

ammunition. We've eliminated 72 of the 91 caches of captured enemy ammunition. Some of the caches are kilometers long and wide with thousands of short tons of ammunition. To assist us in this reduction process, we've hired over 50 local Al Anbar truckers and employed over 700 Iraqis in making the province safer for all of us. Coalition forces work side by side with Iraqis who care about a safe and secure new Iraq.

To date we have jointly reduced over 22,000 short tons of ammunition. And yesterday I had a huge smile on my face for the future of Iraq as I personally blew up 100 short tons of ammunition out in western Iraq. That made a big boom for the progress of Iraq.

Now for the way ahead. Turning over the local governance is our next and perhaps our most important task. Keith Mines, the CPA governance coordinator for our province, and I are working with the local provincial leaders to establish a legitimate government in Al Anbar. We're on track to refresh the local provincial council this month, which will start the process toward the election of delegates for the new transitional government.

We have turned the corner, and now we can accelerate down the straightaway. There's still a long way to go before the finish line, but the final outcome is known. There certainly will be some friction along the way, but we will continue to kill or capture enemy forces, train Iraqi security forces to work independently, continue to create jobs, reduce the availability of weapons and ammunition, and finally, transfer the governance to local control that is legitimately recognized by the people.

Shukran. And I'll take your questions at this time. Right here.

Q: (In Arabic.)

Swannack: The question regards the attacks on coalition forces by anti-coalition forces. And it really boils down to the fact, when we're attacked, how do we react to an attack? And whether there are people around or not, our troopers are trained that you have to first identify a hostile threat before you take action.

Now, with the 82nd Airborne Division we all have close combat optics. And if you understand what that means, that means you can use very precise fire when returning fire. And so our troopers identify the target, try to identify as best where the fire is coming from, and then very surgically take out the enemy target. This is a very unscrupulous enemy we're fighting here. They're dressed in the same clothes as civilians and children; they operate amongst civilians and children. So it's a very difficult task to identify the enemy, and sometimes there are civilian casualties, but we try to minimize this as much as possible by very surgical operations against a direct threat. And I believe we have great troops out there doing the work of the coalition forces.

Right here.

Q: General, following up on that -- Brian Hartman with ABC News. Can you tell us to what extent you think that the enemy that you're fighting, that you're describing here, are former coalition members or just common criminals now? I mean, have you crossed that bridge where you think you've suppressed the insurgency enough that most of what you're seeing is criminal attacks rather than former regime figures?

Swannack: I think there are some criminal attacks out there on soft targets. But the majority of targets directed against us, coalition forces and probably Iraqis who support coalition efforts, are done by former regime elements still today.

I think we've done a very, very good job at taking out the -- as I said before, the middle management layer, the folks directing those attacks. Surely we can go ahead and take away the cell members, and we're doing that very,