

Appendix C: Russian Military Intel update: War in Iraq, April 6, 2003

[<http://www2.iraqwar.ru/index.php?userlang=en> – Translation by “Necroman”]

Around Baghdad skirmishes between coalition forces and Iraqi divisions are going on. As we said before, during the next two days the coalition troops will extend the zone of blockade to the west and north-west using local strikes. Currently a part of the 1st brigade of the 3rd Mechanized Division is outflanking the city from Abu-Harraib, trying to reach the south outskirts and seize a strategic bridge across the Tigris at the north of the Tunis area (Salakh-Khasan).

Fire has not stopped near the Airport, both sides are using artillery. According to the most recent data the rush of the coalition forces toward to the southern borders of Baghdad, though expected by the Iraqi command, was tactically a surprise. Hidden in the interiors of the city, parts of the Iraqi army were unable to leave their covered positions, advance and face the enemy. There arose confusion that led to disorganization of the Iraqi squadrons that engaged their rivals “on the move”, without proper reconnaissance and concentration of forces.

According to specified information in different conflicts and during the assault of the airport up to 400 Iraqi soldiers were killed, 25 tanks and 12 guns were lost. But the coalition command also faced serious problems. Powerful Iraqi attacks aimed at the airport immobilized most of the force breaking towards Baghdad and it turned out necessary to bring reinforcements from other sectors of the front in order to succeed. In particular, up to 2 battalions of the 101st Airborne Division located by An-Nasiriya and An-Najaf and at least 1 battalion of the 82nd Division were moved there. Americans tolls at the south and south-east of Baghdad for the last 24 hours amount to: up to 30 men killed and at least 80 wounded, 15 soldiers are known to be missing. The Americans lost at least 8 tanks and 5 APC.

Marine squadrons are still incapable of breaking down defenses by the Diyala river. Currently the vanguards are trying to outflank the city from east and seize the bridge in the New Baghdad region. There are not enough coalition forces to block such a city, and the troops blocking An-Nasiriya, An-Najaf, Al-Kut and Al-Diwaniya were given categorical orders to break down the Iraqi resistance in the next 3 days, take control of those areas and advance toward Baghdad to join the blockade.

To organize offensive against Karbala the blocking troops were enforced with one expeditionary marine squadron, and another storm started this morning. There is no information about casualties from this region yet. Analogous tasks were set before the British command at the south of Iraq near Basra.

For the past 2 days the British have tried to overcome Iraqi defenses from An-Zubair and the Manavi regions 3 times, but they still cannot break down the resistance. This morning an armored column was able to come up to a strategic cross-road near Akhavat-Rezan, but got under heavy fire and had to retreat. Yesterday and during this morning the British lost at least 3 armored units, 2 men killed and 6 wounded.

The coalition command and the foreign policy departments of Russia and USA are now making every effort to close all the information related to the Russian embassy getting fired upon near Baghdad.

Sources claim that the embassy ceased its activities in many respects because of the danger of an air strike on the embassy. The American command was utterly irritated by the presence of the Russian embassy in Baghdad and believed that some technical intelligence equipment was deployed there that provided the Iraqis with information. Moreover, some officers in the coalition HQ in Qatar openly claimed that it was on the territory of the Russian embassy that the “jammers” hampering the high-precision weapons around Baghdad were operated.

Yesterday morning the Secretary of State Colin Powell demanded of immediate evacuation of the embassy from the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Igor Ivanov. Yesterday evening the Russian minister informed the Americans that on the 6th of April the embassy column would be leaving Baghdad heading for the Syrian border. This gave rise to dissatisfaction among the State Department officials who suggested that the column should move to Jordan.

The coalition special operations HQ were sure that the embassy column would contain secret devices taken from military equipment captured by Iraqis. In this connection one cannot shut out the possibility of “revenge” from the coalition command. Moreover, experts claim that the purpose of this armed assault could be to damage a few cars where the Russians would have to leave some of the salvage. This is also indicated by the fact that neither the ambassador himself nor journalists in the column were among the injured. In this case we can expect that this action was committed by coalition special forces and the column was shot using Russian-made weapons to conceal the origin of the attackers to blame the Iraqis afterwards.

According to the most recent data the column got ambushed almost 30 km to the west from the city on the territory occupied by the coalition, but moving fast it escaped from fire and made a few more kilometers where it was blocked by military jeeps. On attempting to establish contact with their crews it received fire again; then the jeeps vanished.

Today at 5pm a phone conversation between president of Russia Vladimir Putin and president of the USA George W. Bush took place. Before this conversation, his assistant for National Security Affairs Condoleezza Rice, who came into Moscow today, had consulted Bush. At this time Rice is meeting Igor Ivanov, the head of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The details of this meeting are unknown so far, but we can suppose that very soon some “unknown squadrons” will be made responsible for the incident and the situation will be dampened to the maximum. Analysts reckon that the situation with the nuclear submarine “Kursk”, when a whole series of private contacts between top Russian officials and American representatives brought more questions than answers, is about to occur again to some extent.