful nation building as much as traditional combat operations. (*The Associated Press*, 02/28/2008)

**April**

On the 4th, Gates suggests that the U.S. will increase troop strength in Afghanistan in 2009 regardless of troop levels in Iraq. Gates’ comments come after a deterioration of Afghani stability. (*The Associated Press*, 04/04/2008)
On the 9th, Gates states that he no longer believes troop levels will reduce to pre-surge levels in Iraq by the end of the year. *(The Associated Press, 04/10/2008)*

*The Washington Post* reports that the Future Combat Systems weapons modernization program, which is expected to cost $124 billion, is in jeopardy because separate military programs (specifically the development of high-speed radios, a wireless network, and satellites) it will rely on have been plagued by budget issues and delays. *(The Washington Post, 04/08/2008)*

**May**

On the 1st, Gates announces that the troops will no longer have to disclose all mental health issues during security clearance processes, particularly post-combat counseling sessions. The Pentagon hopes the move will decrease the stigma related to mental health illness. *(The Associated Press, 05/01/2008)*

**June**


On the 12th, from Brussels, Gates announces that NATO members agree to broaden their peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. The announcement comes after Kosovo’s declaration of independence from Serbia in February. *(The Associated Press, 06/12/2008)*

On the 23rd, Bush nominates Lt. Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody to take over the Army’s Materiel Command as a four-star general. Dunwoody will be the first woman in American history to receive this rank. Casey states that Dunwoody’s “nomination not only underscores her significant contributions and success […] but also shows the level of possible opportunity in our Army’s diverse, quality, all-volunteer force.” *(The Washington Post, 06/24/2008, 11/15/2008)*

**July**

On the 1st, Gates states that Lithuania is a good backup site for the U.S.’s missile defense plans if talks in Poland continue to degenerate. However, on the 2nd, Poland and the U.S. agree to a tentative deal for placing missile defense shield infrastructure in the country. *(The Associated Press, 07/01/2008, 07/02/2008)*

On the 9th, Iran performs a missile test capable of reaching Israel. Gates says this shows that Tehran is a threat and illustrates the need for a missile defense shield to protect the U.S. and her allies. *(The Associated Press, 07/09/2008)*

**August**

On the 5th, Gates extends the deployment of 1,250 Marine trainers in Afghanistan and announces an additional 200 troops to support the trainers. According to reports, the move is an effort to bolster support for the trainers after positive gains. *(The Associated Press, 08/05/2008)*
On the 14th, after Russia and Georgia engage in military operations against each other, Gates states that Russia must withdraw from Georgia or face the serious possibility that relations between the U.S. and Russia may deteriorate. However, Gates is quick to point out that the U.S. does not plan on using military force in the Georgia-Russia conflict. *(The Associated Press, 08/14/2008)*

**October**

Casey visits India from the 16th to the 18th. *(The Balochistan Times, 10/17/2008)*

**November**

On the 4th, Senator Barack Obama (D-IL) is elected president.

On the 5th, the Pentagon announces that the U.S. military will pull out two combat brigades in November. The withdrawal comes two months earlier than originally anticipated. *(The Associated Press, 11/05/2008)*

On the 21st, Gates says that he wants to increase troop levels “significantly” in Afghanistan before the 2009 Afghan elections. *(The Associated Press, 11/21/2008)*


**2009**

**January**

Casey defends the Future Combat Systems program against possible cuts by the incoming Obama Administration. Arguing that a lack of investments in the 1980s and 1990s left the Army overwhelmed in the wake of 9/11 and the war on terror, Casey states that the Future Combat Systems represents “a minimum prudent investment in our future.” *(El Paso Times, 01/06/2009)*

Casey stays on as Army chief of staff in the new Obama Administration.
TIMELINES

- George Casey News Timeline, prepared by Rob Martin, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 08/01/2014.

- Timeline of the Bush Presidency, prepared by Justin Peck and Bryan Craig, Miller Center, University of Virginia, 04/30/2010.
SELECTED WRITINGS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS


BACKGROUND ON GEORGE CASEY


WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

THE WAR IN IRAQ


ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF


Early Relationship with George W. Bush
• When did you first meet George W. Bush? What were your early impressions of him?

Commander of the Joint Warfighting Center
• Comment on your work in the wake of 9/11 preparing a plan to provide a coordinated joint military effort to respond to future terrorist attacks in the U.S.

The Joint Staff
• Tell us about your responsibilities working on the Joint Staff. What issues occupied most of your time? With whom did you work most closely?
• Did you spend much time working on issues related to the war in Afghanistan on the Joint Staff?
• Tell us about your work planning the military’s long-term approach to fighting global terrorism.
• When did you first begin to work on planning for a possible war in Iraq? Comment on the military’s thinking on Iraq in 2002. Was there much disagreement within the administration over how the U.S. should proceed? What were your primary concerns regarding a possible invasion of Iraq? Tell us about the creation of the Iraq Political-Military Cell.

Army Vice Chief of Staff
• How did you come to serve as Army vice chief of staff? Tell us about your responsibilities in this position. Comment on your relationship with Peter Schoomaker, the Army chief of staff.
• Discuss your work overseeing the multi-year reorganization of the Army. Tell us about your work with regards to Afghanistan and Iraq. What other important issues occupied your time?

Commander of the Multi-National Force in Iraq
• How did you come to serve as commander of the Multi-National Force in Iraq? How was your mission in Iraq defined?
• Comment on your relationship with Bush. How did it change over time?
• Comment on military-civilian relations within the DOD. Tell us about your relationship with Don Rumsfeld. How did you get along with other senior DOD officials such as Paul Wolfowitz and Doug Feith? Tell us about your relationship with top military officials at DOD such as John Abizaid and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.
• Tell us about your relationship with Bush’s key national security advisers such as Colin Powell, Condoleezza Rice, Stephen Hadley, George Tenet, and Dick Cheney.
• Describe the decision-making process in the Bush administration on issues regarding defense and foreign policy. Which actors had the most clout? What role did Cheney play?
• Comment on the interagency process within the Bush administration. How well did the different departments and agencies work together during your time in Iraq?
• Who did you work with most closely in Iraq? Tell us about your relationship with key military officials such as Tom Metz and David Petraeus.
- Discuss your relationship with the U.S. ambassadors to Iraq and the high level of importance you placed on political-military integration. Tell us about your relationship with Iraqi political leaders.
- What were the biggest obstacles you faced in accomplishing your mission in Iraq? What were the biggest threats the coalition forces faced in Iraq? How did you try to address the threats posed by terrorists, insurgents and sectarian violence?
- Why did you feel it was important for the U.S. to keep a small footprint in Iraq? Tell us about the debates within the administration over how quickly the coalition should transition to Iraqi sovereignty. How did you attempt to encourage the Iraqis to play a greater role in providing for their own security? Comment on your efforts to embed U.S. military advisers within Iraqi units. What were the biggest challenges you faced in training the Iraqi forces?
- What were the key transitions and turning points during your time in Iraq?
- Tell us about your work preparing for elections in Iraq. What special challenges did they present in maintaining security? Tell us about your relationship with Prime Minister Jawad al-Maliki. How was it different from your relationship with his predecessors? Did you feel al-Maliki was doing enough to increase Iraq’s role in providing security? Was he doing enough to take on the Shia militia groups?
- Comment on the resistance the coalition faced from Sunni insurgents and Shia militia groups. How did the bombing of the Golden Mosque in Samarra in 2006 affect the level of violence in Iraq? Tell us about Operation Together Forward and Together Forward II.
- Tell us about the reviews conducted by the DOD and the NSC in 2006 on Iraq. What reservations did you have regarding the surge option? Did Rumsfeld and Abizaid share your concerns? Has your opinion on the surge since changed in any way?
- Comment on the transition from Rumsfeld to Robert Gates as secretary of defense.

**Army Chief of Staff**

- Comment on your transition to Army chief of staff. Discuss your confirmation hearings.
- What issues occupied most of your time? Tell us about your work advising Bush, the secretary of defense, and the NSC as Army chief of staff.
- Describe the Army’s force structure after the surges in Iraq and Afghanistan. Why did you feel these levels were not sustainable? What were your greatest concerns regarding rotation cycles and schedules? Were these concerns shared within the civilian leadership?
- What did you mean when you said that the Army was “out of balance”? How did this affect Army readiness? Did it have any impact on recruiting?
- Tell us about your relationship with Congress regarding funding legislation for defense.

**The Bush Presidency in Retrospect**

- What do you consider to be your most important accomplishments during your time in the Bush administration? What were the most challenging parts of your jobs? What were the most rewarding?
- What were Bush’s greatest assets as commander in chief?
- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Bush presidency with regards to national security and defense?
- Comment on Bush’s leadership in the days after the 9/11 attacks.
- What features of the Bush presidency were overlooked or misunderstood by the press?
• How should the Bush presidency be viewed in history?