

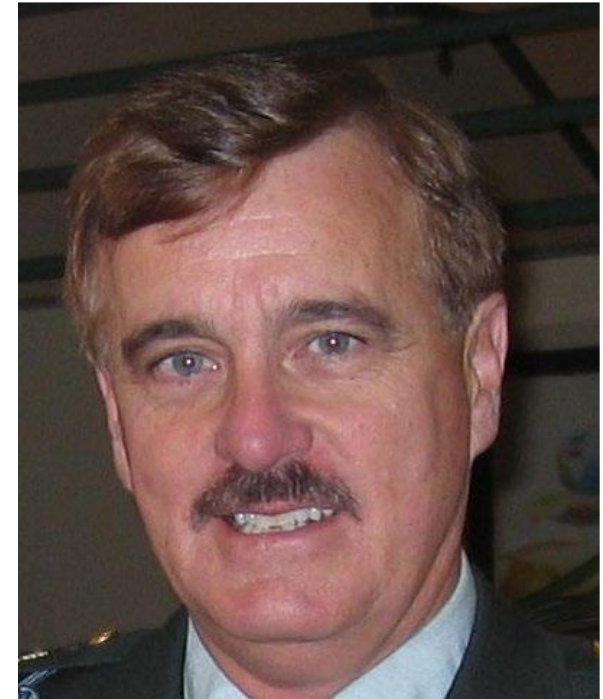
Facilitation Meetings in a Potentially Hostile Environment

Meetings were arranged to discuss the Hajj (a major pillar of the Islamic religion)

These meetings required collaboration, trust, partnership, and conflict resolution.

This presentation is not about religion as it is about gaining the trust of a varied community for their benefit.

January 2004



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Map of the Middle East

Note the proximity of Iraq to Saudi Arabia, Iran and Syria.

Although mostly Muslim, there is a large divide between the branches of that religion.

Fairly inhospitably terrain and weather.

Understanding your audience and their history is important.



Tribes in Iraq

There are 74 major tribes.

A tribe can have both Shia and Sunni members.

Tribes are mostly urbanized now.

Status in order of importance to the populace:

Religion

Family

Tribe

(rarely country)

Learning a little about their culture and history helped ease tensions.

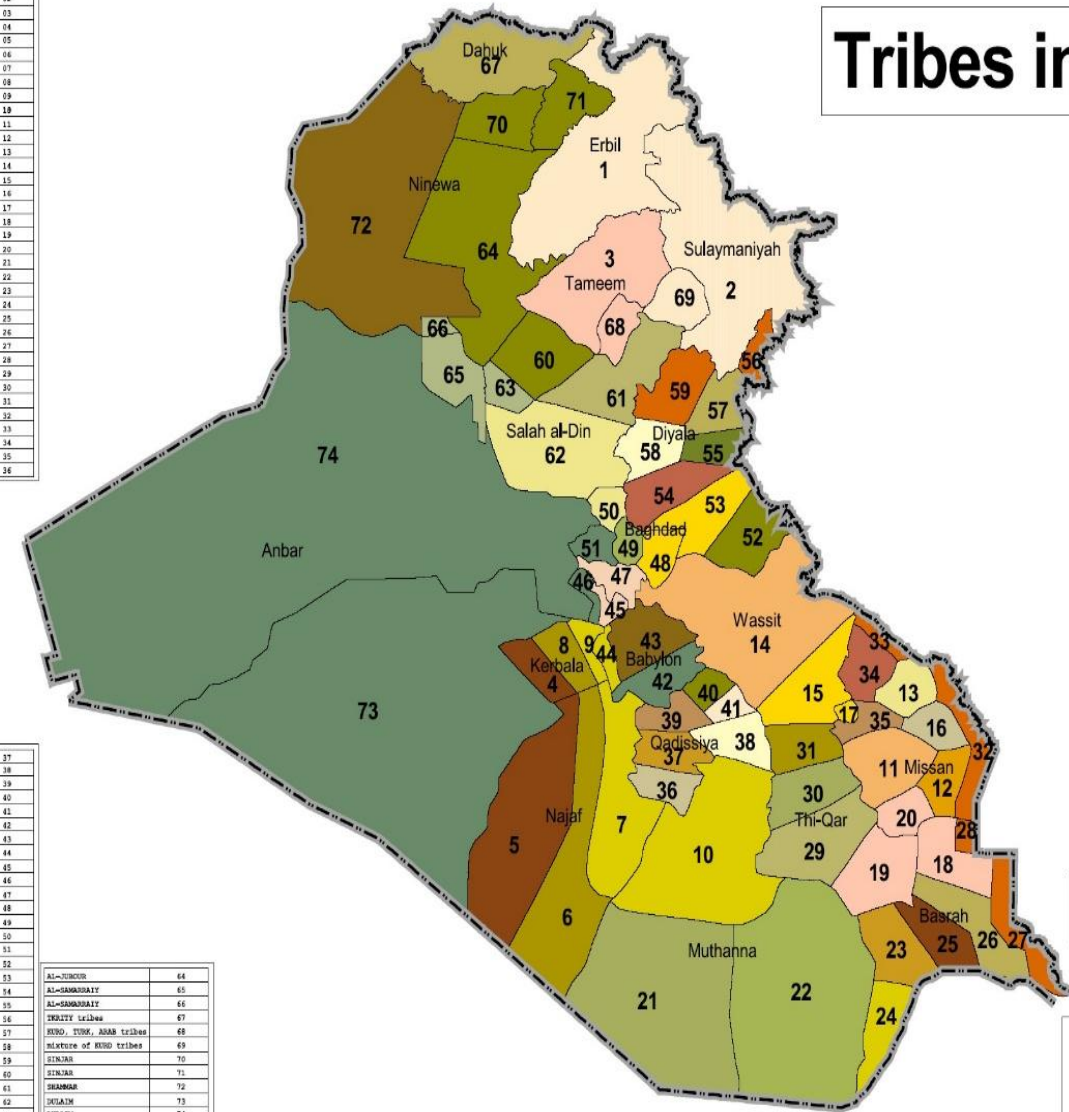
Tribes in Iraq

Name of Tribe	Number
Mixture of KURD tribes	01
Mixture of KURD tribes	02
KURD, TURK, ARAB tribes	03
AL-QALAL	04
AL-QALAL	05
AL-QASAB	06
UNIZAN	07
AL-QASAB	08
UNIZAN	09
UNIZAN	10
ALBU MUHAMMAD	11
AL-QALIL	12
BAHO BAHAT	13
AL-TORAJI	14
AL-SAMI' B	15
ALBU TUBIN	16
AL-SAMI' B	17
AL-MUHTAFI	18
AL-MUHTAFI	19
AL-MUHTAFI	20
AL-DUWAY	21
AL-MUHTAFI	22
AL-SAMI' B	23
AL-SAMI' B	24
BAHO BAHAT	25
AL-SAMIRI	26
some shown	27
some shown	28
AL-SAMIRI	29
BAHO BAHAT	30
BAHO BAHAT	31
some shown	32
some shown	33
AL-SAMIRI	34
BAHO BAHAT	35
AL-SAMIRI	36

ALBU TUBIN	37
AL-SAMI' B	38
AL-SAMIRI	39
AL-SAMIRI	40
AL-SAMIRI	41
AL-SAMIRI	42
AL-SAMIRI	43
UNIZAN	44
AL-QASAB	45
UNIZAN	46
AL-QASAB	47
AL-SAMIRI	48
Mixture of tribes	49
AL-QASAB	50
UNIZAN	51
AL-QASAB	52
AL-SAMIRI	53
AL-SAMIRI	54
AL-QASAB	55
AL-QASAB	56
some shown	57
AL-SAMIRI	58
AL-SAMIRI	59
AL-QASAB	60
AL-SAMIRI	61
AL-SAMIRI	62
AL-SAMIRI	63

AL-SAMIRI	64
AL-SAMIRI	65
AL-SAMIRI	66
TRAITI tribes	67
KURD, TURK, ARAB tribes	68
Mixture of KURD tribes	69
SINJARI	70
SINJARI	71
SINJARI	72
SINJARI	73
SINJARI	74

This map was produced as a reference aid only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations



Iraq border

HIC Map reference 284



Colonel Robert Klein in Saddam's Hiding Hole

For context:

Saddam was captured 13 December 2003.

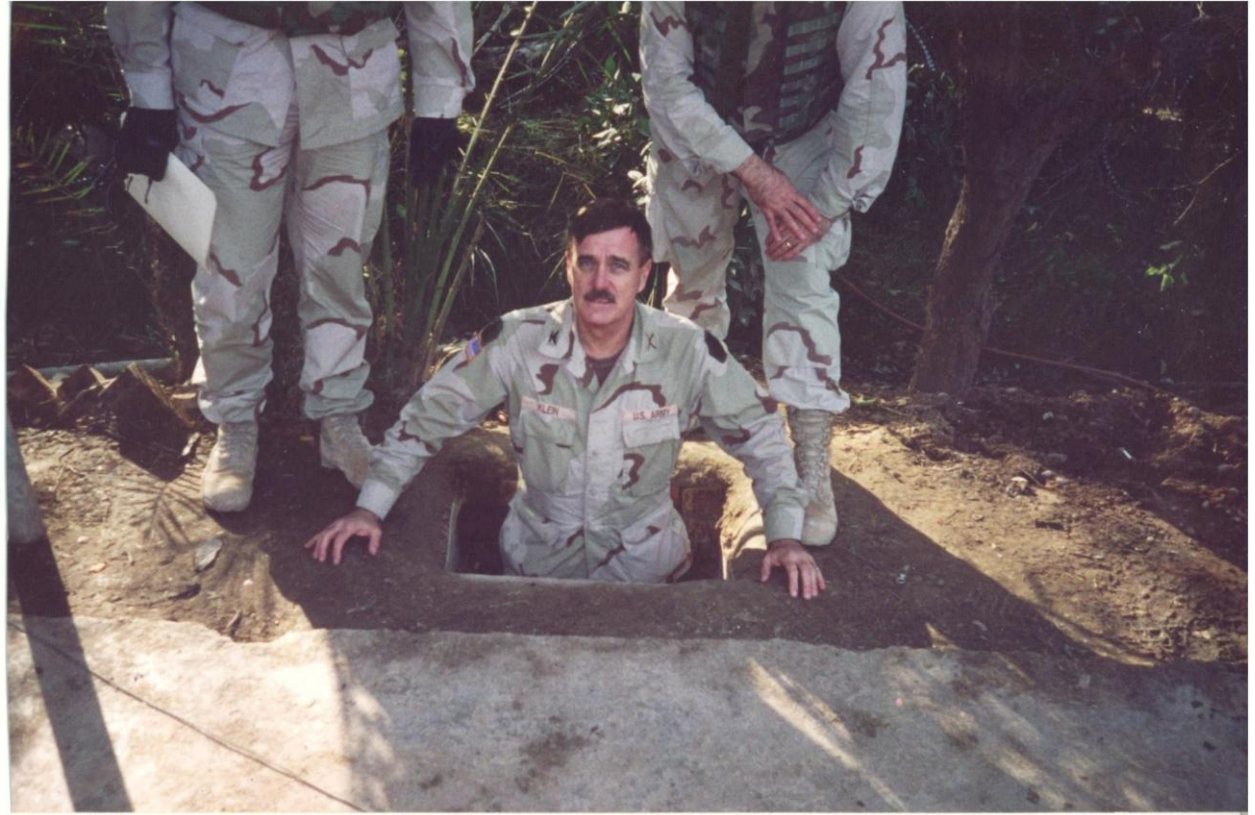
The announcement of his capture was made to the world the following afternoon.

Saddam forbade Iraqis from going to the Hajj for over 20 years.

The Hajj was to start 1 February 2004.

And the war was still on.

Historical context, is in the change of Iraqi leadership.



Briefing Presidents

I briefed the Hajj plan several times to senior government officials in Bagdad, Iraq.

Plans had to be developed for security, transportation, medical care, subsistence and shelter.

I wanted to convince the leaders of the country that we needed to address this issue at the tribal level not at the religious level.

Then I went out in the community at large to engage the tribal leaders to determine what was needed to be done to make the Hajj successful.

The main issue was trying to understand how many of the faithful Muslims would attempt this pilgrimage and how we would get them there.

Convincing bosses that on the ground facilitation was needed to have a smooth and successful Hajj. Developed risk analysis.



The Hajj

Determining how to get the pilgrims to the Hajj and back was my mission.

Distance between Baghdad and Mecca is 1900 kilometers.

The activities at the Hajj were not in my purview.

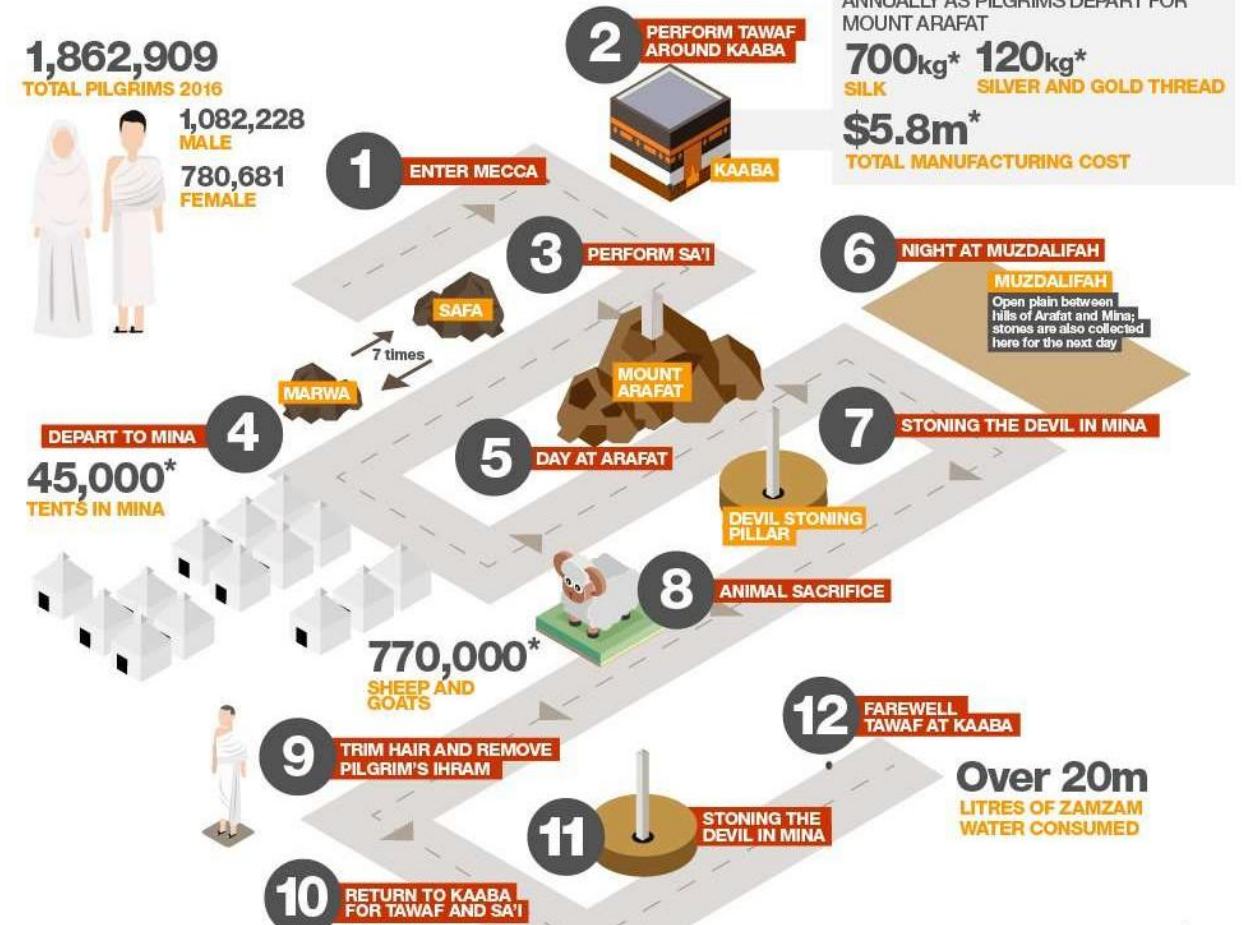
6-day event.

80-kilometer trip from Mecca to Kaaba.

Many religious rituals.

Added trivia and history to the conversations to enlighten those who may not know and to show that you have an interest and understanding in the subject.

Saudi Arabia hosts some 2 million Muslims from around the world for the 6-day pilgrimage.



Some tribes were in remote areas

Most tribes were in urban areas, but not all.

The farther away from urban areas you travelled the more friendly the inhabitants were.

However, they were less likely to understand what we were trying to accomplish.

The more urbanized the tribal members were the more suspicious of our motives they were.

Build a basis for mutual trust and listening to concerns as a team.

Constructive criticism is considered rude.

Meeting people in their environment was necessary to start the conversations in a familiar setting for them.



Facilitation Meetings for the Hajj in Iraq 2004

Some smaller meetings occurred outside.
Sometimes a cluster of four to five families.
And at times a mixture of Shias and Sunnis
members in the same tribe.

Convinced group that we have a common
goal.

Encouraged creative thinking (thinking
outside the box).

Set ground rules, carefully.

Kept them focus on the goal.

More social than formal until you recognized
who is senior in the group.



Meetings in Tents

Many meetings occurred in tents.

The attendees were usually with the senior members of the tribes.

Determining who was the senior person present was important.

We had to socialize some of the issues within the tribe to understand their concerns.

Needed to understand customs.

Stayed constantly aware of the differences in their beliefs.

However, also pursued their shared beliefs to help enforce how we would conduct the Hajj.

Needed to share observations to develop group dynamics.

Recognized any conflicts and try to minimize them.

Established a clear and rational context for the meeting.

Fostered open discussions.



Small groups

Sometimes the groups were just one family.

This was not a good dynamic as they tended to talk badly about other families rather than solve issues.

It was difficult to see the other side of the argument.

It was easier to develop rapport with smaller groups.

Less formal meetings.



Intimidation was a factor with which to contend

Weapons were usually present.

This helped me understand the environment in which these tribes lived.

Tribes were very leering of strangers.

Sustaining the group's energy was not a problem, directing it was.

Needed to gain their confidence so that I could get them to talk and share.

Again, showing you had knowledge of the subject without seeming to be teaching them.



Always Sweet Tea

Hospitality was always present.

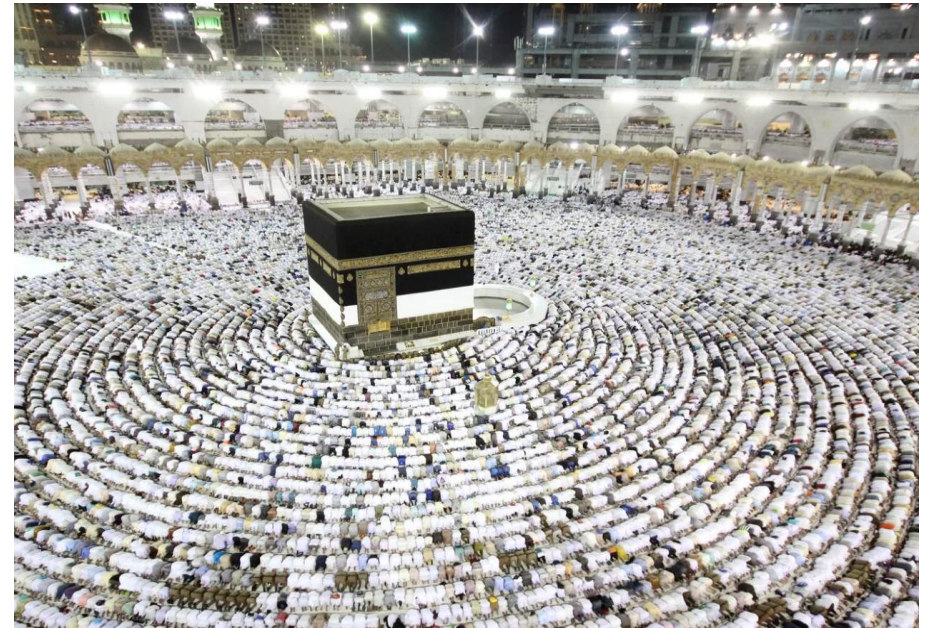
Almost every meeting started with tea.

Even if there was heated arguments and threats, hospitality was paramount.

Understanding customs and respecting traditions were very important.

Participated in their culture (such as the tea ceremony).





Results of the 2004 Hajj

- We used every form of transportation (boats, carts, horses, camels, cars, buses, trains, planes and by foot).
- Over 43,000 pilgrims travelled to the Hajj in 2004.
- Very little violence.
- Six perished along the way (less than the risk analysis suggested).
- Unfortunately, at the Hajj during the 'stoning the devil in Mina' event 252 pilgrims were killed by a stampede.

Reflections of the Meetings

- Not everyone has the same truths.
- It is ok not to know all the answers (if fact it is good).
- Need to determine the dynamics of the attendees (who is senior and why).
- You must not enforce your own beliefs (religion, democracy, etc.)
- You must remain neutral in the face of very different views within the same meeting.
- I rarely received consensus, just acceptance. And that's ok.