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MEMORANDUM

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U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

To: Nan Borton, Director, BHR/OFDA/W

Cc: Ted Bratrud, A/Director, OFDA/DRD
Paul Randolph, RTL/NIS/NE/NIRAQ
PPC/CDIE/DI-Acquisitions, Rm 209, SA-18

Fm: Jesse L. Snyder, TL/OFDA/DART/NIRAQ
PSC Contract #AOT-4036-S-00-4203-00

Re: End of Tour Report/DART/NIRAQ

1. This End of Tour Report, which covers a 7-month assignment period as OFDA/DART Team Leader/NIRAQ from 10 September, 1994 through 24 March, 1995, is submitted in accordance with Article I., C., of the subject contract.

2. Background: This contract represents the second time that I have undertaken an assignment for OFDA in Northern Iraq. The first such assignment covered a period from October 11, 1992 through March 5, 1993, following initial Congressional funding authorization which tasked the Department of Defense to carry out an Humanitarian Assistance program in Northern Iraq. This original enabling legislation gave particular attention to the winter emergency relief conditions and requirements of 1992/93 and also called for mitigating measures to reduce and preclude suffering for the people of the affected region. This initial assignment came about as a result of policy agreement between the Dept. of State, AID/OFDA and DOE which called for OFDA to provide an OFDA team in Northern Iraq to provide technical assistance and coordination for the European Command/CTF (Operation Provide Comfort). This policy agreement continues to the present time and forms the basis for OFDA's continuing provision of a DART team for this purpose and for my current assignment.

During my initial assignment in 1992/93, I was responsible for initiating, establishing, and organizing the technical assistance effort and for assuring implementation of all aspects of the USG humanitarian assistance effort in Northern Iraq. At the completion of that preliminary 6-month assignment, an office, operating procedures and relationships with the executing agency (EUCOM/CTF at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey), prioritized program content and budget, a communications system, housing, transportation, and a technical assistance (DART) team of four Americans and some 40 local national employees was established and operating. With a budget of US \$43.0, all food, fuel, shelter, medicine and other winter emergency needs, as well as a convoy operation and other transportation/distribution requirements to support the effort, were successfully met and a nascent program of mitigation to preclude and reduce future suffering had been initiated.

Following my departure, and during my absence over the next year and a half, the DOD-funded humanitarian assistance program continued at a level of U.S. \$30.0 annually, comprising essentially the same necessary program mix but increasingly focused on mitigation activities, especially the return of those displaced to their formerly villages which had been destroyed by Saddam Hussein during the pre-Gulf War period. The OFDA/DART team structure had evolved to include a Team Leader, a Transport/Logistics Officer, a Program Officer, an Information Officer, an Administrative Officer and three Field Office Managers. With a program budget of U.S. \$30.0 million, an operating budget of U.S. \$2.0 million, 6 U.S., 84 local employees, 8 vehicles, 5 office facilities and 4 residences spread over a geographic area of 300 miles distance, OFDA/DART Team operations in Northern Iraq as of my return in September, 1994, exceeded those of many ordinary USAID Missions elsewhere.

3. The Assignment: The purpose of this new assignment was to again assume charge of the OFDA/DART technical assistance team and assure the continued effectiveness of the USG humanitarian assistance effort in Northern Iraq which was/is considered one, if not the, most successful humanitarian program undertaken in the past decade, anywhere. The major and specific challenge of this assignment included not only the evolved character of the program with its emphasis increasingly on mitigation, but the magnitude and problematic character of the DART team and its personnel and eliminating the potential negative impact on the USG program effort.

After my initial assignment, I was replaced by an experienced NGO manager who, it appeared, quickly proved incompetent to effectively manage the operation and DART personnel and who was subsequently terminated in July of 1993. A replacement Team Leader was recruited who, although he remained in place for his full contract period, was unremittingly absent from post and reportedly proved almost equally unsatisfactory. During his tour, one program specialist quit as a result of the Team Leader's approach; an information specialist was abruptly terminated and inappropriately treated, threatening a sexual harrassment suit; one field officer manager proved incompetant and was ineptly fired, threatening an EEO suit for age discrimination; and a newly-assigned program officer was deliberately isolated by the Team Leader from the DART Team headquarters staff and required to establish a separate office in a DART residence away from the main office.

Clearly, given the short duration disaster response mandate for most emergency actions, OFDA's experience with long-term DART Team operations is limited. That experience would suggest that high priority is assigned to getting skilled, imaginative, problem solvers into the disaster area. While Team leadership is critical to the immediate task, problems resulting from on-going personality conflicts, poor communication, a lack of consistent team management and the like are less likely to surface in the brief time period of most (under 90-day) OFDA disaster responses.

OFDA needs to focus on the need for effective management skills and team building leadership for its longer term efforts in remote area programs such as NIraq. Team management is as serious a requirement for effective program execution as are the other emergency skills and implementation talent expected of DART team members. All the skill in the world will not serve OFDA's disaster support efforts if the individual possessing it is not in the loop, effectively motivated and clearly owns a piece of the overall team action.

b.) H/A Program in NIraq:

Without qualification and despite DART Team management issues, the H/A program is easily the most successful effort disaster response effort undertaken, anywhere, in the past twenty years by the United States Government. Whether measured in tons delivered in an emergency time frame, or by extent of impact over time, or in terms of assistance cost per beneficiary or in terms of lives saved or circumstances mitigated, the NIraq program will take top honors at any competition.

This achievement is all the more astonishing when one considers the nearly total absence of either US national or subsidiary command direction of the assistance program over the past four years.

While initial direction for the NIraq program was provided as a result of both immediate post-gulf war relief efforts by Task Forces Alpha and Bravo, as part of the first Operation Provide Comfort and by initial Congressional legislation, virtually all subsequent assistance strategy, program direction and execution, has been derived only from the OFDA/DART team on the ground in NIraq. The OFDA/DART team, since 1992, has been the defacto source of program content and direction. It has been both the reactive originator of strategy, planning and tactics, and the initiator and developer of response actions needed to assure a successful assistance effort.

While there has been an active IAWG in Washington which has maintained oversight and provided necessary coordination and political intervention for the program, neither DOD, through Eucom or CTF, as the designated executive agent of the NIraq assistance program, nor any other agency of government, has provided any program direction other than routine approval for actions and expenditures recommended by the OFDA/DART team.

This has not necessarily been bad: within initially established policy and procedural guidelines, the USG program in NIraq has proceeded efficiently and effectively without customarily hampering program interference at every turning point in the road. Indeed, to a program manager, a blessing of the first order.

OFDA/DART members on the ground can happily assure themselves of legitimate accomplishment in terms of meeting crucial human needs of the badly damaged people of Northern Iraq.

From the standpoint of United States Foreign Policy in the Middle East, however, it is more difficult to assess the impact and purpose of the current USG H/A program: there has not been, and there is not, a strategic objective defined and agreed upon that provides national direction for the conduct of the program in NIraq.

In the absence of such guidance, the point and purpose of the H/A program in NIraq, aside from the observable immediate impact on fragile, at-risk human life, is unassessable.

And since it is unassessable, and since it is unknown what it is that the USG wants to accomplish in NIraq, it is also not possible to responsibly program either assistance direction or levels in NIraq.

Current, tentatively approved program strategy for NIraq provides for on-going mitigation assistance which will effectively return the majority of those displaced by Saddam Hussein's reign of terror and then reduce assistance to a minimal relief level with minimal or no direct USG on the ground program management.

While this strategy may or may not be appropriate, it is impossible to know without a defining political objective for the United States in NIraq.

For example, it may well be, that, to serve the best interests of the United States, a more structured H/A program is needed, an assistance effort which could more effectively address longer-term mitigation needs and which could better prepare the region for survival.

My point is that our involvement or lack of it or level of assistance in NIraq should be neither budget driven nor agency driven (i.e., "not a military mission, not really a DOD program" or "too long term--not really an OFDA program" or "not really development, not really an AID program", it should be mission directed by a sense of our specific national objectives.

The people of NIraq and the people of the United States have a right to expect nothing less.

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Jesse L. Snyder
Team Leader
OFDA/DART/NIRAQ
March 23, 1995